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**Five Ways To De-Stress The Stay-At-Home-Mom!**

**By Jennifer Tarzian**

As a stay-at-home mom, I often wonder why I get so stressed out. Before having children, I worked full-time and managed to be involved in multiple extra-curricular activities - none of which seemed to put me over the top. So why does being a mother and homemaker frazzle my nerves so much?

I think I may finally have the answer to this question. I've come to realize, for myself at least, that a well-balanced mood comes from a well-balanced life. When I used to work full-time, I had multiple different outlets in my life: home life, work, social groups, athletic groups, etc. If I was having difficulties in any one of these areas, it was ok because I had enough others in my life to even it out. As a stay-at-home mom, however, I have not given myself those outlets. When I feel bogged down at home, I have no where else to turn for relief. So what was I to do? I wasn't going to go back to work or stop being a SAHM - I loved it too much. So it made me do some thinking and some research to figure out ways to manage my stress so I could maintain my sanity and enjoy my time at home that much more!

The first recommendation I have is to get regular exercise. Even if it's nothing more than plopping your kids in the stroller and taking a few spins around the block. For more information on getting the proper amount of exercise, see Phil Beckett's article, "Can Women Still Exercise While Raising a Family?" at

The next thing I recommend is to avoid high-sugar and other empty-calorie foods. You may not have much time to eat, so make sure you are getting a good supply of nutrients when you do. Active moms, especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding, need to maximize the nutrients in the food they consume. Avoid fad diets and just stick to the appropriate helpings from the basic food groups. In addition to having more energy yourself, you'll be setting a great example for your kids.

Keep a schedule. The more organized you are, the less likely you are to forget something at the last minute or miss an appointment altogether. These last minute mistakes cause an undue amount of stress and are easily avoidable with the proper planning. I recommend a simple day planner (which you can purchase from your local office supply store for under \$20) to keep track of all your appointments, as well as household chores that need to be done.

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Create a family budget. I know the number one thing that has caused stress in my life is worrying about money. Once I created a budget, however, that stress quickly diminished. By setting spending limits each month that are within our available income, I no longer have to worry if we're going to come up short some month. Plus, make savings a part of your budget. This will help in the event there is a financial emergency.

Last but certainly not least, make time for yourself! Being a mom is a tough job and you deserve a break once in a while. In fact, you NEED a break! This can be any number of things. Personally, I like to schedule a date night with my husband each week. Or sometimes I'll just curl up with a book. Either way, this is time spent purely for the fun of it. Each week you should schedule something fun to break up the monotony of all the work. Plus, it will give you something to look forward to.

The bottom line is this: the more stress and negative energy that comes from you, the more strained

your household will be. Have you ever heard the saying, "When mama's happy, everyone's happy?" There's a lot of truth to that statement. Our kids are a direct reflection of our attitudes, actions and emotions. The more we can do to maintain a level head, the more peaceful our home will be.

I hope you have found this information to be helpful and wish you a very stress-free day!

Jennifer Tarzian is proud to be a stay-at-home mom. For all your parenting resources or to sign up for her weekly newsletter, please go to

<http://www.youngparentsmagazine.com>

or visit

<http://creditcards.youngparentsmagazine.com>

for helpful guides on credit reports, as well as valuable information on choosing the right credit card.

## 5 Ways To Tell If A Preschooler Is Living In Your House

**By Deborah Shelton**

1. You reheated the same cup of coffee three times this morning.
2. There is always one more person in your bed in the morning, than there was the night before.
3. You can't imagine life without the Cartoon Network.
4. The lock on your bathroom door is purely for decoration... After all, no locked door could withstand,

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"Mom? What are you doing? Mom? Can I come in? Mom? Can I show you something? Mom? Can I give you a hug? Mom? Can you hear me? Mom?"

5. You have started—or signed—a petition to banish the word "why" from every language known to man.

Deborah Shelton is a mother, freelance writer, and author of the brand new book, "The Five Minute Parent: Fun & Fast Activities for You and Your Little Ones." Visit Deborah's website for more family-friendly ideas:

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