

# PARENTING TIPS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.



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## ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again, Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'



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## HELP CHILDREN COPE WITH CRISIS

- Children may be scared, confused and angry. They need your support.
- Listen to children when they share how they are feeling.
- Accept how they feel and give them comfort.
- Every day before you sleep, praise yourself for trying to help your children cope.



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## 5 MINUTES OF POSITIVE TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Playing with and talking to children for a few minutes every day helps them feel secure.
- Ask children what they would like to do.
- Listen to them, look at them, give them your full attention.
- Small amounts of time can help them feel safe and loved.



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## COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.



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## SMALL THINGS HELP KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

- Talk to children about what is happening in a way that they can understand.
- Identify a meeting point and make a plan in case you get separated.
- Assure your children that you will do everything to keep them safe.
- Planning with children helps them feel safer too.



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## BUILDING CHILDREN'S STRENGTH IN A CRISIS

- Ask children to help with day-to-day tasks such as making food or cleaning.
- Praise children for trying or doing well.
- This encourages helpful behaviour.
- Praising children shows them that you notice and care.



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## KEEPING OUR FAMILIES TOGETHER

- Keep children with you or someone you trust all the time.
- Encourage them to share anything that worries them with you.
- Talk to them about things that are not safe.
- Be proud of your efforts and try to take care of yourself too.



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## MAKING AN IDENTITY TAG FOR A CHILD

- Write the full name & phone number of you and three people you trust.
- Write any medication your child needs, any special needs or disability.
- An identity tag should be covered in plastic or kept in a waterproof bag.
- Hide the tag in something your child always wears (e.g., a pocket, shoe, necklace).



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## MAKING TRAVEL PLANS WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Make a song with your child so they memorise your full name and phone number, and number of someone you trust. Go over it every day.
- Tell your child where you're going and why, in a way they can understand and handle.
- Make backup copies or photos of all your identity documents
- Praise yourself for doing the best you can.



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# PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM TRAFFICKERS

- Traffickers can be men, women, couples, and could be from your own community.
- Teach your children that people sometimes lie and trick children into coming with them.
- Tell children to talk to a trusted adult if they feel confused or worried.
- Teach children to trust their instincts and get away if something feels strange.



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## TRAVELING SAFELY WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Tell someone you trust your travel plans, where you are and who you are with.
- When it's hard, remember you're trying your best in a difficult situation.
- Travel in a group of people you know where possible.
- If you need to show your passport or ID, try to keep it in your hands.



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## PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- If they tell you about abuse, trust your child. Reassure them it's not their fault and they are safe and loved.
- Teach your child that no one has the right to touch them or make them uncomfortable.
- Practice saying “no” loudly and strongly.
- Tell them that abusers often trick children by saying it is their ‘secret’
- Talking about this with your child helps protect them.



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## HELPING OUR CHILDREN WHEN SOMEONE WE LOVE DIES

- Tell children who they will live with and who will look after them – they often worry about this.
- Listen to and accept whatever your child feels. Children may seem happy but be sad.
- Do something together to say goodbye to the person – a song or letter or prayer.
- Allow yourself to mourn your losses too.
- In simple words, tell them the person has died and will not come back.



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## KEEPING SAFE ON THE ROAD

- If a child has a mobile phone, save your number and those of a few trusted people.
- Explain to your child how they should behave when at checkpoints, (i.e., be quiet, do not leave the vehicle).
- Hide money or bank cards in different places, in case you lose your bags.
- Being prepared takes hard work. Be sure to look after yourself.



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## CARING FOR CHILDREN IN A SHELTER

- Take a comfort item from home with them to a shelter
- Find something to smile about together
- Decorate the shelter together, with notes or pictures for the walls if you can
- Try to reassure your children as often as you can.



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