

Infancy Visit #10

- PIPE: Emotional Refueling
- Babies and Stress – Zero to Three
 - Brain Development
 - IPV & Children

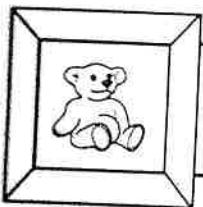
Topics for Next Visit

- 4 Month Growth & Development
 - Introducing Solids



Emotional Refueling





Conceptual Overview

1. Relationships consume emotional energy. Emotional energy, like physical energy, is not endless. It runs out. We can feel empty, exhausted, used, helpless, out of control, or alone. People need "refueling" just like cars. Our batteries need recharging. It is natural to "run low" and this depletion can be heightened by our emotional involvement with others.

One way we receive emotional energy is by feeling independent and self-directed. We feel emotionally strong when we feel accomplished and in control. We also receive emotional energy from one another, by feeling valued and understood by another person. Another way we renew emotional energy is by sharing fun. When we are having fun, we lose sight of our stress for a while and become refueled and renewed to handle our problems. When we share the positive forces of a relationship, we are energized, not depleted.

2. Caring for a baby or toddler requires tremendous physical and emotional energy. In these early years, children are dependent on their parents for most everything. It is the parents who have the knowledge, the instincts, and the love to understand, tolerate, and support their baby. In the first year, the baby uses parents as the model for all relationships. It is the actions of the parents that define trust and teach shared positive emotions. Parents represent strength, safety, and comfort. This takes a lot of emotional energy.
3. In a loving relationship, you must plan for refueling your energy. Parents who are eating right, exercising, napping, and keeping a schedule are refueling their physical energies. Parents who laugh and play with their babies, who enjoy loving their babies, and who find humor in their small mistakes help preserve their emotional energy. Parents who can adapt to change and have knowledge about parenting can be energized by the task. Some parents say they gain emotional energy from the joy of child rearing.
4. Parents must nurture themselves. It is natural and OK to need refueling. To refuel emotional energy, parents need to feel a sense of accomplishment in something they are doing. Congratulate yourself for small victories. Find a supportive person to help solve problems. Have friends to share fun and laughter, and take time off for personal space.

All of these things bring equilibrium into our lives. When parents feel good about themselves, they become better parents. They model confidence and balance. They share positive emotions more often. They are better able to meet the needs of their children.



Empty Bucket

Do you need to refill your energy bucket?

Do you need to re-energize?

On each line below
give an example of something
that requires your physical, mental,
and emotional energy.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Is your energy bucket getting low? Close to empty?

- ⊗ _____
- ⊗ _____
- ⊗ _____

I feel _____

What do you do?

You have an empty bucket!



Personal Stress Survey

At some time, you may have had many of the stressors listed below. Mark those you are now experiencing. For each of your stressors, indicate how much stress you feel in each situation you are experiencing (Decide if it is a 1, 2, or 3 point stress: 1 = low, 2 = medium, and 3 = high).

- Having a sick baby.
- Losing daycare arrangements.
- Needing things for my baby.
- Feeling like my baby is out-of-control.
- Feeling too tired; getting cross with my baby.
- Baby screams all the time, is up too much at night.

Any others? If so, list and score them.

- School is overwhelming, too demanding with a baby.
- Not able to do activities I want.
- Failure of a grade level.
- Suspension from school.
- Competing for an award.
- Applying to college.

- Feeling rejected by old friends.
- Unable to find a group of friends.
- Arguing with my partner.
- Want different kinds of friends, but can't see how to change.
- Boy/girl friend has changed, our relationship is not the same.
- Starting to date again.
- Boyfriend doesn't like the baby.
- Baby's father is dating someone else.
- Baby's father/mother never helps with the baby.

- Arguments with my mother/father or stepmother/stepfather.
- Don't like my living situation.
- Feel trapped by my family situation.
- Change in parents' financial status.
- Marriage of one of my parents.
- Marital separation of my parents.
- New person living in our home.
- Serious illness of a family member.
- Death of a good friend, close family member.

- Financial stress.
- Becoming involved with drugs or alcohol.
- Jail sentence of a close friend or family member.
- Involvement with law enforcement.
- Finding a job.
- Moving.
- Graduating or planning further education.

Total Points _____

Subtract 1 point for each stress
that you can manage.

Total _____

Stress is necessary in life.
It can be motivating and energizing,
but too much is harmful.

Feeling out of control creates stress.

Take control!

1. Consider what stressors you can manage; change, limit, or ignore.
2. Circle the marks on your sheet where you feel you might manage the stress, and subtract 1 point for each.
3. Add up the scores. Compare. Discuss.
4. Brainstorm where you can find help with stressors.

