



Build a strong family *foundation*

Happy families have a strong foundation. This helps parents and children deal with changes and hard times.

Every family faces challenges and stress. Here's how to protect your family from whatever life throws at you.



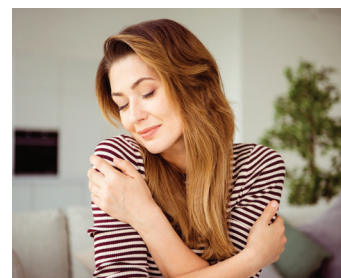
SHOW LOVE THROUGH ATTENTION

Connect with your kids or spouse each day. Take time to ask about their day or do an activity together. Have family meals when you can, play games or take walks together. Avoid being on screens too much, when no one is talking or noticing one another.



BE OPEN TO LEARNING

Having a strong family takes knowledge and care. No one knows everything about families and relationships. Parents can take classes about child development. See a marriage counselor if your marriage is having trouble. You can also look into support groups. Ask your family's doctor if you need help dealing with specific challenges.



CARE FOR YOURSELF

If you get burned out, you can't help others in your family. Take quiet time to listen to music, take a bath or do whatever relaxes and calms you. Get regular exercise, such as walking, and include family members if you can. Talk to a trusted friend when you're stressed or overwhelmed.



BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY

Connect with others who understand and support you. Join a sports team, a group or a religious organization that supports family life. Community can make life fun and help you learn from others, too.



BE OPEN ABOUT PROBLEMS

If you're stressed and need some time alone, tell your spouse or your kids. Explain that you need some time to calm down, rather than blowing up or feeling resentment toward them.



DON'T OVERSCHEDULE

Try to keep your activities and family calendar reasonable. When everyone is too busy, there's not much time to connect.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services