

# STRESS REDUCTION TIPS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

Bury your guilt in the backyard.

Be a mother or father; not a therapist.

Reach out - parents helping other parents are powerful and healing.

Consider how your child's illness or disability impacts the family in a positive way. Examples:

*Your family has become more accepting of differences.*

*You have met some great people who, otherwise, would not be part of your life.*

Live in the present and enjoy the good times.

Keep a picture of the good times with you.

Take deep breaths regularly. Take more deep breaths.

Laughter is therapeutic.

Guilt is a self made emotion....make time for you.

*Do something you enjoy doing; even if it doesn't include your family.*

Recognize your family's strengths and build upon them.

# **COPING WITH YOUR CHILD'S SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

**Understand your feelings.**

**Express your emotions.**

**Educate yourself about your child's illness or condition.**

**Keep communications open.**

**Talk to other parents.**

**Focus on the strengths and goals that are achievable.**

**Believe in your child.**

**Establish routines.**

**Maintain your sense of humor! There is no co-pay for laughter!!**

**Remember that taking care of yourself is caring for your family.**

**Helpful websites:**

[www.parenttoparentnys.org](http://www.parenttoparentnys.org)

[www.parenting-ed.org/handouts.htm](http://www.parenting-ed.org/handouts.htm)

[www.medicalhomeinfo.org](http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org)

[www.caringtodaymagazine.com](http://www.caringtodaymagazine.com)

[www.caregiver.com](http://www.caregiver.com)

**Contact your regional Parent to Parent office to network with other parents.**