



# EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

## THE JUGGLING PARENT

We all have our days where we feel like we have a lot to do, feel overwhelmed and like there is never enough time in the day to get everything done. But, do you ever feel like you are a “juggling parent”? This isn’t someone we see at the circus or a local parade, this is someone who is juggling multiple things all at the same time-finance, a household, children, a job, mental health, taking care of older family members, health issues, stress, a pandemic...the list can go on and on and on. You might relate to this term and think this is you, or you might feel like you are a parent trying to juggle everything... while trying to ride a unicycle! Let’s



think about this for a moment. This is someone trying to keep everything going while often times getting pushed to the absolute limit. You are working both legs to keep the unicycle going forward, all while keeping

everything going around up top so nothing gets missed and falls to the ground (this would be a great time to turn into an octopus and gain a few arms). This sounds like an enormous amount of pressure...and exhausting! Just think, if one leg slips off the pedal, the unicycle tips over. If one arm slows down and can’t catch what is coming around, something falls. And what about different unexpected factors coming in and messing it all up? Things like this happen and tend to stop us in our tracks, or even cause us to feel even more stressed, lost and alone.

During a time like this, it’s good to know you are not alone in the struggle to juggle everything. Parents and caregivers within our communities are trying to manage many different aspects of life, while trying to take care of themselves at the same time. It can seem absolutely impossible to juggle everything, but taking the time to stop and reset can help us to think of how we can continue to move forward and make things a little bit more manageable. Let’s take a look at some things you can do maybe lighten the load, or even make the juggling a little bit easier. These can be done anywhere and at any time!

**1. TRY TO STAY POSITIVE-** This is something we have been hearing a lot about lately (sometimes when we hear this it can feel like our feelings aren’t that important, or it can feel down right annoying!) But, we do know that what we think can have a major effect on our overall sense of well-being. One way to try and look at positive things in our lives is to think of things we CAN control right now. Much like the children in our care, feeling like we have some control helps us feel grounded and that our environment is predictable. This can help ease the burden of when things happen that are out of our control.

**2. PRIORITIZE-** You may want to ask yourself...what absolutely has to get done first? Make a

### Cheryl’s Corner of Caring

“Being a good parent means you need to teach your child the moral in what is right and what is wrong. Setting limits and being consistent are the KEYS to good discipline. Be kind and firm when enforcing those rules. Focus on the reason behind the child’s behavior.”

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list of things you need to do in order of what is most important to the least important. Having a visual aid in front of us can help our brain focus on the task at hand. You may want to limit the number of items that need to get done so you can lower the risk of feeling pressured or overwhelmed. (Remember...you might not get everything done in one day)

**3. THINK OF THINGS THAT CAN WAIT-** This definitely goes with setting priorities. It might be nice to think of a few things that CAN wait. Can the dishes in the sink get washed tomorrow? Are you able to do a few things on the weekends when you have a little extra time?

**4. TAKE A STEP BACK-** Along with setting priorities, it's good to take a step back and think about how to approach new situations. What is a realistic approach for you? Do you need help with things that are coming up? If you do need extra help, do you know who to reach out to? (Remember...things that seem easy for some people can be more challenging for others. And that is absolutely okay!)

**5. WORK TOGETHER-** Sometimes it helps if everyone works together to share the load and responsibilities. Making a chore or job chart can help designate jobs that everyone can handle doing (even this kids!). Think about who can help pick up around the house? Who can help wash clothes? Maybe everyone could take turns putting something together for dinner. Working together can also bring a sense of gratitude...what is a better way to appreciate what someone does in the home more than doing it yourself?

**6. REACH OUT-** As stated before, there may be things you can get extra support with that can help lighten the load. Can you get involved in a carpool to get the kids to school? Can you go to the local resource and referral agency to get information about childcare? (Remember...Caregiver mental health is so important for everyone! Asking for help is a sign of strength, so reach out to the local mental health center if you need extra support)

*Image Source:*

<https://discoveries.childrenshospital.org/covid-parenting-challenges/>



# MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



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Lincoln & Yuma

For additional support during  
the COVID-19 Pandemic you  
can call Centennial's  
**COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT LINE**

You can do this by calling your  
nearest Centennial office:

Akron - 970.345.2254  
Burlington - 719.346.8183  
Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183  
Elizabeth - 303.646.4519  
Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924  
Holyoke - 970.854.2114  
Julesburg - 970.474.3769  
Limon - 719.775.2313  
Sterling - 970.522.4392  
Wray - 970.332.3133  
Yuma - 970.848.5412

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

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