

EXPECT SUCCESS



RELIEVING STRESS ONE STEP AT A TIME

“Don’t forget that you’re human. It’s okay to have a melt down. Just don’t unpack and live there. Cry it out and then refocus on where you are headed.”



Like adults, kids also struggle with stress. Too many commitments, conflict in their families and problems with peers are all stressors that overwhelm children. A certain amount of stress is normal. The key to helping kids manage stress is teaching them to problem-solve, plan and know when to say yes and no to activities and commitments. It isn't to make everything smooth and comfortable. We know that parents are important partners in this teaching and learning so we hope you will find the following suggestions from Psych Central helpful. You can read the full article written by Margarita Tartakovsky, M.S. at <http://psychcentral.com/lib/7-tips-for-helping-your-child-manage-stress/>.

7 Tips for Helping Your Child Manage Stress

1. Stop overscheduling.

One of the biggest stressors for kids is being overscheduled. Kids need downtime to rejuvenate. And they might not realize this by themselves. So knowing when your child is overscheduled is important. Also, pay attention to how your family is eating their meals. Is everybody eating on the run, in the car, grabbing and going? That's an indicator that too much is going on.

2. Make time for play.

Remember the importance of “play that isn't pressured.” There's no lesson, competition or end goal. Younger kids will do this naturally. But older kids may forget how to simply play. Some ideas include: riding your bikes, throwing around the baseball, wrestling and hiking.

3. Make sleep a priority.

Sleep is vital for everything from minimizing stress to boosting mood to improving school performance. If your child isn't getting enough sleep, that's another red flag that they're overscheduled. Also helpful is stressing the importance of good sleep-keep TV – and other electronics – out of your child's bedroom.

4. Teach your kids to listen to their bodies.

Teach your kids to understand their own bodies and the physiology of stress. Encourage them to listen to what their bodies are saying. While it's normal for a child's stomach to feel jumpy on the first day of school, leaving class because their stomach hurts or waking up repeatedly with a headache is a sign there's too much going on.

5. Manage your own stress.

Stress is really contagious. When parents are stressed out, kids are stressed out. If you're living in an environment with one thing after another, your kid is going to pick up on that. Show your kids how to relax and effectively deal with stress. They have to see you slowing down.

6. Make mornings calmer.

A disorganized home is another stressful trigger for kids, and this is especially evident in the mornings. Making mornings smoother sets the tone for the day.

7. Prepare your kids to deal with mistakes.

For kids a lot of stress comes from the fear of making mistakes. Remind them that they're not supposed to know how to do everything or do everything right. The skill that might be even more important is learning how to recover from a bad decision. Help your child learn to figure out the next steps after a bad decision or mistake. Help them figure out how to fix it, make amends, learn the lesson and move on.