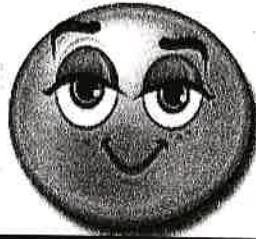




Ways to Manage Stress

THE GOOD

Self-talk
Compliment yourself on a job well done.
Exercise
Ask a friend
Keep a journal
Relax head and neck muscles
Dance
Help someone else
Daydream
Cry to your teddy bear
Read a book
Play hard
Create something
Clean your house
Write a letter
Say no
Say yes
Make a list
Get/give a massage
Go for a walk
Listen to music
Play an instrument
Talk to someone
Pray
Surprise someone
Write a note to a friend
Set some goals
Rearrange your desk
Dig in the mud
Plant something
Yell at your pillow



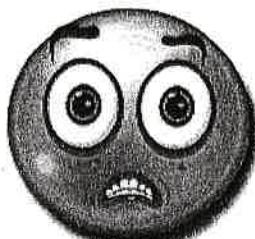
THE BAD

Eat, eat, eat!
Have a cigarette
Put someone down
Criticize
Go to sleep
Keep so busy you can't think
Watch TV
Make an excuse
Withdraw
Pout
Pretend
Keep it all inside
Break something
Yell at a pet
Blame someone else
Spend too much money
Gossip



THE UGLY

Take a drink
Take a pill
Steal something
Try to kill yourself
Destroy something
Lie
Drive too fast
Yell at people you like
Damage property
Harm another person
Pick a fight
Gamble your money
Take extreme risks
Run away/withdraw
Take a sexual risk
Abuse your baby
Neglect your baby



Boosting “Feel Good” Brain Chemicals

Neurotransmitters are chemicals that help brain cells connect with and talk to each other. While the chemical system of the brain is very complex, there are small actions you can take to influence your mood, your ability to focus, and manage stress by increasing your “feel-good” brain chemicals.

Serotonin: stimulates appetite, elevates mood, promotes sleep, enhances learning, offers a feeling of pride and belonging

Boost serotonin with:

- quality sleep
- nature walk
- sunshine



Dopamine: promotes feelings of pleasure and reward, increases sociability, improves focus and attention, affects motivation, can stimulate addictive behavior

Boost dopamine with:

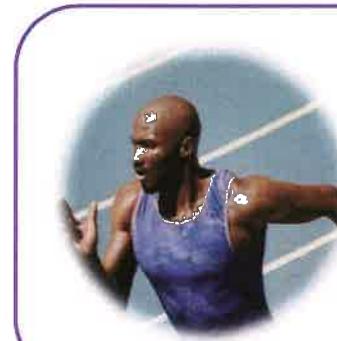
- music
- meditation
- tyrosine rich foods like beef, turkey, and cheese
- small “wins”



Endorphins: reduces pain, reduces stress, gives a “runner’s high”

Boost endorphins with:

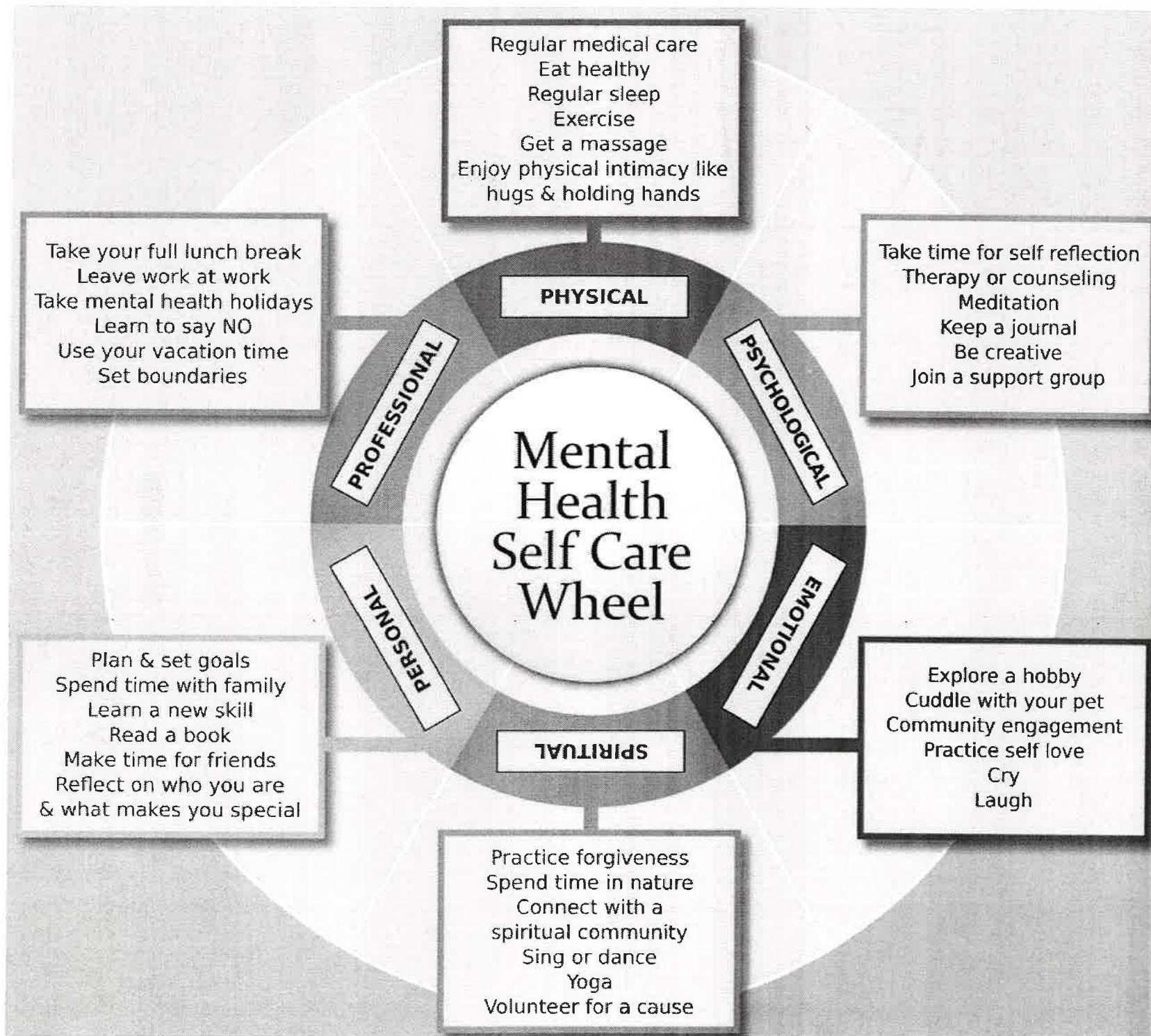
- physical activity
- laughter
- essential oils such as lavender, rosemary, rose, vanilla, and citrus
- dark chocolate



