

'Top Tips for Parents / Carers'

- ✓ **Daily Activity Planner** - Focus on achieving a few things each day & try not to get too overwhelmed
- ✓ **Wall Chart** - Use coloured stickers, characters, stars, marker pens to set out daily / weekly tasks
- ✓ **Get organised** - Reduce stress by sitting down as a family & have forward planning day to plan school & after school activities
- ✓ **Become more self aware** - Become more knowledgeable about how stress affects you & how that can impact the kids
- ✓ **Relaxation classes** - Sign up to local baby groups, yoga / meditation classes, children respond well to this
- ✓ **Weekend time** - Change the pace of your work week, make sure there is action & time for spontaneity built into your weekends. If your work week is fast-paced & full of people and deadlines, seek peace & solitude during your days off
- ✓ **Do one thing at a time** - When you are with someone, even your child, be with that person & with no one or anything else. When you are busy with a task, concentrate on doing that task & forget about everything else you have to do
- ✓ **Do the worst first** - If an especially unpleasant task faces you, do it early in the day & get it over with. Then, the rest of your day will be free of anxiety
- ✓ **Make a commitment to yourself** - Change one small thing each day / month to improve your lifestyle
- ✓ **Classes** - Book a babysitter, take up a new class, art, drama, dancing, music, creativity (something just for you)
- ✓ **Lifestyle analysis** - Break your week down & see how many hours per week you give to things
- ✓ **Work / Life / Family balance** - Reward yourself for hard work by giving yourself time out
- ✓ **Prepare** - It is often worth preparing for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table, make lunches, put out the clothes you & baby plan to wear (with a back up set of clothes just in case) so you know if you're running late it's all ready
- ✓ **Don't rely on your memory** - Affectionately known as "baby brain". Write down appointment times, invest in a nice diary include when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, dental, health checks etc
- ✓ **Buy duplicates** - House keys, car keys, phone charger, sim card. Always handy in case of an emergency
- ✓ **Don't put up** - With something that doesn't work right. If your alarm clock, wallet, windshield wipers, whatever are a constant aggravation, get them fixed or get new ones
- ✓ **Say "No!"** - Saying "no" to extra tasks, social activities, kids events & invitations you know you don't have the time or energy for takes practice, self-respect & a belief that everyone, everyday, needs quiet time to relax & be alone
- ✓ **Unplug your phone** - Want to take a long bath, meditate, sleep, or read without interruption? Drum up the courage to temporarily disconnect
- ✓ **Pamper yourself** - You really do need to give yourself an amount of time out to do something nice for yourself
- ✓ **Schedule a realistic day** - Avoid the tendency to schedule back-to-back appointments. Allow time between appointments for a breathing spell, traffic jams, hold ups
- ✓ **Become more flexible** - Some things are worth not doing perfectly & some issues are well to compromise upon

- ✓ **Turn needs into preferences** - Our basic physical needs translate into food, water & keeping warm. Everything else is a preference, so try not to get attached to preferences
- ✓ **The 3 minute rule** - If you can get it done in a few minutes, do it!
- ✓ **Set your boundaries** - Know your own limitations, be realistic with how long it takes you to do things, kids always throw schedules out of sync, so try to plan for this time
- ✓ **Ask for help** - Don't be scared to ask people for some extra support, people really love the opportunity to help
- ✓ **Positive visualisation** - Close your eyes, see, feel, hear, sense yourself being a calm relaxed parent
- ✓ **Walk outside** - Getting some fresh air is a great way to de-stress & clear your mind & it's good for baby too
- ✓ **Unwind** - Run a bubble bath, play some relaxing music, light candles, use oils or incense
- ✓ **Share worries** - Join support groups, chat to other parents, talking to others can help you offload your worries
- ✓ **Eat healthy** - Food such as fish, veg, wholegrain, fruits, nuts are all good for boosting your brain
- ✓ **Move your body** - Get up & stretch, walk around the room, move position or location, keep fit
- ✓ **Challenge** - Be assertive in taking on extra deadlines & demands that feel unreasonable
- ✓ **Have some fun** - Do some things to make you laugh, make daily tasks fun & interesting with the kids
- ✓ **Drink water** - Avoid drinks that make you hyper like pop, red bull, coffee, alcohol
- ✓ **Music** - Sing, dance, play Just Dance or Wii Fit, alternatively play calming & relaxing music
- ✓ **Exercise as a family** - Swim, dance, cycle, run, walk, this is great for creating happy chemicals
- ✓ **Sleep** - You will feel sleep deprived so try when your baby sleeps, even if it's just a power nap
- ✓ **Create calm in your house** - Before going to sleep turn off mobile phones, TV's, video games
- ✓ **Think positive** - Change your mindset, don't feed negative thinking or beliefs about yourself
- ✓ **Positive affirmations** - ("I am capable, I can manage, I am balanced, I am calm, I am confident, I am clear")
- ✓ **Complementary Therapies** - Have a massage, relaxation treatment, do some meditation or yoga
- ✓ **Internal beliefs** - Become aware of how much internal pressure & expectation you create
- ✓ **Writing** - Jotting down your thoughts and feelings (in a journal, or on paper) can help you clarify things and can give you a renewed perspective
- ✓ **Breathing** – Nostril, Mouth, Finger Tip, Square or Star Breathing, counting
- ✓ **www.relaxkids.com** - Recommended website with a range of excellent tools for calming and relaxing children
- ✓ **Communicate** - Be brave in starting up a conversation to ask how your kids day went, talking is good