

Stress Management



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Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections (APAC)

...a collaborative effort of Children's Aid Society and the Department of Human Resources

Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections (APAC)

- Collaborative effort between the Department of Human Resources and Children's Aid Society
- Mission is to provide education and support to adoptive families
- Statewide program
- No fee for most services



APAC's Services

- Information and Referral
- Resource Library
- Educational Training Workshops
- Adoptive Family Groups
- Camp APAC
- Special Events
- Short Term Crisis Counseling
- Recruitment

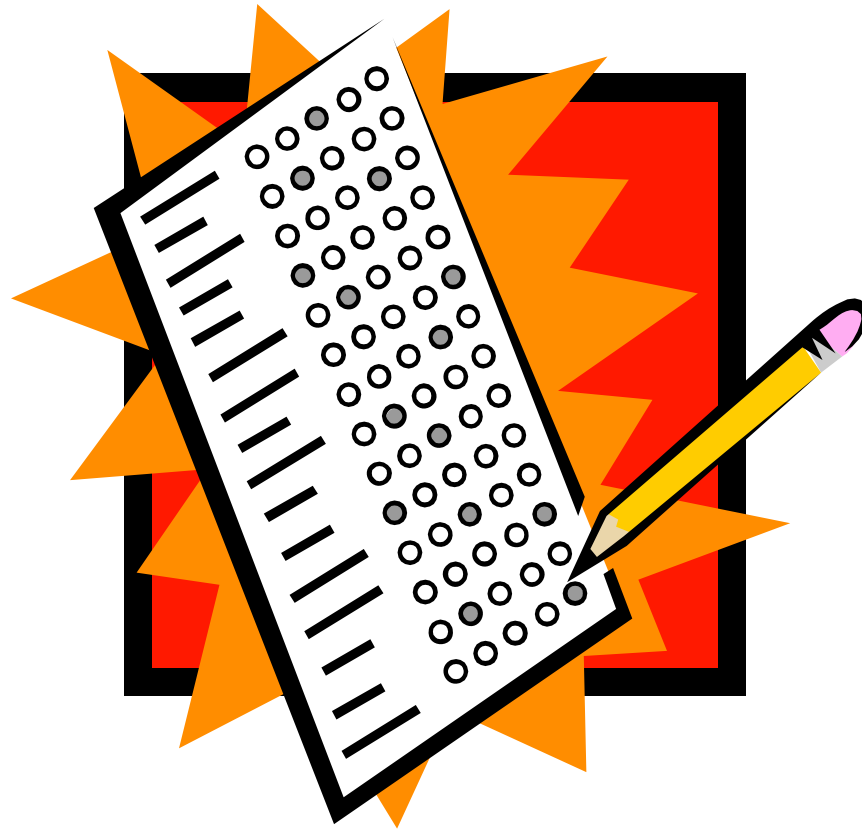


What Are We Talking About...

- Defining stress
- Typical stressors
- Perceptions of stress
- Coping styles
- Basic needs
- Stress management tips



Stress Test



How do we define stress? There are so many different definitions...I am so stressed out..

- No “right” definition
- Wear and tear our bodies experience as we adjust to our changing environments
- Most Common: Stress is a feeling or condition experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.

Some typical stressors...

- ❖ Adapting to new family member(s): behavioral needs
- ❖ Getting necessary daily items accomplished and **managing time**
- ❖ Concern about success & safety-children/family/self
- ❖ Money
- ❖ Health concerns: yourself and children
- ❖ Life plans or goals
- ❖ Secondary Stress: children's history, natural disasters, war, news/media



IS ALL STRESS BAD?

Let's think about it...



Moderate vs. Chronic Stress

- Moderate stress is stress within reasonable limits; not excessive, extreme, or intense.
 - Moderate stress can be positive and challenge people to act in creative and resourceful ways.
- Chronic stress is a long-term state of physiological arousal. Some examples include ongoing high pressured work, persistent financial problems, and long-term relationship problems.
 - Chronic stress can cause harmful physical changes in your body.



What do you see?



- What do you think is going on in this picture?
- Where are they?
- What are they feeling?
- Where are they going?