Oxytocin: increases feeling of attachment and love, stimulates labor and breastmilk production, reduces stress, promotes relaxation and sleep

Boost oxytocin by:

- hugging someone
- playing with a pet
- showing kindness
- connecting with loved ones





Babies and Stress: The Facts

Claire Lerner, LCSW



Babies and Stress: The Facts

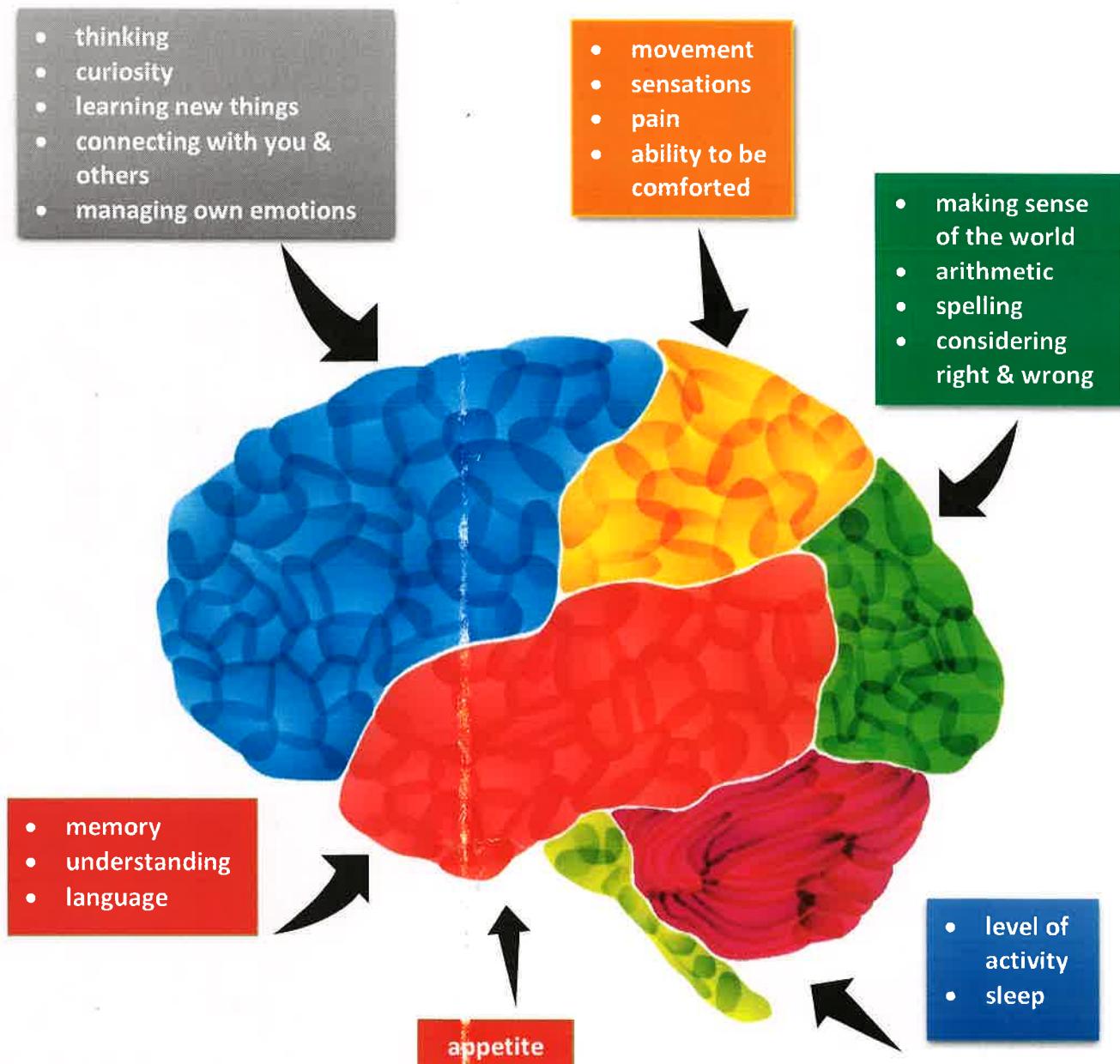
- 1) Babies can be affected by parents' moods – and sense how they are feeling as early as 3 months old.** ZERO TO THREE's national Parent Survey, [Tuning In](#), found that almost half of parents (47%) believe children are not affected in this way until 1 year of age or older. And 50% of parents believe that the quality of a parent's care does not have a long term impact on a child's development until after 6 months of age. In fact, babies are wired for survival; tuning in to their most trusted caregivers – their parents – is one of their most powerful tools.

