

UTICA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Adult Support: Self Social Emotional Health and Wellness Guide

Self-Care Tips

1. IDENTIFY WHAT SETS YOU OFF

- Consider what behaviors or situations “push your buttons,” so that you can plan what to do when it happens.
- Acknowledge your feelings. Allow yourself to feel them.
- Recognize what’s happening inside of you: rapid heartbeat, feeling sweaty, fast breathing and muscle tension.
- Figure out which symptom typically comes first so that you can activate your plan sooner rather than later.
- Use a 1-10 scale.
- If you start your plan when you’re at a 5, rather than a 10, it is going to be a lot easier to calm down and make better choices.



2. WALK AWAY



- If you are feeling overwhelmed, walk away from that trigger.
- Take a break from whatever is setting you off.
- If you need to allow your child to have screen time so that you can have some space, then so be it.

3. DO SOMETHING THAT CALMS YOU/TAKE 5

- What calms you down may be different from someone else.
- Experiment with what that might be.
- Is it exercising? Deep breathing? Listening to music? Taking a shower or bath? Reading? Going for a walk?
- Whatever it may be, it is important to do something for yourself, even if it is for just 5 minutes.



4. CALL A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER

- Talk to someone who is reassuring to you.
- Reach out to others.
- It may be calming to describe what’s bothering you and to get it off your chest.
- Having this type of support system is important.
- Physical distancing doesn’t mean we need to be socially isolated.



Why it is important for parents to take care of themselves

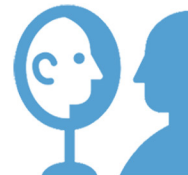
- Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family.



- When you take time to care for yourself, you can: lower stress levels, teach your children to value their health and well-being and be a better, healthier, calmer parent.

5. POSITIVE SELF-TALK

- Give yourself a pep talk.
- I’m a good parent and I’m doing the best I can.
- I got this.
- Focus on what you can control.



6. LAUGH

- During times of stress, it can feel like a struggle to find joy.
- It may even feel inappropriate or insensitive to have fun while we’re also experiencing losses.
- But laughter can improve your mood, relieve stress and help your body relax.
- So, try and make time for laughter every day—whether it’s watching a funny video, checking out the latest memes or Facetimeing with a friend who always makes you laugh.

7. PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- Even if it’s just one thing, taking the time to recognize what you are grateful for each day helps shift your focus to what you do have instead of what you don’t.
 - It can be as simple as shifting “I’m stuck at home all day trying to manage work and kids” to “I’m grateful that I am safe and healthy at home with my family.” A gratitude journal is some thing you can read when feeling down.

8. PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

- Mindfulness practice can help you be more present.
- It is focusing on what is happening now and taking in that moment. Rather than replaying what happened in the past in your mind or worrying about something in the future. Mindfulness is about the now and savoring the moment you are in.

What indicator signs do parents need to look for?



While it may be normal to experience these signs occasionally, you would be concerned if you notice any of these are keeping you from doing your day-to-day tasks/activities.

- Worrying all day long (or more than 80% of your day)
- Feeling like your heart is racing, breathing difficulties that come on suddenly
- Feeling restless
- Racing thoughts
- Sleeping too much (more than your normal) or not able to sleep (insomnia)
- Sudden changes in mood (i.e. anger outburst, crying)
- Losing interest in things you normally like to do