

# 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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**“I am with you always”** (Matthew 28:20)

**Remember that God is with you**  
**- it's the most frequent promise of God in the Bible.**



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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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**“Do not fear, for I am with you... I will strengthen you and help you.”** (Isaiah 41:10)

**God promises to be with us and help us. He can help you cope.**



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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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**“[God] comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”** (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Ask God to give you the strength you need to provide the support your children need.

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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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“Jesus Said, ‘Let the little children come to me.’” (Matthew 19:14)

Our time and attention are great gifts we can give children.



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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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**“Is anyone among you in trouble?  
Let them pray.”** (James 5:13)

**Pause. Say a prayer and ask God to give you the strength you need for this moment.**

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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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**“I will instruct you and teach  
you in the way you should go.”** (Psalm 32:8a)

You can ask God to guide you as you make plans to stay safe.



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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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“Anxiety weighs down the heart,  
but a kind word cheers it up.” (Proverbs 12:25)

In times of great anxiety, kind words of praise are very important.

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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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**“Hear my cry, O God;  
listen to my prayer.”** (Psalm 61:1)

**Dear God, please keep our family together  
and give us the strength we need. Amen.**





# PARENTING TIPS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



## 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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**“Hear my cry, O God;  
listen to my prayer.”** (Psalm 61:1)

Dear God, please protect my children and keep them safe. Amen.



# PARENTING TIPS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



## 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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**“Keep me safe, for in You I take refuge.”** (Psalm 16:1)

Dear God, please help me and give me strength as I keep my children safe. Amen.

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# PARENTING TIPS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



## 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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**“Save me, Lord, from lying lips  
and from deceitful tongues.”** (Psalm 120:2)

Dear God, please provide the help we need and protect us  
from those that would harm us. Amen.



# PARENTING TIPS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



## 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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Dear God, as I travel with my children I will remember that you are my...  
“refuge and strength, an ever-present  
help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1) Amen.

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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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**“Rescue me, Lord, from evildoers;  
protect me from the violent.”** (Psalm 140:1)

Dear God, I thank you for my children. I pray that they would be kept safe. Amen.

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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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**“May Your unfailing love  
be my comfort.”** (Psalm 119:76)

**Dear God, as we say goodbye to..., we are sad.  
Please comfort us in our sadness. Amen.**



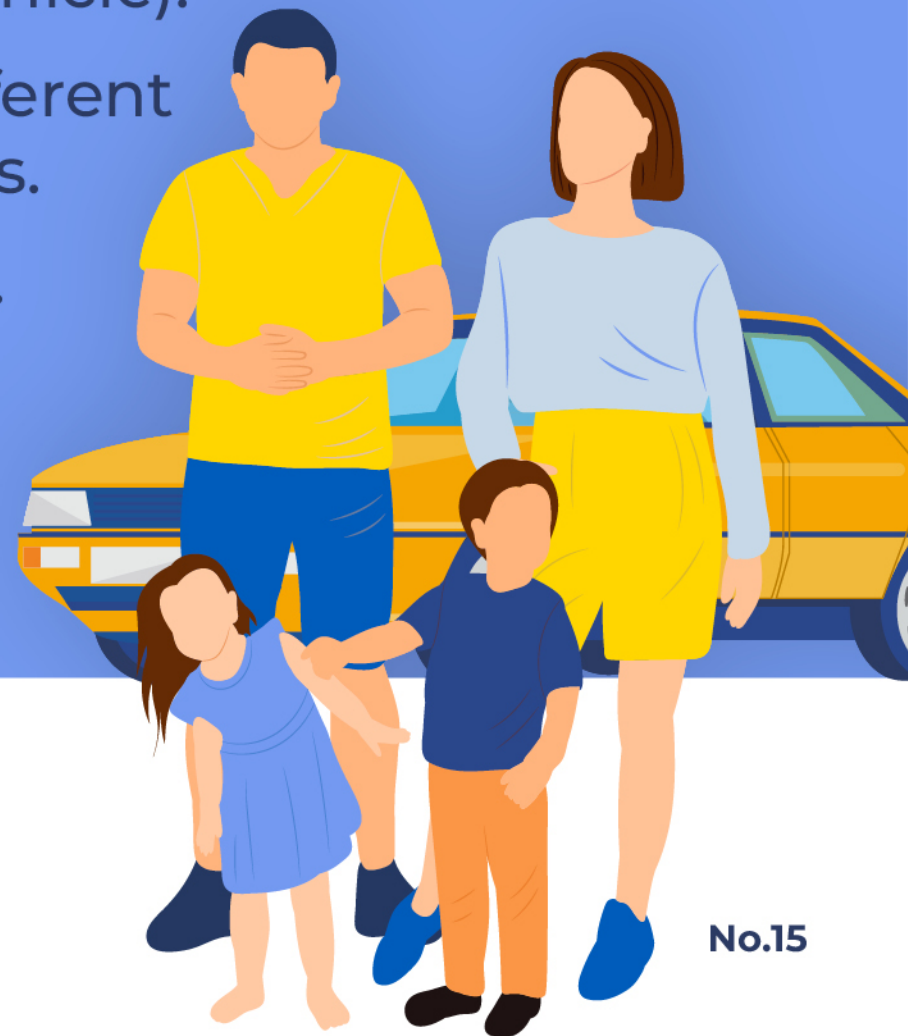
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## KEEPING SAFE ON THE ROAD

- 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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Dear God, “Keep me safe, my God,  
for in You I take refuge.” (Psalm 16:1) Amen.

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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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Dear God, I pray that I would experience your peace,  
“...which exceeds anything  
we can understand.” (Philippians 4:7a) **Amen.**