Even in the earliest months of life, very young babies are trying to make sense of what they are seeing and hearing all around them. This means that when parents experience ongoing, significant stress, babies absorb it. They pick up on their caregivers' facial expressions and tone of voice—whether they are sad, angry, or happy—right from the start, and react accordingly. This is why it's really important for parents to be mindful of their emotional state. Having healthy ways to deal with stress helps parents cope in ways that can minimize the impact on their baby.



- 2) Very young babies already have very big feelings. Babies can begin feeling sadness and fear as early as 3-5 months of age.** Our research revealed that 42% of parents believe babies begin experiencing these feelings at one year or older. But the fact is that way before they can say their first words, as early as 3 to 5 months old, babies experience a whole range of emotions including sadness, anger, and fear. A critical factor in nurturing healthy development is parents' ability to read and respond to their baby's cues about how they are feeling and what they need to feel safe and secure. Parents experiencing ongoing stress can be preoccupied and thus have less bandwidth to tune in to their babies in this sensitive way.
- 3) Babies figure out what's going on in the world by watching parents' reactions.** They read the facial expressions and actions of their trusted caregivers to figure out the meaning of a situation—such as whether they are safe or should be wary or afraid. So it is important for parents to be aware of the signals they are sending. If a parent finds himself consumed with anger or worry, it is important to be aware of the impact on the child, and be mindful to try not to communicate these feelings in front of the child.
- 4) Babies can be affected by ongoing stress in their environment as early as 6 months old.** *Tuning In* found that parents expected this to happen much later. Stress can come in many forms for young children, from angry faces and reactions, rough handling, big changes in their daily routine or being overloaded by too much stimulation. There's even research showing that sleeping babies' stress levels go up when there is shouting in the home (yet 47% of parents believe this doesn't affect children until age 1). So while all parents experience stress to varying degrees, remember that living with *ongoing* stress and fear can negatively affect children's development. Tuning in to and taking care of yourself during stressful times is as important for you as it is for your child.

Supporting Your Baby's Developing Brain



Babies' brains develop best in relationships that are:

