Ways to Reduce Everyday Stress

**DO...**

› Get up 15 minutes earlier
› Keep things in perspective and accept what you cannot change (the other line always moves faster, etc.)
› Learn to say NO to extra activities
› Join a parent support group
› Spend time with friends—have a potluck supper to make it easier on yourself
› Set realistic goals
› Prioritize tasks, putting your energy into things that bring the most benefit
› Simplify meal times by making out your shopping list with easy meals in mind, and cooking enough one day for leftovers the following day
› Ask friends or family for help with errands, cleaning or child care
› Eat well-balanced meals and drink plenty of water every day
› Get enough sleep
› Exercise because regular exercise relieves stress, lowers the risk of depression and anxiety, boosts your immune system, increases energy, and sets a good example for your children
› Attend worship services, if religious
› Break big jobs into sections and focus on one section at a time
› Combine activities when possible. For example, walk the dog with the children and talk to them about their day while you walk.
› Chose a hairstyle that is easy to maintain and clothes that don’t need special care
› Have a desk, table or other place where all bills and important papers can be organized and addressed at a regular time
› Follow a set schedule. When children know what to expect, mealtimes, bedtimes, chores and homework are less stressful for the whole family
› Keep a small calendar with you at all times to keep up with appointments
› Make duplicate keys for home and car
› **Remember, your children need your unconditional love**

**DON’T...**

› Self-medicate
› Try to be perfect
› Try to “fix” other people
› Feel guilty for asking for help

When your children grow up, they will not remember the perfectly clean house or elaborate meals, but the time spent together sharing love and laughter.