



Looking after yourself...

In order to care effectively for our children, our number one priority is to care for ourselves first.

To help you with this during the Covid-19 lockdown, read these ideas for getting started:

- Remind yourself that you are a parent and not a superhero. You don't have to do extraordinary or exciting things for your child to feel safe and happy. Find some simple ways you can enjoy being together, without the pressure of leading activities or 'entertaining' your child.
- If you're sharing the care of your child with another adult, create your own space in the house that you can withdraw to in order to rest and recharge. Let your child know where you will be, how long you will be away and when you will be back. Use your own special space daily. Allow yourself to do this without feeling guilty.
- If you're sharing the care of your child with another adult, and you are working from home, try to limit interruptions. Be clear with your child about when you are available and when you are unavailable. Setting boundaries around your work time will make it easier for you to be more present with, and emotionally available to your child when you do spend time with them.
- Make a plan for each day with your child. Keep some key parts of each day the same – for example begin the day with a fun exercise and end the day with a familiar bedtime ritual. At the end of each day, reflect on one good thing that you and your child shared during the day.
- Use time with friends and family (in person and/or online) as a source of support, reassurance and as a resource for new ideas
- Manage demands by being clear about what you can realistically do, rather than thinking about what you 'should' or 'ought' to do. Don't compare yourself with what you see other people doing on social media. If when looking at this, you end up feeling inadequate or unhappy...then don't look.
- Sometimes it is difficult to say 'no' to your child and keep to it. When you don't this can be confusing for your child and harder for you. Be open about when you feel you cannot do anything more than you are doing. Trust yourself that you are doing your best. You are good enough.
- Make sure you have some fun!

"When you do an activity with a child you fill their time. When you are connected with your child, you fill their heart" Viv Trask-Hall, Thrive Principal Trainer.

Remember to be kind to yourself.