- Kind
- Loving
- Responsive
- Safe

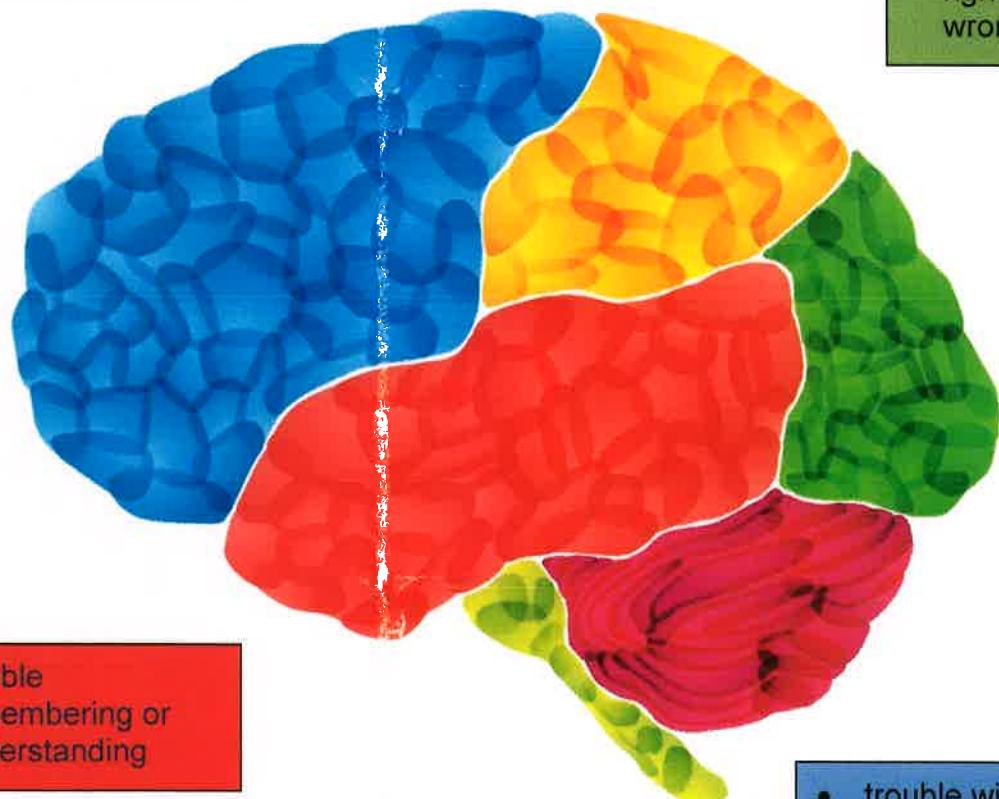
Supporting Your Baby's Developing Brain

Too Many Emotions Can Overwhelm Baby's Brain

- can't think
- afraid to try new things
- avoid connecting with people
- trouble managing feelings

- experiences more pain
- hard to comfort

- difficulty understanding right and wrong



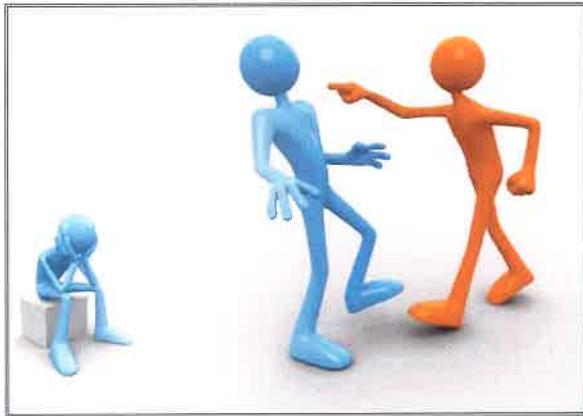
- trouble remembering or understanding

- eating problems (too much, too little, vomiting, etc.)

- trouble with sleep and level of activity (hyperactivity, etc.)

Ways to protect baby from too many or scary emotions:

Children and Intimate Partner Violence



When a mother is abused, so are the children who see it and hear it. Even when they are not in the room, children can be hurt by what they hear.

Children don't understand. It is scary to see someone being hurt. Hearing the noises is scary. Feeling the tension between parents is scary.

Their parents must stop the abuse to protect them.

Infants and children are hurt by abuse. They could be physically hurt. Or just seeing and hearing abuse can cause them harm.

Babies cannot protect themselves. Babies are hurt by intimate partner violence.

Remember!
Never hold your child infant as a shield between you and your partner. Your child might be hit or hurt.

Children and Intimate Partner Violence

Things babies do...	How intimate partner violence affects them...
Babies learn about the world using their five senses.	Babies are distressed. Loud noises, yelling, and seeing mother hurt are scary.
Babies form secure, loving and trusting bonds with parents and caregivers.	An abused mother cannot always meet baby's needs. Babies are upset when needs aren't met quickly.
Babies play and explore the world.	Scared babies do not play and explore the world. As they get older, children might become violent and aggressive.
Babies need a safe place to live.	When there is abuse in the house, babies can be hurt.
Babies need food and care to grow into a healthy toddler!	Mother might not control the money. She might not be able to buy formula, food, diapers, vitamins or other things for baby.

Abuse can affect a child throughout life. Some of the effects are:

- Mistrust of adults
- Get sick often
- Get hurt physically
- Act hostile
- More likely to be abusive as adults
- School problems
- Do not eat/sleep well
- Get hurt emotionally
- More likely to abuse alcohol or drugs

Relationship Red Flags

Sometimes in a relationship, it's hard to tell the difference between loving actions and controlling actions. It's important to recognize controlling actions.

Are there any red flags you should consider in your relationships?

Partner speaks disrespectfully about former partners

*It is normal to feel sad or angry after a break-up.
Be cautious if your new partner is very angry about their ex-partner.*

- "Puts down" or insults ex-partner
- Claims ex-partner made false accusations of abuse
- Blames ex-partner for all problems
- Admits abusing an ex-partner, but always has an excuse (e.g.: they were drinking, thought ex-partner was cheating)
- Praises you for being a much better person than ex-partner
- Claims you are the first person to truly understand them

Does a lot of "favors" for you

It is normal to do nice things for your partner, but too many might make you feel uncomfortable.

- Insists on doing something for you, even if you say no
- Buys you many expensive gifts early in the relationship
- Brings up past "favors" and makes you feel guilty if you do something that he (she) disapproves of

Partner is controlling or possessive

At first these actions can make you feel like your partner is very interested in you, but over time it might feel like you have no say in what you do.

- Plans out all activities for your time together
- Is not interested, or criticizes, your ideas for activities you do together
- Has strong opinions on what you should wear
- Pressures you to spend all your time together
- Insists you take his advice
- Calls or texts many times a day to check in
- Is upset when you talk to other men
- Justifies jealousy as partner being "crazy in love with you"

Partner is disrespectful to you

Your partner is kind at first but slowly starts to find fault with many things you say or do.

