



4-H School-Age Child Care
University of California Cooperative Extension

PARENT STYLES II

Tips for Busy Parents

DEALING WITH A FAMILY CRISIS

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We live in a world of change. Constant or dramatic change can cause stress for individuals and families. When too much change takes place in too brief a time, our chances of becoming ill can increase by as much as 80 per cent.

Unchecked stress can lead to a number of mental and physical problems including headaches, digestive disturbances, insomnia, irritability, moodiness or loss of appetite. Children can have these symptoms, too.

Stress from one member of the family can affect the whole family. Some experts have likened the family to a spider web. When you pluck one strand, the entire web is affected.



Healthy families probably have as many stresses and problems as less healthy families; however, they have a different way of looking at them and solving them.

Following are some helpful tips on dealing with a crisis:

- ★ Find someone who is understanding, caring and willing to listen.
- ★ Don't make decisions when anxiety and panic are at high levels.
- ★ Don't deny feelings.

Stress can be a lifelong element of our families. *Following are tips for dealing with stress:*

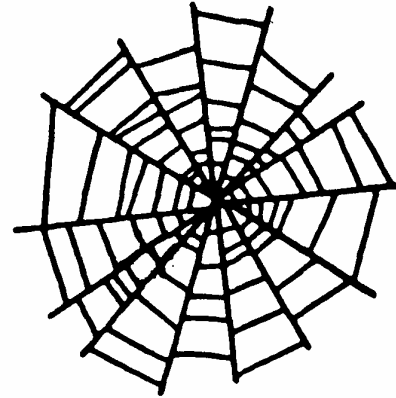
- ★ Work off stress - try running, gardening or cleaning.
- ★ Avoid self-medication - alcohol and drugs often mask symptoms.
- ★ Get enough sleep, rest and food - keep yourself healthy.
- ★ Do something for others - focusing on others needs often can give you a new perspective.
- ★ Take one thing at a time - don't try to solve all problems at once; deal with the most urgent first.

Resource: University of Idaho Cooperative Extension, *All Families Have Strengths*.

WEB OF FAMILY SUPPORT

WHAT YOU NEED:

- ☆ Ball of 100 # test string or twine
- ☆ Eight to ten friends and family members



WHAT YOU DO:

- ★ Ask the group to stand about elbow distance apart in a circle.
- ★ Give the ball of twine to one person. Instruct that person to hold onto one end of the twine and throw the ball to another person.
- ★ The person who catches the twine ball holds onto one end of the twine and shouts the name of another family member before throwing the twine ball to another person.
- ★ Repeat the process of catching the twine ball, holding onto an end, shouting a name and throwing the ball until the entire ball of twine has been used to create a tight web and all the participants have a hold of the twine.
- ★ Demonstrate how the web is strong enough to hold up a person. Still holding the twine tight, ask the group to lower its arms to the ground. Ask for a member of the family to lie comfortably on the web.
- ★ Instruct the circle members to carefully raise their arms and lift the person off the ground a few inches. Carefully lower the person to the ground. Give all who wish, a turn to be lifted.