Self-Care
Challenges to Self Care

Why are you not taking care of yourself?

- “Not enough time in the day.”
- Feeling selfish for taking time for yourself
- Work responsibilities
- Not having someone to watch your children
- Errands that need to be finished
- Children’s school work and activities
Self-Care is important!

- Although it can be hard to find time for self-care, routinely doing things for yourself will provide you with more energy.

- Try to schedule time each day for yourself.

- Even if it is only ten minutes, getting to focus on you can make all the difference.
Introduction

- **Self-care** is a term widely used to refer to activities and practices that you engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance your short-term and long-term health and well-being.
- If you neglect your own needs and forget to nurture yourself, you are in danger of deeper levels of unhappiness, low self-esteem, and feelings of resentment.
- Also, if you spend your time only taking care of others, you can be at risk of becoming burned out.
Take Care of Yourself

- Taking care of yourself and reducing stress is important for your physical and mental health, which directly affects your children’s well-being.
- Recognizing the signs of stress is important so you know how to lessen it.
- Signs of stress include:
  - feeling tired,
  - snapping at family and friends,
  - being indecisive,
  - changes in sleep,
  - changes in appetite,
  - headaches and stomachaches,
  - and not being able to concentrate on tasks.
- The next several slides are ideas on how to take care of yourself and lessen your stress.
Regular Exercise

- The benefits of regular exercise are:
  - Relieves stress
  - Lowers the risk of depression and anxiety
  - Boosts your immune system
  - Increases energy
  - Promotes better sleep
  - Manages weight
  - Sets a good example for your children
Eating Healthy

- The benefits of eating healthy are:
  - Improves mood
  - Controls weight
  - Combats diseases (heart disease, high blood pressure, etc.)
  - Boosts energy
Plenty of Sleep

- Benefits of good sleep are:
  - Improves memory and attention
  - Improves concentration and reaction time
  - Extends length of life
  - Benefits your health (lower risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, etc.)
  - Improves mood
Good Hygiene

- The benefits of good hygiene are:
  - Stops the spread of illness and bacteria
  - Provides increased confidence at work and in social interactions
  - Improves mood
Avoid Unhealthy Habits

- Avoiding unhealthy habits will keep you healthier and safer.
- Unhealthy habits to avoid are:
  - Excessive drinking
  - Smoking
  - Recreational drug use
  - Risky behaviors
Make Time for Yourself

- Ideas for spending time for yourself:
  - Reading a book
  - Taking a bath or long shower
  - Meditating
  - Watching your favorite television program

- By making time each day for yourself, you are:
  - Taking a mental and emotional vacation
  - Recharging your energy level
  - Triggering the relaxation response
Begin a New Hobby

- Beginning a new hobby provides you with an outlet to express yourself, meet others, and enjoy something just for yourself.
- Hobbies can include:
  - Joining a book club
  - Taking a class
  - Arts and crafts
  - Outdoor sports
  - Hiking
  - Playing an instrument
Determine Social Support

- Having a positive and helpful support system is crucial to a healthy lifestyle. People who genuinely care about you are invaluable during good times and bad. Your social support can come from a number of different sources such as:
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Support Groups
Social Support Benefits

- Research has shown that people with strong support systems have better health, live longer, and report higher well-being.
- In addition, your support system will listen to your fears, hopes, and help you feel understood.
- They can also provide alternatives to solve problems and help distract you from worries.
Seek Help and Support if Feeling Overwhelmed

- You may still feel overwhelmed or stressed regardless if you take care of yourself or have a strong support system.
- When you feel overwhelmed, it is good to seek help from professionals.
- The next few slides will provide information on who to ask for additional support.
Professional Support: Physicians

- If you are feeling sick, achy, or depressed frequently, you may want to see your physician.
- A physician can examine you to see if there is something physically wrong with you and give you recommendations to feel better.
Professional Support: Counselors

- A counselor can be a good option if you feel like you need to talk to someone with an unbiased view.
- They can be a sounding board and also provide therapeutic interventions such as mindfulness, cognitive behavioral therapy, thought restructuring, and meditation.
- Counselors can also provide community resources that can be beneficial to you.
Professional Support: Religious or Spiritual Advisors

- If you are religious or spiritual, a religious leader may be a good option to reach out to.
- They can provide you support and guidance connected to your religious or spiritual affiliation.
Conclusion

- Self-care is crucial to keep yourself healthy and to be an active parent in your child's life.
- It can be difficult to find time, but there are ways to focus on yourself and there are resources available to help you along the way.
- Remember, self-care involves activities and practices that you engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance your short-term and long-term health and well-being.
- When you are healthy and free of stress, you will be a more attentive parent and good role model to your children.