

CORNERSTONE  
DAY SCHOOL

# Parents Matter

OCTOBER 2022



## Taking Care of Yourself

Parenting is one of the most challenging endeavors a person can undertake. As a parent, you love your children more than anything and want to do whatever it takes for them to be happy and successful. Parenting is more than a labor of love; it is a labor of patience, empathy, hard work, and constant attention. All of this can be exhausting emotionally, mentally, and physically. Subsequently, it is vital to take care of yourself. Below are some strategies that can help to maintain a healthy balance as a parent.

- **Be kind to yourself** – many people will get caught up in focusing on what they did wrong or what did not go right as a parent. This focus on the negative is conducive to feeling down and can deplete our energy level as a parent. Instead, it is essential to focus on your strengths as a parent and to pay attention to what you have done right during the day. Instead of perseverating on the part of the day where you may have yelled at your child, focus on the part of the day where you sat and listened, where you made dinner, where you provided an opportunity for your child to participate in an extracurricular that they enjoy. If you stop and look at all the different things you may have done in a day related to your child, you will see that you have done many positive things that you may take for granted. Give yourself credit for the positive.
- **Do something fun for yourself** – we all need time to unwind and participate in something enjoyable. Spending time doing something you enjoy can help to refuel your tank so that you are ready to face the next challenge. Many people will sacrifice this downtime because they may feel that they don't have time for it; yet even spending 20 to 30 minutes just for yourself can make a difference; even if you sit somewhere quiet and allow your mind to relax.
- **Allow yourself to feel what you feel** – as a parent, you will experience a gamut of feelings and sometimes those feelings are frustration, anger, sadness or confusion. It is okay to feel these feelings and it's okay to acknowledge that you feel them. Repressing feelings or pushing them away does not translate into those feelings going away; it can be healthy to pay attention to these feelings and look at what you need to manage

them in a healthy way. Parenting is challenging, and it is not realistic to expect that you will not experience emotions that are challenging at times.

- **Accept that your child will experience distress** – as parents, we want to make everything better for our children and do whatever we can so that our children do not experience distress or pain. The reality is that sometimes things occur, leading to sad or distressful feelings. As parents, we can be supportive of our children during these times and teach them how to cope and manage distressful events in a healthy way. As a parent, it is important not to change how your child feels or thinks but to accept whatever they are feeling or thinking and to support them through difficult times.
- **Develop and use your support system** – having your own support network is very important. It can be very beneficial to have other people that you trust with whom you can vent, share your feelings and thoughts and gain support. Being isolated is not healthy, and it can be validating and hopeful to know that you have someone who is on your side.
- **Participate in Parent Support Groups** – sometimes, we may have friends and family that care. Still, we may not feel comfortable sharing the details related to our children with these individuals. At CDS, we offer Parent Support Groups that provide an opportunity for parents to support one another through difficult times. It can feel relieving and comforting to be around others who may be experiencing something similar to us. These groups provide this safe place where you can share things that you may not feel comfortable sharing with close friends and family.



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*Parents Matter is published regularly throughout the school year as a service to the parents of students enrolled at Cornerstone Day School. Each issue highlights an important topic for parents with practical suggestions for helping their child continue to grow and overcome their emotional challenges.*