



Parent Self Care Tool: Take Ten!

All parents feel stress in a variety of ways: exhaustion, fussy children, job pressures and family problems. Recognizing that you are under stress is the first step in learning how to take control. Here is a process you can use to turn your stress into positive action.

1. **Take 10 deep breaths.** Try to loosen up each muscle in your body.
2. **Count to 10.** Give yourself some time to calm down.
3. **Remember the 10 Foot Rule:** make sure that your child is in a safe place and then keep 10 feet away from him/her until you've had time to cool down.
4. **Take ten minutes** to cool down and think about your options.
5. **Take a walk** or do something active to unwind.
6. **Get support** from friends or family. Call a friend and tell her how you are feeling.
7. **Eat healthy meals.** Be careful not to eat too much sugar, caffeine and chocolate. Those foods can make you jittery.
8. **Get enough sleep.** You can't take care of others if you are exhausted.
9. **Be sure to get your daily dose of hugs and kisses.** Hugs and kisses can change your mood and remind you what your family means to you.
10. **Remember, it's hard to nurture others if no one is nurturing you.**

**For more information about managing your stress,
Call the Family Help Line: 1-800-932-4673**

The Family Help Line is a program of Parent Trust for Washington Children.