



1601 2nd Avenue, Suite 410 ▪ Seattle, WA 98101
1-800-932 HOPE ▪ www.parenttrust.org

WHY IS SELF-CARE IMPORTANT?

Why is it important to take care of yourself when you are a parent?

If you were going to run a marathon, you would probably do several of the items on this list:

- Read inspiring stories about people who run
- Get tips from people who run
- Set up a training schedule
- Learn to pace yourself.
- Eat good food.
- Drink lots of water.
- Stretch your muscles.
- Get as much sleep as possible.

Being a parent is like running a marathon every day!

What are the benefits of practicing self-care everyday?

- **Puts Gas in Your Gas Tank – Self Care Gives Energy:**

Parenting is hard work and requires energy. Taking care of yourself as a parent means that you will have the energy to really be a good parent.

Example: Every couple of hours, I make sure that I take at least 5 minutes to do something for myself. This way I make sure that I have enough energy to be a good parent to my two-year old son -- play train, say “no” a dozen times, pick up a thousand blocks, read Dr. Seuss, ignore his whining, dance to Halloween songs (in January) and on and on and on!

- **When Everything Goes Wrong--Self Care Increases Patience:**

Parenting requires a tremendous amount of patience every day.



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Example: My two-year old loves music. So do I! When we are starting to get on each other's last good nerve, I say, "Let's listen to some music – it will help us feel better." And it always does.

○ **Start 'em early – Your Self-Care Increases Your Child's Self-Care:**

Our children watch everything we do! If your child is watching **you** take good care of yourself then they learn how to take good care of themselves too – which will make both of your lives much easier!

Examples:

- *I am trying to stretch my old muscles every day. My son, Joey, gets down on the floor with me and does "yogo"(yoga!) too.*
- *I am trying to drink more water these days to keep my immune system up, so I walk around with a water bottle. So does Joey.*
- *I like to read my People magazine to relax. Joey sits besides me reading his Noodle magazine.*

**You have to take care of yourself
if you want to make it across the finish line!**