

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

When your child discloses abuse, a lot of energy goes towards making sure they are okay; it is easy to forget that you are important too. If you want to be there for your children, you need to take care of yourself. The task of helping your child is even more difficult if you have a history of abuse, as their disclosure may bring up unresolved issues of your own. The following are suggestions to help reduce the stress you may be experiencing:

- Make efforts to reduce or eliminate isolation by surrounding yourself with supportive, trustworthy, and caring adults.
- Seek out information and ask questions about how to help your child with the different feelings and behaviors they may have throughout the recovery process.
- If you find yourself unable to help or respond to your child, seek professional services as soon as possible.
- Take some time to recharge your batteries by doing something you like to do (take a bath, exercise, read a good book, watch a funny movie, etc.). If you need to, schedule this time in advance so you can obtain reliable care for your children and keep your schedule clear, if only for 20 minutes.

It is okay to acknowledge that you don't have all the answers. Allowing others to help you will send a positive message to your child. Oftentimes others are looking for an opportunity to show your loving support, but do not know how. Asking for help allows others to fulfill their desire to give you're their support. There will be times when your loved ones do not have the right answers. Role modeling to your child that it is sometimes necessary to seek professional guidance offers them a valuable tool. Unfortunately, some families consider seeking professional help to be somehow weak. Parenting is hard and facing issues at hand is difficult. There is no shame in making sure your family has help in healing from abuse.