

# To Lower Toxic Stress at Home

## Create a Safe, Stable and Nurturing Environment for You & Your Children

### Things you can do to improve your health and well-being if you have been exposed to ACEs:



#### Sleep

- Try to get 8 hours of sleep every day.
- Cut down on your use of caffeine, especially in the afternoon.
- Create a “bedtime routine” for yourself and your children.
- Don't take your phone to bed with you!



#### Nutrition

- Try to eat fresh whole foods from the farmers market or your local grocery store.
- Avoid foods that are very processed or contain a lot of sugar.
- Make sure you drink at least 8 glasses of water a day.



#### Exercise

- Get at least 30 minutes of gentle exercise every day, including walking, swimming, biking. Walking your pet counts!
- Include weight-bearing exercise in your routine. Both strength and cardiovascular training are important.



#### Relationships

- To support your relationships, practice good, honest and open communication.
- Spend quality time focused on those you love. It doesn't need to be expensive; dinners can be made special with a candle, playtime with a paper airplane.
- Do or say something daily to show appreciation to those you care about.



#### Mental Health

- Life experiences, biological factors, and family history can affect mental health.
- Early warning signs of mental health issues can include trouble sleeping, pulling away from usual activities, feeling helpless, and unexplained aches and pains.



#### Mindfulness

- Daily take a few minutes to sit quietly, notice your breath, and feel your feet on the floor.
- When you are angry or upset count to 10 or take 3 deep breaths before you do anything else.



#### Financial Stability

- If you can, put money from your paycheck into savings or an emergency fund automatically, before you start spending.
- Set up autopay for bills or pay immediately to avoid late payment and interest fees.



#### Parenting Knowledge

- Parents are their children's most important people. Showing love includes having empathy, setting boundaries, and buffering children from toxic stress.