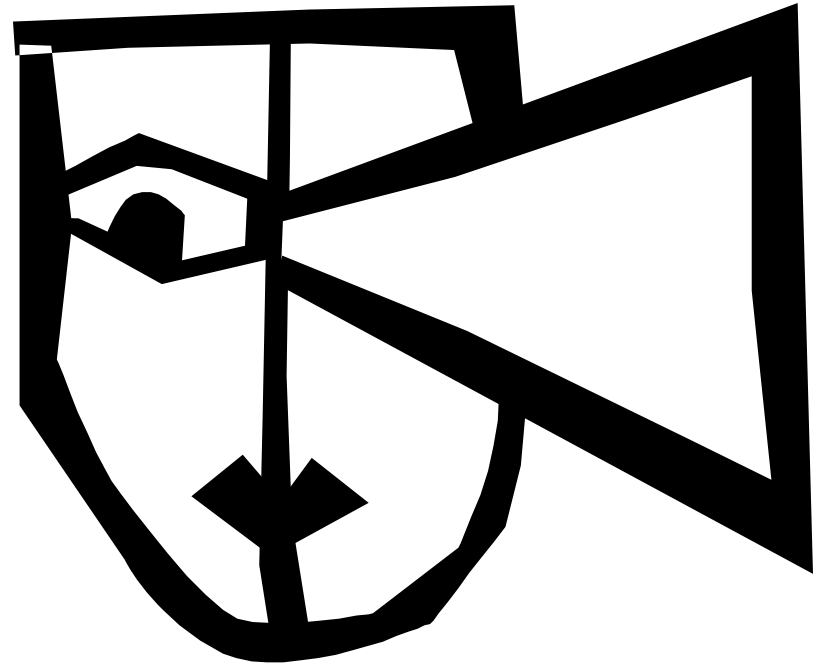
Perceptions

ENVIRONMENT: An event occurs...we view it and take it in through our senses.

COGNITIVE PERCEPTION:
A thought about the event comes to mind.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSE:
A feeling forms.

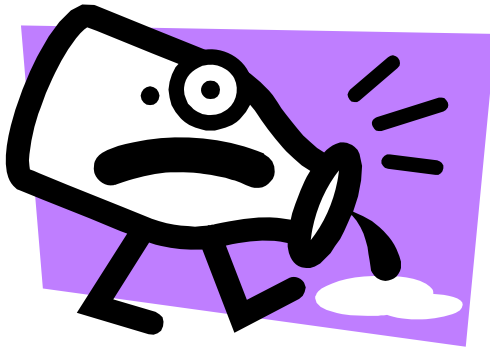
MOOD: An attitude results...
Our mood is in place.



To become stressed...

People must make two judgments:

1. They must feel threatened by the situation
2. Doubt that their capabilities and resources are sufficient.



You know you're stressed if...

- You eat standing up
- You're always late
- You forget what day it is
- You do three things at once
- You don't finish any of them
- You lose your keys and your driver's license and your glasses...and your patience
- You have a headache...again
- You are missing several days from this week
- You wonder if “brewing” is a necessary step for the consumption of coffee
- You say the same sentence over and over again not realizing you've said it before
- You ask the drive through attendant if you can get your order to go



Responses to Stress

- Physical
- Behavioral



Physical Responses to Stress

- “Fight or Flight” response
- Release of stress hormones
- Faster blood flow
- Blood clotting faster
- Liver accelerates production
- Shallow breathing
- Slower digestion
- Acute senses.



Behavioral Responses to Stress

- Yawning
- Talking too fast
- Talking too loud
- Fiddling
- Twitching
- Nail biting
- Teeth grinding
- Drumming Fingers
- Pacing
- Over reacting
- Emotional
- Defensive
- Irritable
- Irrational
- Hostile
- Critical
- Aggressive



What is your coping style?

“You may not be able to control events nor other people, but you can control your responses to them.” ~Dr. Will Glasser

- Do you...
- Complain? Cry?
- Withdraw? Over spend? Over eat?
- Turn to chemical substances?
- Yell? Scream? Leave?
- Fight?
- Or, do you...
- Talk about your feelings?
- Step back and then come forward to talk?
- Exercise?
- Brainstorm solutions?
- Manage issues assertively?

We are Role-Models



- HOW WE COPE WITH STRESS HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH HOW OUR CHILDREN COPE WITH STRESS...WHAT ARE WE SHOWING THEM?



The Best Stress Management

- **SELF-AWARENESS:**

The best stress management stems from your own personal ability to cope. At the core of coping, lies self-awareness. It is the foundation on which everything else depends. When you know yourself, when you are comfortable with yourself and accept yourself-- the good and the not so good--the other stuff (health, happiness and confidence) take root and begin to grow.



Know yourself...

