



Prepared parents. Healthy families.
Padres preparados. Familias saludables.

Parent Newsletter September 2026

Self-Care for Parents

Put on Your Own Mask First

Being the parent of a young child brings joyful moments—first steps, giggles, and new discoveries. It can also be exhausting. Long days of caregiving, work, and household responsibilities can leave little time to rest.

If you feel stretched thin, you are not alone.

You may have heard the airplane rule: “Put on your own oxygen mask before helping others.” Parenting works the same way. When you are running on empty, it becomes harder to care for anyone else. Taking care of yourself is not selfish—it helps you stay patient, present, and able to respond to your child’s needs.

Children also learn by watching you. When they see you rest, ask for help, or take a moment to breathe, they learn healthy ways to care for themselves, too.

What Self-Care Really Means

When people hear “self-care,” they often picture bubble baths or expensive vacations.

But real self-care is much simpler.

It means getting enough water, eating balanced meals, resting when you can, taking a few deep breaths, moving your body, or asking someone for help. It means treating yourself with the same kindness you show your child.

It also means paying attention to your emotional health. Feeling stressed, frustrated, or overwhelmed doesn’t make you a bad parent—it makes you human. Taking small steps to care for yourself can make those hard moments easier to manage.



Tiny Steps That Can Help

When you’re caring for young children, you may not have an hour to yourself. That’s okay. Even a few minutes can help you reset.

Try the “Glass of Water” Break

Young children don’t understand time very well. Instead of saying, “Give me five minutes,” try something they can see.

Pour yourself a glass of water and tell your child:

“I’m going to sit and drink this water. When my glass is empty, I’ll be ready to play again.”

This creates a simple visual cue while giving you a short moment to recharge.

Turn on the Music

Music can change the mood in just a few minutes.

Create two playlists:

- **Energy Songs:** Upbeat music for dance parties and getting the wiggles out.
- **Calm Songs:** Quiet music during dinner, cleanup, or bedtime.

Sometimes, everyone in the house benefits from a change of soundtrack.



Make a "Done List"

Parents always have something left on the to-do list.

Instead of focusing on what didn't get done, write down three things you did do today.

Maybe you:

- Comforted your child after a hard moment.
- Read a bedtime story.
- Folded one basket of laundry.
- Took a few minutes to enjoy a cup of tea.

Small wins still count.

Get Outside

Even a short walk around the block or a few minutes at the playground can help both children and adults feel refreshed. Fresh air, movement, and a change of scenery can lift everyone's mood.

When You Feel Overwhelmed, Take a Pause

Every parent has moments of frustration. Babies cry. Toddlers have meltdowns. Preschoolers test limits. When you're tired or stressed, it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

The most important thing to remember is this: **it's okay to step away for a minute to calm yourself down.**

If your baby is crying and you've made sure they're fed, changed, and safe, it's okay to place them in their crib or another safe place and step into another room for a few minutes.

Take some slow breaths, get a drink of water, or call a friend or family member. Once you feel calmer, you can go back and comfort your child.

If your child is older, make sure they are in a safe place before taking a brief moment to collect yourself.

Here are a few simple ways to reset:

- Take 10 slow, deep breaths.
- Count slowly to 20.
- Close your eyes for a moment and relax your shoulders.
- Call or text a trusted friend or family member.
- Remind yourself, "My child is having a hard time, not giving me a hard time."

Everyone needs support sometimes. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not failure.

If you need extra support, you are not alone. If stress or anger is starting to feel like too much, don't keep it to yourself. Reach out to someone you trust, your health care provider, or a local support program. The Parenting Warmline through [Reach Out Oregon](https://reachoutoregon.org) (1-833-732-2467) is also available to listen, offer support, and help connect you with resources when parenting feels overwhelming. A small conversation today can make a big difference for you and your child.

PARENTING CAN BE CHALLENGING
WE'RE IN IT TOGETHER

LA CRIANZA PUEDE SER UN RETO
ESTAMOS JUNTO EN ESTO



Let's Talk Parent
to Parent
Call or text our parent
warmline.
1-833-REACH-OR
Hablemos de padre
a padre
Lláme o envíe un mensaje de
texto a nuestra línea de
atención a padres.

Reach Out Oregon is a community for people raising children with social and emotional challenges where you can find the support you need without shame or blame.

Reach Out Oregon es una comunidad para personas que crían a niños con problemas sociales y emocionales, donde puedes encontrar el apoyo que necesitas sin avergonzarte ni culparte.

reachoutoregon.org

1-833-REACH-OR

1-833-732-2467



Oregon
Family Support
Network

Building Your Village

You've probably heard the saying, *"It takes a village to raise a child."*

Sometimes that village doesn't appear on its own. Sometimes you have to build it.

Ask for Help

Many parents feel like they should do everything themselves. But the people around you may be happy to help—they just don't know what you need.

Try asking:

- "Could you watch the baby for 30 minutes while I take a shower?"
- "Could we trade childcare for an hour next week?"
- "Would you mind picking up milk while you're at the store?"

Small acts of help can make a big difference.



Find Other Parents

Look for playgroups at your local library, parks, or community centers. Connecting with other parents can remind you that you're not the only one dealing with sleepless nights or toddler tantrums. Sometimes hearing, "Mine does that too," is exactly what you need.

Families in Linn and Benton Counties can also join Live & Learn classes through Linn-Benton Community College. Parenting is a learning process for everyone, and LBCC has supported families in our community with these kinds of programs since 1976. www.linnbenton.edu/community/family-resources/parenting-programs.php



Stay Connected to Yourself

Being a parent is a big part of your life, but it isn't your whole identity.

Call an old friend. Read a few pages of a favorite book. Meditate or stretch for 10 minutes. Listen to a favorite podcast while folding laundry. Even small moments can help you remember you are a person, not just a parent.

Local Support Is Available

You don't have to do it alone. If you live in Linn, Benton, or Lincoln County, Pollywog can connect you with parenting classes, child development information, health and mental health resources, parent groups, child care information, relief nurseries, family support programs, and other local services.

If you're not sure where to start, Pollywog can help. Visit pollywogfamily.org or call or text **541-917-4884** to get connected with resources for your family.

Little moments of care add up. When parents take care of themselves, they are better able to care for the people they love most. You deserve the same kindness, patience, and compassion that you give to your children every day.



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