

Self-Care for Parents and Caregivers



- **Slow down** and take a few deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Use the “ha” sound as you breathe out. This helps to calm our nervous system.
 - **Notice how you are feeling.** Be aware of how you are feeling in your body right now. Are you feeling anxious, scared, stressed, or afraid? Numbed out or on autopilot? Do you have racing or negative thoughts? Acknowledge it all without trying to fix or change it.
 - **Remind yourself** that you, your family, your elders, your ancestors, and your community have overcome hardships in the past.
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- **Remember your own sources of inner wisdom, strength, and resilience.**
 - **Know that you are important to your children and their wellbeing** during this time of great uncertainty.
 - **You are doing the best that you can right now under challenging circumstances.**
 - **None of us are parenting perfectly.** You may not always respond to your children in the ways you might want to when feeling stressed, scared, or frustrated. When that happens, you can apologize. Then listen to your child’s response without defending yourself or making excuses. After a while, both of you might be ready to reconnect through a hug or smile and then move on to what’s next.
 - **Remember** that resting, drinking water, and moving help you too!
 - **Connect with friends and trusted adults in your life** to talk, share a laugh, and get the support you need to continue coping with all of the added stress right now.
 - **Find some inner calm.** Here are some resources from Truman Medical Centers’ Center for Trauma-Informed Innovation that parents and caregivers might find useful:
 - Virtual Room of Refuge: <https://mailchi.mp/751f8d07b5db/virtualroomofrefuge>