- Insults or puts you down
- Does not respect your opinions
- Is rude to you, even in front of other people
- Blames you for things that he (or she) does wrong
- Criticizes you if you protest or share you feel disrespected

Relationship Red Flags

There are also early warning signs  that you might want to look for in a controlling or unhealthy relationship.

When you experience these “red flags” in your partner’s actions, how does it make you feel? What would you like to happen instead of these behaviors?



Tends to blame other people when things go wrong



Abuses drugs or alcohol



Is self-centered, talks mostly about self, doesn’t ask about YOU



Is getting serious too quickly about the relationship



Pressures you for sex



Has double set of standards- one set of rules for your partner, another set of rules for you



When angry, your partner intimidates you (gets too close, punches walls, blocks your way)



Has a negative attitude about women



Partner sees self as your rescuer or protector



Treats you differently when other people are around





Safety for My Child



It hurts your child to see you being hurt.

Your safety is important. Your child's safety is important. You must make a safety plan for your child.

If abuse is occurring, get your child out of the room. How will you do that?

I know when my partner is angry. I can tell when my partner may become abusive. Some signs I can watch for:

If I see these signs I can decide how dangerous things might become.

My partner may ask me what I'm doing. I will think of reasons for leaving the house with my child. I could tell my partner:



Safety for My Child

People I can ask to look after my children in an emergency (and phone numbers):

Remember!
Never hold your child as a shield between you and your partner. Your child might be hit or hurt.

TEACH
YOUR
CHILD TO
CALL
FOR HELP



If your child is old enough:

- Teach your child to find a safe room in the house. It's best to go to a room with a lock and a phone.
- Teach your child how to call for help. Teach your child not to use the phone in front of your partner.
- Teach your child about safe places to go. This could be a neighbor's or relative's home.
- Tell your child every day that the abuse is not his/her fault.
- Tell your child it is his/her job to get to safety. Your child should not get involved. Your child should not try to distract your partner.

Tell your child that you love him/her.

You want your child to be safe.

Here's what to do when you call for HELP:

- Dial: 9 1 1.
- They will ask if you need Police, fire, or ambulance.
- Tell them, "Police."

Then say:

My name is _____.
 I am _____ years old. I need help. Send the police.
 Someone is hurting my mom.
 The address here is _____.
 The phone number here is _____.
 _____.

Safety for My Child

If your child goes to daycare or preschool...

Tell them who can pick up your child. Tell them who can NOT pick up your child. Make a plan together. What will they do if someone who is not allowed to tries to pick up your child?

If needed, provide copies of the family court orders. Give them a picture of those who can NOT pick up your child.

I will talk to these people about who is allowed to pick up my child:

Teachers and principal:

Daycare staff:

Babysitters:

Sunday school teacher:

Parents of my child's friends:

Other:



I will tell my child:

You are not to blame for the abuse.

You must not put yourself in danger.

Abuse is very dangerous. It is against the law.

Find a safe place. Go there when abuse is happening.

Keeping me safe is not your job. Get help if it is safe for you.

Get to a phone if you can. Use a phone in our house, a neighbor's house, or a pay phone. You can call for help.

Bad Things Happen: How Can I Help My Child?

Sadness. Fear. Worry. Anger.

Even babies may feel scared when bad things happen. Babies cannot use words. Babies share their feelings through actions.

Some ways babies may show you they are scared:

- **Regress.** Baby **may** stop sleeping through the night. Baby does not want to feed herself. She wants you to feed her.
- **Lose interest.** Baby might not want things he used to like. Games are not as fun. Baby seems annoyed.
- **Trouble sleeping.** Baby could sleep more or less than before. Baby might not sleep as deeply. She could startle while sleeping.
- **Behavior changes.** Baby can act listless or cranky. Baby might be clingy. Baby might be restless. She could be jumpy or easy to startle.

Babies do not know something bad has happened. But they do know you are scared. They know you feel worried. This can make them scared too.

What Can I Do to Help My Child?

Love	Limit	Accept
<p>Babies need to be loved. They need to be touched and held. They need family. They need comfort, and hugs. They need normal routines. Your presence helps them.</p>	<p>You may want to talk to others a lot about the event. You might watch replays on TV.</p> <p>Baby does not need to see or hear too much. Be careful what you say or watch when you are with baby.</p>	<p>Baby's behavior changes might be hard for you. Be patient. Give baby love and comfort. Know that this will pass. As you all start to feel better, babies behavior will go back to normal.</p>

Bad Things Happen: How Can I Help Myself?

Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now I worry about everything.” • “This is my fault.” • “I can’t control my feelings. I am on an emotional roller coaster.” • “I am so sad. I will never be happy again.” • “I feel nothing. I am numb.” • “I am easily startled.” • “I can’t relax. I need to be ready. Something bad could happen again.” 	What else?
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I do not want to do the things I used to do.” • “I can’t do anything.” • “I am bored. I do not want to do anything.” • “I do not want to be around other people.” • “I do not trust people.” • “I want to drink or take drugs. It helps me cope.” • “I do not have the same feelings about sex that I used to.” • “I am so angry.” • “I can’t sit still. It is too hard to calm down.” 	What else?

Bad Things Happen: How Can I Help Myself?

