Have a Stressed Out Child? Not Sure How to Help?

Social pressures, achievement tests, recent world events and just being overwhelmed from racing from one after-school program to the next can take a toll on a child. Anxiety and exhaustion can stress children mentally and physically and deplete their energy. As parents teach relaxation skills, children internalize those methods and use them as they grow.

Here are some strategies for helping your child relax. Use them to begin teaching your child how to cope with life’s stresses and strains.

- **Talk openly about emotions.** Fear, anger and sadness can stress children enormously. But children often can’t put their finger on what’s causing them to be upset. Addressing your child’s emotions directly will help your child find relief. Start by asking open-ended questions. Giving your child examples from your own life can have a terrific calming effect.

- **Teach your child to take breaks.** Getting away from a tense situation will calm him/her down and may even help him/her find new solutions. To take off the pressure, avoid overscheduling your child with after-school programs or play dates. Give him/her a day off occasionally.

- **Show children relaxation exercises.** Suggest that your child breathe in and out deeply three times whenever anxious.

- **Use distraction.** Activities such as reading a book or magazine, drawing or riding a bicycle will distract your child when tense, channel excess energy and take his/her mind off concerns.

- **Focus on visualization.** Teach your child visualization – a technique he/she can use with you or on his/her own. It can be especially helpful at bedtime. Tell your child to lie on the bed and visualize a favorite place, such as a vacation, camp or activity.

- **Try the magic touch.** Hugging, kissing or holding your child on your lap will lower anxiety levels. Sitting next to, reading to or singing to your child will help him/her feel more at ease. A little snuggling will probably make you feel better, too!

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**Eleven Tips on Dealing with Stress**

1. **Put your body in motion.** Physical activity is one of the most important ways to keep stress away.
2. **Fuel up first.** Begin each day by eating breakfast to give you the energy you need. Eating regular meals and taking time to enjoy them will make you feel better too.
3. **LOL (Laugh Out Loud).** Lots of laughing can make you feel good, and that good feeling can stay with you even after the laughter stops.
4. **Have fun with friends.** Being with people you like is always a good way to ditch your stress.
5. **Spill to someone you trust.** Instead of keeping your feelings bottled up inside, talk to someone you trust or respect about what’s bothering you.
6. **Take time to chill.**
7. **Catch some zzz’s.** Fatigue is a best friend to stress.
8. **Keep a journal.**
9. **Get it together.** Getting everything done can be a challenge, but all you have to do is plan a little and get organized.
10. **Lend a hand.** Get involved in an activity that helps others.
11. **Learn ways to better deal with anger.** Important thing is to deal with your anger in a healthy way. It will help to cool down first and then focus on positive solutions to problems.
WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Enjoy a Full & Balanced Life!

Friends. Family. Co-workers. Social events. Professional organizations. The list of demands on our time can seem endless. Many of us today are struggling to balance full-time jobs with full-time responsibilities at home. Meeting the demands of an increasingly complex world means developing strategies for maintaining balance in our lives.

In this issue of Your Source, we will take a look at balancing your home and work responsibilities—how to tell if you’re striking a good balance, the consequences of an out-of-balance lifestyle and practical tips for getting the most out of time spent at work and at home.

Is Your Life Out of Balance?
If your life is out of balance, you may find yourself having a hard time concentrating or feeling less creative than you could be. You may feel overwhelmed and experience a range of emotions including anger, sadness, guilt, fear, frustration, resentment, hurt and loneliness.

In addition, you may find yourself feeling powerless, and suffer from low self-esteem or self-confidence.

What is a Good Balance for You?
Achieving balance means that you are dedicating the most time and energy possible to the aspects of your life that are important to you. There is no set formula for living a balanced life. For example, some people find a 60-hour work week fulfilling, while others want to spend less time at work and more time with family or friends.

Go Online Today!
Log on to your program’s website to access Work-Life Balance and other helpful resources in the Spotlight section. Log on now and register with your program’s toll-free number.

Know How to Balance—Which of the following is not a way to balance your life?
A. Set goals and prioritize
B. Do everything yourself
C. Think positively
Check your answer on the bottom.

Now That’s an Idea!
Your priorities may vary based on what phase of life you’re in. It’s important to stand back and assess your situation before determining whether you need or even want to change the balance in your life.

Start by asking yourself these questions:
• Is my life right now the way I want it to be?
• If not, what is wrong with it?
• Is my current situation temporary?
• What can I change to make my life more fulfilling and enjoyable?
• Are the rewards of making these changes worth the sacrifices?

The most important thing to do is realize when your priorities have shifted too far in one direction or another, and then to do something about it.

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Answer: B. No one is a superman or superwoman. Sharing tasks at work fosters creativity and teamwork; at home it builds togetherness.
Balancing and Transitioning

As life continues to get more hectic, you may be wondering if it’s possible to successfully balance your work and home life. We are constantly charged with getting everything done and getting it done fast.

The good news is you have the power to reach a healthy work-life balance. In fact, the more balanced you are, the more productive and happy you will become.

