



Mental Health Awareness Month

WHAT PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS NEED TO KNOW

The Basics

May is a time to raise awareness about mental health and reduce the stigma around seeking help. Parents and Caregivers, your mental health matters.

Here are some tips for taking care of yourself!

- Place your own oxygen mask on first... This message rings true as a metaphor for parenting: Take care of yourself so that you can be there for your child.
- Identify, process, and manage your stress- Create and practice self-care rituals. Examples include: exercise, yoga stretches, deep breathing, or even just taking a few minutes for yourself.
- Get some green in your life- Research shows that spending time outside and in nature lowers stress levels. If you can't get the kids outside, then bring some plants or wildlife into your home.
- Listen to music- Music can soothe anxiety, lower heart rate, and increase dopamine levels in the brain.
- Unplug to recharge- Phones, devices, and screen time can lead to elevated stress levels, difficulty sleeping, and symptoms of depression.
- Practice Gratitude- At the end of each day, acknowledge something you are grateful for, either to yourself or make it a family activity!
- Develop a personal care plan- Pay attention to the physical, emotional, and mental manifestations of stress. Choose how you will react to stressful situations. Identify ways you can prevent stress from taking over.

Additional Resources

- Article: [Vicious Cycle of Depression](#)
- Article: [If your Teen is depressed](#)
- Article: [5 Things to Help Depression](#)
- Podcast: [Depression in Children and Teens](#)