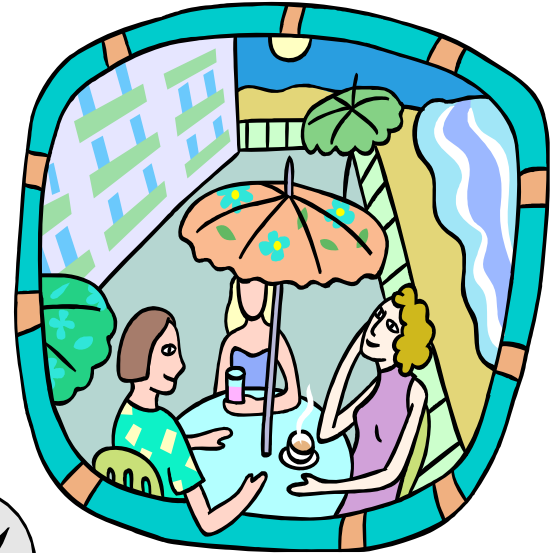


- **Are you more of an extrovert?**
- You enjoy being around others and feel energized by other people
- You like social events
- You'd rather have people around than not
- **Are you more of an introvert?**
- You enjoy alone time
- You get energized from spending time alone
- You'd rather spend time with a few people than with a large group

Most of us experience some of each of these. Pay attention to your preferences in this area and to your needs. Ask for "space" when you need it or create opportunities to socialize.

Basic Needs and Self-Preservation

- Physiological (shelter, food, safety)
- Love and Belonging
- Freedom
- Power
- Fun



Think of your own basic needs...

- Physical
- Emotional
- Intellectual
- Social
- Spiritual
- Which ones are being met?
- Which are lacking?
- Are your children's basic needs being met?
- What can you do about it?

13 signs of burn out...



- Chronic fatigue, run down, exhausted
- Anger at those making demands
- Self-criticism for putting up with demands
- Cynicism, negativity, irritability
- A sense of being besieged
- Feelings of helplessness
- Exploding easily at seemingly inconsequential things (1 – 10 scale)
- Frequent headaches or gastrointestinal disturbances
- Weight loss or gain
- Sleeplessness/depression
- Shortness of breath
- Suspiciousness
- Increased degree of risk taking

General Suggestions for Managing Stress

- Time away from work and/or home
- Take a break
- Delegate!
- Pleasure time with people you enjoy
- Relax
- Nature
- Exercise
- Quiet times at home
- A positive attitude
- Refraining from negative self talk
- Being aware of how your perceptions may cause stress and change them as needed
- Talk
- Fun and laughter
- Keep a journal

