



Stress Tips for Single Moms

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Being a single parent may be common today, but that doesn't mean it's easy. Many single moms are experiencing dangerous levels of stress, and they don't see any way around it.

Chronic stress is harmful to your body, mind and spirit. As a parent, you need to find positive ways to deal with the stress so you can be healthy for both your children and yourself.

With a little bit of planning, help, and effort, you *can* juggle being both the parent and provider of your family.

Here are some tips to help you combat the everyday stresses of being a single mom:

- 1. Plan ahead.** The best thing you can do when you're a single mom is to plan ahead. You'll find that the simple things in life that often cause the most stress can be managed or outright eliminated when you plan ahead.
 - Prepare meals in advance and freeze them until you're ready to use them.
 - Have everyone put out their clothes the night before and their shoes by the front door so getting the day started will be a breeze.
- 2. Involve the kids.** You can't do everything by yourself, so get your kids involved in getting things done. ***Any help that your kids are able to contribute will save you a lot of time and stress*** each day, plus it's teaching them the importance of responsibility and contributing to the family.

- Teach them age-appropriate tasks like cleaning their room, doing laundry, making the grocery list, planning meals, cooking, taking out the trash, vacuuming, cleaning the bathrooms, and so on.
- 3. Know your limits.** When a friend, co-worker, or family member asks something of you that you know you can't do, ***say no***. It may not make the other person happy, but knowing your limits can help you from being overworked unnecessarily.
- ***If you don't respect your time, who else will?***
- 4. Create a support system.** When you have people that you can turn to, you'll be able to release stress in a positive way. When you need a bit of reinforcement, it helps to know ***you can pick up the phone and call in backup!***
- Your support system might consist of family members and friends who are willing to listen to you vent or even help you around the house.
- 5. Make time for yourself.** Schedule at least 10 to 15 minutes just for *you* into each day. This time can even be for something simple, like painting your fingernails, taking a hot bath, or reading for pleasure.
- ***Your alone time will refresh and revive you!***

These are all very simple, yet effective, ways to deal with the stress of being a single parent. These tips won't do away with stress altogether, but they'll help you manage it in a way that will allow you to get things done and enjoy your life and kids.

Your kids will only be small for a short time, and you don't want to waste these years in a stressed out daze. Instead, take advantage of the here and now by incorporating these stress management tips into your life. It's easier than you think!