

Parents: Taking Care of Yourself

The Allies in Action Project educates newcomers to Canada about domestic abuse/family violence and how to maintain healthy family relationships.

“Happy healthy parents make happy healthy children” – Dr. Miriam Stoppard

Parents need to be healthy and happy in order for their children to be healthy and happy as well. Being happy and healthy as a parent can be difficult for many reasons, and it is important to find ways to address these difficulties.

Parents are often unhappy from STRESS!

1. What is “stress”?

When you are feeling stress, it means that you have a lot of things on your mind. According to Health Canada, “Stress is a fact of daily life and is the result of both the good and bad things that happen. Too much stress can cause serious health concerns, but there are many ways of dealing with stress that can reduce your risk.”

Resource:

- [Health Canada – It’s Your Health: Coping with Stress](#)

2. What causes stress?

- Money. What do we spend money on, and what resources are available to help?

Food & Groceries Rent/Housing Car/Gasoline Bus/Transportation
Children’s Clothes

- Language. Moving to a new country where you do not speak the language can be very stressful. What are some of those stressors, and what resources are available to help?

English Learning Social Stigma Language Barriers

- Time. What things take up time? How can we manage our time in ways that help *reduce* stress? What resources can we turn to for support?

Children/Family Housework Employment Classes (ESL, citizenship, etc.)

3. Why is it important to manage stress?

- Effects of stress. Long term stress can have many negative impacts on our health and our families:

Bad Mood/Depression

Trouble Sleeping

No interest in eating

Arguing with Spouse

Impatient with Children

Children affected by parents' mood

- Self-Care. Taking care of ourselves is essential for reducing stress:

Eating Healthy

Talking with Friends

Doing things you enjoy

Listening to Music

- Exercise. Getting regular exercise is not only healthy for your body, it is also healthy for your mind, and an excellent way to reduce stress.
- Prayer & Meditation. Participating in religious activities, or finding times for quiet sitting, are important ways of finding calm and feeling peaceful.

Resources from Health Canada (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/>):

- [Health Canada – Physical Activity Tips for Adults \(18-64 years\)](#)
- [Health Canada – Physical activity tips for older adults \(65 years and older\)](#)
- [Health Canada – Positive Mental Health & Social Support](#)
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