

Things I want to try:

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Contact Us:



[www.strengtheningfamilies.alaska.gov](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.alaska.gov)

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ALL ALASKA  
PEDIATRIC  
PARTNERSHIP

# Taking Care of Yourself.....



**HELPS YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR CHILD**

# Managing Stress

Being a parent comes with stressful moments and sometimes it can be overwhelming. Long-term stress can be unhealthy and takes a toll on our body and our brain. Here are some helpful hints about managing stress:

## ***1. Learn to recognize when stress is coming on***

What is your body's IMMEDIATE response to stress? Does your heart beat faster? Are you breathing faster? Are your muscles tensing up? Notice overall changes when you have ongoing stress- getting frustrated or angry easily, losing sleep, increasing alcohol and other substance use, or feeling down or depressed, etc.

## ***2. Slow yourself down***

When you feel stress coming on- focus on your breathing and try to slow it down..... slowly inhale for 5 counts and slowly exhale for 5 counts. Repeat several times. When we slow our body down, we can think more clearly and make better choices.

## ***3. Notice the things that stress you out and make a plan for dealing with them***

When we have a plan in place, we are better prepared to manage a stressful situation if it should happen again.

## ***4. Take time to think about the things that are going well***

At the end of each day, note what you have accomplished even if only small progress was made. Think about something you like about each of your children and celebrate their positives!

## ***5. Eat healthy foods and get regular exercise and adequate sleep***

Increase your vegetables and cut down on processed foods. Walking is a good activity to prevent and combat stress. Playing active games with your kids is great exercise and fun for everyone. Enjoy the outdoors! Also, put yourself to bed on time. Getting good sleep is a key ingredient for managing stress.

## ***6. Connect with people who are supportive and helpful***

Reach out, share concerns, and ask for help. Find other parents who have children the same age as yours and compare notes. Arrange play dates or take turns watching each other's children. Connecting with others is one of the most powerful stress busters there is!