While at Work
- Ask for help
- Set realistic goals
- Be efficient
- Take breaks
- Do your best

Back at Home
- Shut off technology
- Don’t overbook your calendar
- Ask for help
- Lean on your friends and family
- Take care of yourself

Achieving a more balanced life is a constant process. From day to day, your focus may shift, but give yourself the freedom to be flexible. The end result of balancing work and home means allowing yourself to have a more fulfilling life.

Making an appropriate transition from work to home and vice versa can help you enjoy all aspects of your life more fully. Too often, we begin our day at work thinking about tasks waiting for us at home, or bring work issues home with us at night.

From Home to Work
- Plan ahead so you can leave home issues at home
- Establish goodbye rituals, especially with children
- Arrive at work early so you don’t start off the day rushed

From Work to Home
- Leave work issues “at the office”
- Use the commute time to de-stress and refresh
- Arrive home ready to enjoy home

As you accomplish these tips to transition from home to work and vice versa, your balanced life will be more enjoyable and you will have more time to do as you wish, whether it is at home or at work.

Get Back in Balance

The following guidelines can help you get on the right track if you have determined that you need to make some changes in the balance of your life.

Set Realistic Expectations. You may not be able to have everything you want, at least not all at one time. Establish realistic expectations and ease up on yourself when possible.

Prioritize. Determine what tasks you need to accomplish and rank them according to importance.

Set Realistic Goals. Be flexible and realistic in planning your schedule. Focus on things you know you can accomplish. At the same time, learn to expect the unexpected.

Modify Responsibilities. Sharing responsibilities is a good strategy. Determine what tasks need to be accomplished and then distribute tasks fairly.

Be Efficient. Develop ways to work smart at home and at work. Combining and consolidating tasks may be more effective than trying to squeeze as many tasks as possible into the least amount of time.

Think Positively. Try to recognize that changes in your routine may be difficult at first. Stay upbeat through the bumps in the road.
Managing People and Your Stress Level

Being a supervisor can be very stressful. Your staff needs your attention and direction. Your employer expects you to manage your staff and complete your daily responsibilities. Keeping your stress level in check can be a job in itself. There are a number of techniques you can use to help reduce stress and manage its effect on your life. The key is to become familiar with the various options and choose the method that works best for you. Here are some tips:

Delegate - delegating projects to your staff will free up your time, reduce your stress level and allow you to develop new skills. Delegating your projects to others will allow your staff members to grow and develop new skills as well.

Talk it out - talking about your concerns can relieve your stress. Try talking confidentially with one of your peers or your supervisor. Alternately, talking to a friend or family member, with an objective viewpoint, can give you valuable feedback.

Escape for awhile - sometimes it helps to take a break. Look out the window, take a short walk, read a book or run a few errands.

Know your limits - no one can manage every situation perfectly. If a problem is beyond your control and cannot be changed, look for alternative solutions. Take a step back and ask your staff or your peers for ideas.

Take one step at a time - when a situation seems unmanageable, take a moment to step back and look at the big picture. Then break the situation down into parts. Focus on the most important parts first, then move on to the others as you have time.

Use your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as a resource to learn other ways to manage your stress.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides supervisors and managers support in managing people. By attending Supervisor Training, you will learn more about the benefits and services that the EAP provides.

The training also teaches you how to assist an employee when he or she brings personal problems to work, how to conduct a constructive confrontation when employee performance declines and how to respond to workplace trauma.

The next Supervisor Trainings are scheduled for September. There are ten scheduled across the state so if you would like to participate, register now.

Click here to register.

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September: Managing Stress in the Workplace for Employees

Stressors are unique to the individual and so are the ways for managing them. This workshop looks at stressful situations differently and focuses on what you can control about them. Practical techniques are provided to help you manage your stress in the workplace.

All location times are from 10:00–11:30 a.m. local time.

Martin • Sept 8
University of TN at Martin
544 University St, University Center, Room 206

Memphis • Sept 14
State Office Building, 170 Mid America Mall
Conference Room, 2nd Floor

Jackson • Sept 14
Lowell Thomas State Office Building
225 Martin L. King Blvd, Video Conf Room 1, Tower B

Columbia • Sept 15
Maury County Health Dept
1909 Hampshire Pk, Education Room 17

Johnson City • Sept 20
ETSU D.P. Culp Center
JL Seehorn Jr. Drive, The Forum, 3rd Floor

Knoxville • Sept 21
Regional Health Office
1522 Cherokee Trail, Room 234

Nashville • Sept 22
WRS Tennessee Tower
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave, 3rd Floor Multi-Media Room

Murfreesboro • Sept 27
TN Technology Center at Murfreesboro
1303 Old Fort Parkway, Conference Room

Chattanooga • Sept 28
UT Chattanooga
East 5th St, University Center, Lookout Mt Room

Cookeville • Sept 29
TN Tech, Roaden University Center
1000 N. Dixie Ave, Room 342

To register for a seminar:
Registration is available on our web site at http://eventreg.state.tn.us/EventDetails.aspx?id=2&did=73
The deadline to register is two days prior to the event.

ParTNers Employee Assistance Program is available to you 24/7, simply call 1.800.308.4934 or visit www.magellanassist.com