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# Safety Matters

## Daycares: Managing Stress

Working in a daycare can be very rewarding for many reasons, but it can also introduce stress to employees and volunteers. Properly managing stress helps maintain positive relationships, moods, and overall health. Here are some methods to help manage stress during your workday.

- **Have a positive attitude.** Seeing the best in people and situations will reduce your stress level and improve your daily interactions. Relationships can be strengthened by interacting positively with co-workers, parents, children, and others.
- **Maintain open dialogue with parents, children, and staff.** Ongoing communication will provide information regarding any issues facing children. Although not everything can be shared in every situation, the more you know, the more effectively you can react.
- **Redirect disruptive behavior.** Use proven strategies to guide a child's behavior from inappropriate to appropriate. Share a private moment with a child to explain appropriate behaviors. When you see behavior change, provide positive reinforcement.
- **Take breaks during the workday.** It's difficult to stay "on" for the entire workday. Go for a walk, enjoy a conversation with another person, or have a quiet moment. This provides an opportunity to put space between yourself and daily events and interactions.
- **Focus on job duties.** Be present in the moment and focus on interacting with children while providing structured activities. Connection with children is important to building trust with you as a natural authority figure.
- **Take care of yourself.** Exercise, practice deep breathing, eat healthy, and get enough sleep.



By effectively managing your own stress, you make the environment better for children in your care.

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