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.

Adapted from the Center for Youth Wellness and materials from the Sonoma County Department of Health Services.