What Can I Do?



Find Someone You Trust

You do not have to go through this alone. Others may have the same kinds of feelings. People who care about you will help.

Family and friends can support you. Talk to people. Find support in your church, community or school. You could join a support group.

Let Yourself Feel

Feel what you are feeling. You may feel a lot of things. Sometimes all at once. There are many normal feelings after a tragedy. All feelings are ok.

It takes time to heal. Give yourself time to feel and heal.



Take Care of Yourself

Get enough rest. Eat healthy food. Get some exercise. Avoid drugs and alcohol.

Bad Things Happen: How Can I Help Myself?

Know Your Limits

Deal with one thing at a time.

Avoid stress for a while. Don't try to do too much.

Sometimes you just need a break.



Relax

Listen to music. Find some quiet time. Go for a walk. Make a peaceful picture in your mind. Focus on that place.

How did you relax before this happened?

Keep Things Normal

Stick to your daily schedule when you can.

Make choices. Even something small, like what to eat for dinner. This gives you a feeling of control over your life.

Delay making big life choices. Wait until you are feeling more normal again.



Deal With One Thing at a Time

Life as normal may feel like too much. This is normal. It is easy to feel overwhelmed after a tragedy. These feelings should get better over time.

Take things one step at a time. Give yourself time to heal.

Bad Things Happen: How Can I Help Myself?

Get Away From It All

Limit your viewing of TV reports about the event.

Taking a break helps you relax. Breaks make it easier to deal with your stress.

Sometimes it helps you when you help others.



Get Help

The things you think and feel might be too much. It might be hard to take care of yourself. Hard to take care of your baby. Hard to do all you need to do. If this happens, you need help.

This is not a sign of weakness. It does not mean that you are crazy. It just means that you need someone to help you.

A doctor or therapist will help you find the best ways to cope. There are therapies for dealing with awful events. Sometimes medication is helpful.

There are many ways to find professional help. Ask your nurse or doctor. Check with your church. Ask people in other groups you belong to. Look online or in the phone book for mental health professionals.

Getting professional help puts you on your way to feeling better!

List some ways you will cope:

Breathe Those Negative Thoughts Away

Deep breathing involves intentionally controlling your breath or breathing deeply to impact your body in positive ways. Some benefits include decreased stress, enhanced immunity, and improved sleep. It involves taking time (even just a few seconds) to slow down your breath and bring more air into your lungs. There are several different types of deep breathing you can do. Here are a few to try.

Tap or click the Play button  to access a video of each exercise.



Breathe Negative Thoughts Away *

1. When a negative thought starts, **stop**.
2. Then take a **deep breath**.
3. Let the breath go slowly.
4. Picture the thought floating away as you breathe out.
5. Take another **deep breath**.
6. Picture a new, positive thought coming in with the fresh air.



Even Breathing

Even breathing is when you breathe in the same count as breathing out.

1. Inhale to the count of 4.
2. Then exhale, breathing out, to the count of 4.
3. Repeat several times.



Breathe to Calm

Breathing to calm yourself includes a regular breath in and then a long breath out.

1. Breathe in as you regularly would.
2. Exhale slowly, so all the air in your lungs is released.



Square Breathing

Square breathing builds on even breathing.

1. Inhale for a count of 4.
2. Hold for a count of 4.
3. Exhale, breathing out, to a count of 4.
4. Hold for a count of 4.
5. Repeat several times.



Mindfulness Ideas

Our world is fast-paced, and we are exposed to lots of stimuli throughout the day. This is especially true for parents taking care of children! Mindfulness is the ability to focus on the present moment and it is important for our emotional and mental wellness. These ideas provide opportunities to create mindful moments in your day!

Connect with Nature

Include your child in these outdoor activities!

- Give your child a masking tape bracelet, sticky side out. Then take a walk and attach flowers, leaves, and other small nature items to the bracelet.
- Grab a shovel, dig a hole, and plant a seed! If you do not have seeds or it is not the season to plant, just look for bugs and do not be afraid to get your hands dirty!



Journaling

Try journaling when your child is napping or in the evening!

- Write 3 things that make you feel anxious or upset. Then circle what you can control from what you wrote.
- Write 3 things you could do that would make this week great.
- Write 3 things you appreciate about yourself.
- Write a letter to someone. Express things that you cannot say to them in person. You do not have to send it – just keep it for yourself.
- Write 1 thing that made today wonderful.

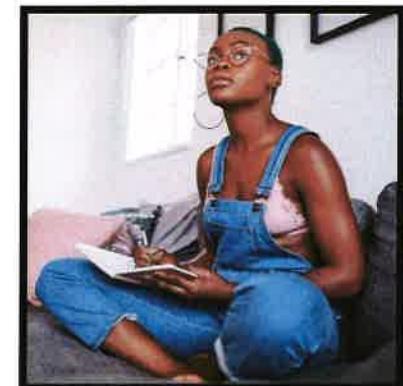
Use one of these prompts or one of your own.

Gratitude

Choose one as a mealtime reflection with your family!

