

TRANS PARENTINGSM Toolbox

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Family transition is a stressful time for everyone. New stressors emerge and old stressors intensify. It is essential to develop and use appropriate stress management techniques to adjust to these changes. Parents who manage their level of stress have more energy available for parenting, are better decision makers, and can respond more effectively to new difficulties or crises that arise.

Stress is inevitable and even helpful to a point. It keeps individuals motivated and can be a source of energy. The key is to determine how much stress is enough to help you be productive and not so much that it leads to problems.

Too Much Stress—

Physical Signs

Nervousness
Lack of Energy
Headaches
Indigestion
High Blood Pressure

Emotional Signs

Confusion
Extreme Sadness
Increased use of alcohol or drugs
Loss of sleep
Eating too much

Control Your Stress—

Write it down – Use a calendar or appointment book to keep track of things you and your children are doing every week. Create a “To Do” list everyday, write it in your appointment book, and refer to it throughout the day.

Break it up – When feeling like the task in front of you is too big and you are overwhelmed by the thought of it, break it down into smaller more “do-able” tasks.

One thing at a time – Realize that you will not be able to control everything. Pick one thing to focus on and address it as best you can.

Learn to let go – Don’t become stuck on solving one issue entirely or perfectly. Sometimes the best you can do is decide to come back to it later or let it go completely.

Perspective – Keep in mind the importance of the task or issue in comparison to the larger picture of safety, health, and well being.

Value your time – Evaluate tasks that you do based on the time it takes you to accomplish them. By putting value on your time, some things begin to lose their level of importance in comparison to other things you would rather be doing.

Say “no” – Being helpful to others is noble. Taking care of everyone and everything is dangerous. Decide what you can realistically do in the amount of time you have available and say “NO” to the rest.

About Families First[®]

TRANS PARENTINGSM was developed by Families First[®], a premier not-for-profit organization providing critical, preventive services to strengthen and preserve families for more than 100 years.

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Making Families Last 