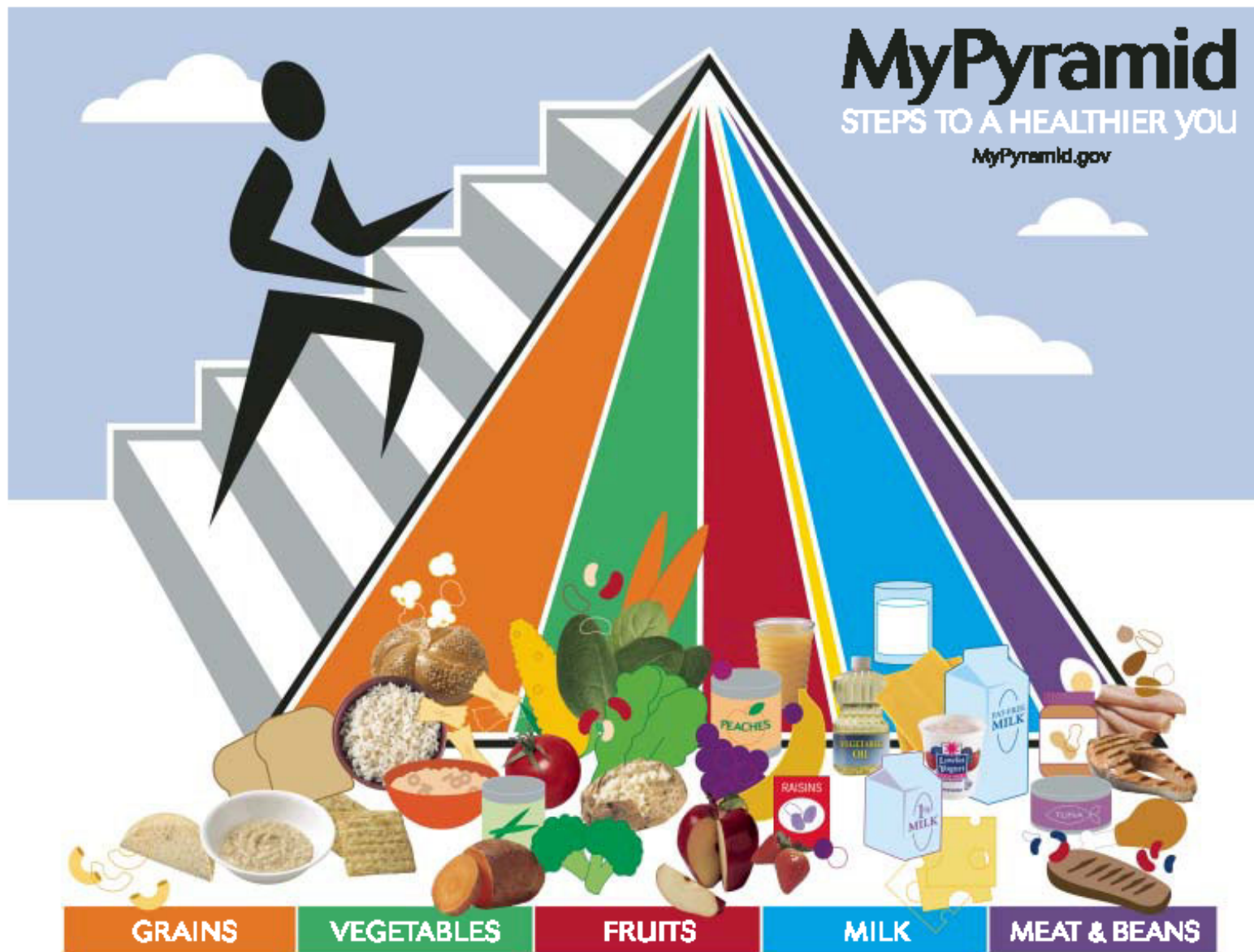


Get Plenty of Rest!

1. Maintain a regular bed and wake time schedule including weekends.
2. Establish a regular, relaxing bedtime routine such as soaking in a hot bath or hot tub and then reading a book or listening to soothing music.
3. Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and cool.
4. Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before your regular bedtime. Also no caffeine close to bedtime.



Eat a Healthy Diet



GRAINS

Make half your grains whole

Eat at least 3 oz. of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day

1 oz. is about 1 slice of bread, about 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta

VEGETABLES

Vary your veggies

Eat more dark-green veggies like broccoli, spinach, and other dark leafy greens

Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweetpotatoes

Eat more dry beans and peas like pinto beans, kidney beans, and lentils

FRUITS

Focus on fruits

Eat a variety of fruit

Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit

Go easy on fruit juices

MILK

Get your calcium-rich foods

Go low-fat or fat-free when you choose milk, yogurt, and other milk products

If you don't or can't consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages

MEAT & BEANS

Go lean with protein

Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry

Bake it, broil it, or grill it

Vary your protein routine — choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds

For a 2,000-calorie diet, you need the amounts below from each food group. To find the amounts that are right for you, go to MyPyramid.gov.

Eat 6 oz. every day

Eat 2½ cups every day

Eat 2 cups every day

Get 3 cups every day;
for kids aged 2 to 8, it's 2

Eat 5½ oz. every day

Find your balance between food and physical activity

- Be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.
- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
- About 60 minutes a day of physical activity may be needed to prevent weight gain.
- For sustaining weight loss, at least 60 to 90 minutes a day of physical activity may be required.
- Children and teenagers should be physically active for 60 minutes every day, or most days.



Know the limits on fats, sugars, and salt (sodium)

- Make most of your fat sources from fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- Limit solid fats like butter, margarine, shortening, and lard, as well as foods that contain them.
- Check the Nutrition Facts label to keep saturated fats, trans fats, and sodium low.
- Choose food and beverages low in added sugars. Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients.



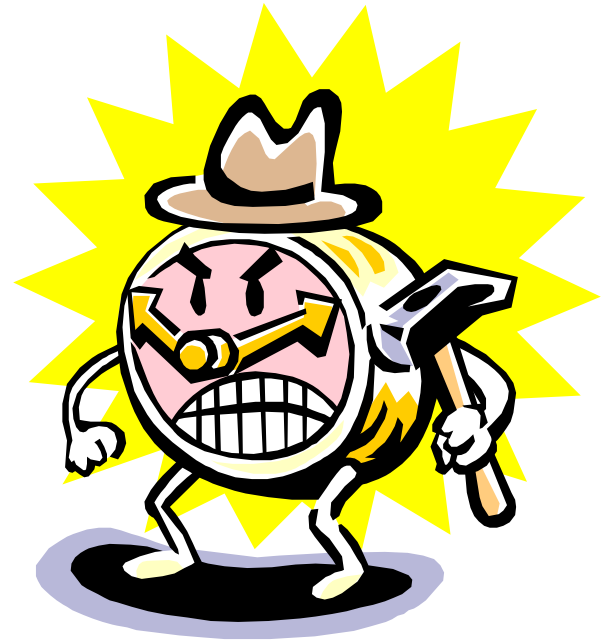
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
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TIPS FOR MANAGING TIME

