



Top 10 Tips for Stressed Out Parents

1. Maintain a Healthy Diet

Eating well is important for energy, sleep, and a strong immune system.

2. Sleep

Try to maintain good sleep habits. This can be hard with a new baby. If your baby suffers poor sleep, seek support from friends, family, or professionals (e.g., Ngala).

3. Seek Support

Everyone needs help from time to time. If you are struggling, try to use make use of your social supports. If needed, seek professional support. Make the most of any reasonable offer of support.

4. Have Realistic Expectations

There is huge social pressure for mothers and fathers to be “perfect parents” and to be able to cope with everything that comes along. But, there are no “perfect parents”. It’s ok to adjust your standards (e.g., housework) when children come along.

5. Team Parenting

Parents who work together as a team tend to report more satisfaction and enjoyment with parenting and find parenting less stressful.

6. Keep Active

Engage in valued activities (e.g., exercise, movies, yoga, walking, cafe) that can have positive effects on mood, thought, and behaviour. Spend time out of the home, especially with friends and family.

7. Talk to Other Parents

Have conversations with other mums and dads. Share your experiences. It helps to know that you’re not alone and you might pick up some useful tips and strategies.

8. Use Community Resources

There are lots of resources available, many without cost, that help to make parenting more positive and less stressful. Try online for information about WA’s parenting community resources at: www.communities.wa.gov.au/childrenandfamilies/parentingwa/ and <http://www.ngala.com.au/> or phone: (08) 6279 1200 or 1800 654 432.

9. Take Time Out Just for Yourself

Try to find ways that you can spend some time doing things just for you, even away from the family. This will give you and your children a nice break and you can return to parenting refreshed and ready for more! Make use of babysitters, family, and friends. Work together with your partner to ensure that both of you have a chance to get away and recharge the batteries.

10. Care for Your Relationship

Parents who report a strong, loving, and caring relationship with their spouses also report less stress and greater satisfaction with parenting. Take care of your relationship with your partner. Communicate, spend time together having fun and relaxing, and treat each other with compassion and respect.

If you feel that you are really struggling, please seek professional support from:

- Your GP or Child Health Nurse: Check your local directory
- Ngala Helpline: (08) 9368 9368 or 1800 111 546
- Beyondblue: 1300 22 4636 or www.beyondblue.org.au
- PANDA Helpline (Post & Antenatal Depression Association): 1300 726 306
- Dads@lifeline (08) 9261 4444
- MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978 or www.menslineaus.org.au
- Relationships Australia: 1300 364 277 or www.relationships.com.au
- Centrecare: (08) 9325 6644 or www.centrecare.com.au