



SELF CARE FOR SINGLE PARENTS

activity sheet

Self care is even more important for single parents, who know that they can be on their own for extended periods during tough times such as the pandemic. It's not uncommon for single parents to experience an increase in isolation and an increase in stress.

The lack of contact with others alongside sole responsibility for children, home, finances and handling uncertainty can be overwhelming at times.

Single parents can often struggle to find any time for themselves or for self care.

Social media can also increase feelings of loneliness as we see even more photos of other families in lockdown together.

We have all experienced similar challenges as we navigate the impact of Covid-19 over the last 18 months. It's what connects us today more than ever.

There are many steps that single parents can take to support their emotional wellbeing.

Dr Erin Seeto has shared some of her favourites:

1. Take time out to recharge. If you have access to support, use it to allow time to focus on just you, everything else can wait. If not, then timetable in protected moments in your day to do something nice for yourself or something that makes you feel good.
2. Create a nurturing surrounding e.g. this might be burning a candle with your favourite scent, having an area of the house free of toys for you only or a space with a good view you can relax in.
3. We are more connected than ever so reach out to others. It might not be the same as a physical hug but we thrive when connecting with people we love and care for.
4. Let go of high expectations. It's ok not to do everything on your list today or spend more time on TV than you would like to admit.
5. Manage social media use to reduce opportunities of increasing anxiety or comparisons with others. Remember that social media can give a biased perception of other people's lives. Think about revamping your news feed so that you see the messages you need right now.
6. Put on your favourite playlist and dance or exercise. Endorphins are good for mood so get moving when possible and let the whole family join in.
7. Finally reassure yourself that this too will pass.

HOW TO CREATE A SPACE FOR SELF CARE

- Find a spot in your home that you can designate for yourself, it may only be a corner of a room if your space is limited, it may be a room if possible
- Gather some of the things that create a sense of calm for you such as candles, favourite books or magazine, music, comfy cushions and blankets
- Let your children know that this is your self care space and that it is really important to you that you have this special space
- Find a few moments in each day where you can to spend some time in your own space, even if only to read a few chapters of your book, do a short guided meditation, catch up on a new magazine or take a cheeky nap!