- ✓ To do lists
- ✓ Prioritize by importance
- ✓ Allow time for interruptions
- ✓ Take appropriate breaks/gain control
- ✓ “Just Say No”



Relaxation Techniques

- Visualization/ Guided imagery
- Stretching
- Deep breathing
- Muscle relaxation
- Massage therapy
- Meditation
- Yoga



Visualization/ Guided Imagery

- Sit in a quiet place, close your eyes and let your worries drift away.
- Imagine your restful place – whatever setting is most calming to you.
- Picture it as vividly as you can. Try to use as many senses as you can including smells, sights, sounds, and textures.



Stretching

- Neck stretch – Sit up straight and tuck in your chin. Place your left hand on the right side of your neck. Gently pull your head to the left and hold for 10 seconds. Switch sides and repeat the exercise.



- Shoulder and arm stretch – Put your hands together and lock your fingers. Then raise your hands above your head, palms upward. Hold for 15 seconds and relax. Repeat 3 times.

Deep Breathing

- Sit up straight
- Exhale completely through your mouth.
- Place your hands on your stomach, just above your waist.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, pushing your hands out with your stomach.
- Hold your breath to a count of two to five.
- Slowly and steadily breathe out through your mouth, feeling your hands move back in as you slowly contract your stomach.



Muscle Relaxation

- Start by taking several deep breaths.
- When you feel relaxed, focus your attention on your right foot. Focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your right foot, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Relax your right foot.
- Stay in this relaxed position for a minute, breathing deeply.
- Shift attention to your left foot and follow these same steps as you continue up through the body.

Relax the body in this order...

- Right foot
- Left foot
- Right calf
- Left calf
- Right thigh
- Left thigh
- Hips and buttocks
- Stomach
- Chest
- Back
- Right arm and hand
- Left arm and hand
- Neck and shoulders
- Face





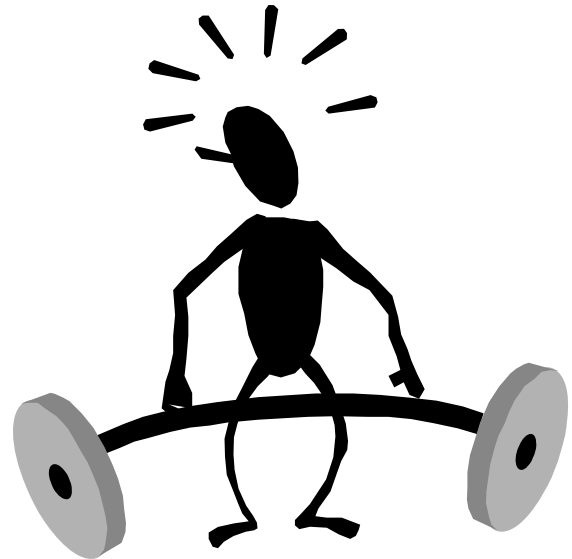
Massage Therapy



- Scalp soother – place your thumbs behind your ears while spreading your fingers on top of your head. Move your scalp back and forth slightly by making circles with your fingertips for 15-20 seconds
- Easy on the eyes – Close your eyes and place your ring finger directly under your eyebrows, near the bridge of your nose. Slowly increase the pressure for 5-10 seconds, then gently release.
- Sinus pressure relief – Place your fingertips at the bridge of your nose. Slowly slide your fingers down your nose and across the top of your cheekbones to the outside of your eyes.
- Shoulder tension relief – Reach one arm across the front of your body to your opposite shoulder. Using a circular motion, press firmly on the muscle above your shoulder blade. Repeat on the other side.

Another idea

- Stress Diary
- Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis



Stress Relief for Kids

- Naps/Rest time
- Physical contact
- Interaction with pets
- Singing
- Playing games
- Creative activities
- Writing down their thoughts
- Sports/spending time outside
- Eating healthy, teaching them deep breathing and relaxation techniques, etc...same things that help adults!



GO FORTH BY TAKING CARE OF YOU!

Your homework is to:

- Decide on a “fun” activity that you will do *this week*.
- Make a commitment to yourself to schedule your time, and to place some ‘in-control’ time into your daily routine
- **Take time to know yourself and pay attention to your needs.**

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