

How to Deal with Stress

Stress is a part of everyday life. No one can get through a day without it. Parents and caregivers will realize, however, that stress can affect the way they care for their children. Stress can cause frustration, anger, and resentment. It can also lead to verbal and physical abuse.



When you find yourself stressed and ready to lash out if feeling overwhelmed or frustrated, *especially when a baby won't stop crying*, separate yourself and try one of these:

- Close your eyes and take 10 deep breaths.
- Take a "time out" and go into another room.
- Talk to a friend who will listen.
- Take a shower and let the drops dull your stress.
- Do some jumping jacks until you are tired.
- Put on your favorite music and sing along.

No one can be a perfect parent or caregiver all of the time. **It's a sign of strength when you know you need a helping hand.** If these techniques don't work and your stress is mounting, call for help NOW. Call someone who can relieve you NOW so you can get a break. Call your partner, neighbor, family or friend. You may also call a Carlton County Public Health nurse for tips and advice at 218-879-4511. Your primary care provider is another good resource.

If nothing works, put the baby in his/her crib and check on the baby at least every 5 to 10 minutes to make sure he/she is okay.

Resources:

- Mayo Clinic – Healthy Lifestyle: Infant and Toddler Health
 - Newborn care: 10 tips for stressed-out parents
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/in-depth/newborn/art-20045498>
 - Crying baby: What to do when your newborn cries
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/in-depth/healthy-baby/art-20043859>
- CDC – Violence Prevention: Preventing Abusive Head Trauma
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/Abusive-Head-Trauma.html>