- Someone to whom I am grateful
- Something that went well today
- Something for which I am thankful

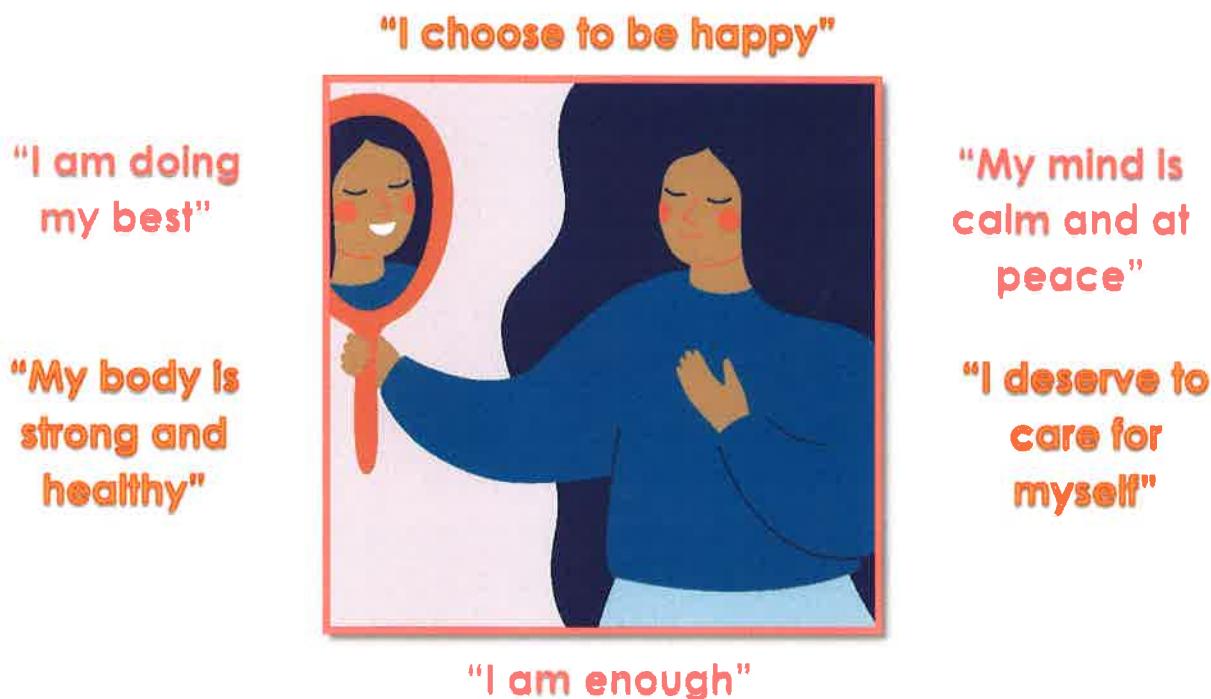
Try to be as specific as possible and focus on the feeling that emerges as you think about your response



Positive Self-Talk

Positive Self-Talk statements are also known as affirmations. These are short, encouraging statements that bring you into a positive frame of mind, help you to challenge and overcome negative thinking, and may even improve your confidence. Follow the steps below to create your own affirmations.

- ① Think about an area of your life you want to change.
Example: body image
- ② Turn negatives into positives by noting the negative thoughts or beliefs that are bothering you and creating a statement that is opposite of that.
EXAMPLE: I am weak → I am strong
- ③ Make it present tense such as “I am enough.” or “I choose to be happy.”
- ④ Put your positive self-talk statement in a place where you can see it every day like in your personal device, by your bed, or on your bathroom mirror. Say it often!



Self-Care Checklist and Tracker



Self-care activities benefit your physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. As you review this list, check which activities you already do regularly and take note of new ones you may want to try. Fill in other activities of your choice in the space provided.

Used regularly	🏃 Physical Self-Care Activity	Used regularly	❤️ Emotional Self-Care Activity
	Eating regular meals		Doing things I am passionate about and interested in
	Eating a variety of healthy foods		Taking a break from technology and social media
	Drinking plenty of water		Expressing emotions and feelings (like talking to others, journaling)
	Being physically active		Appreciating my own strengths, talents, and accomplishments
	Receiving medical and dental check-ups		Taking breaks from my responsibilities when possible
	Getting quality sleep		Learning about and trying new things
	Limiting recreational substances (like drugs and alcohol)		Practicing relaxation strategies (deep breathing, meditation, visualization, etc.)

Used regularly	👥 Social Self-Care Activity	Used regularly	🙏 Spiritual Self-Care Activity
	Surrounding myself with people who are supportive		Enjoying time outdoors / in nature
	Spending time with others whose company you enjoy		Offering acts of kindness
	Staying in contact with distant connections		Engaging in a spiritual or religious practice
	Engaging in mentally stimulating discussions		Practicing gratitude
	Asking for help when I need it		Meditating / praying
	Doing fun and enjoyable activities with others		Spending quiet time reflecting
	Making new friends		Appreciating beauty (like music, art, literature, movies, etc.)
			Volunteering or contributing to causes in which you believe
			Cherishing my own optimism and hope