



### STRESS BUSTERS



Today your child learned about how stress can have a powerful impact on his or her body. Here are some ways that stress can affect you physically:

- upset stomach
- headache
- trouble breathing
- dizziness
- chest pains
- heartburn
- muscle pain, aches, cramps
- change in sleep habits
- change in appetite
- change in weight.

The good news is that because our bodies and our minds are so connected we can also do things with our bodies that help our minds, our whole body, relax. Ask your child to teach you a little bit about how progressive muscle relaxation works!

### AT HOME ACTIVITY

Here are some simple tips for reducing stress. How many of them can you incorporate into your life?

- Avoid it. Don't drive in rush hour. Sidestep hassles. Avoid situations that make you feel anxious, competitive or emotionally drained.
- Build in pleasantness. Schedule things you enjoy: visiting with friends, watching sports, reading on the front porch.

- Eat well and stay active. As you adopt healthier habits, you may find it's easier to cope with life all around.
- Remember that it is easier to deal with stressful things when they are small. To better cope with problems before they feel too big to handle, you can ask for help from your doctor, nurse or other trusted professional.
- Take a break. If you're stuck in a stressful situation, take a few minutes alone to sit, breathe and consider: What must be done now? What can you postpone? Things will look clearer in a few minutes.
- Clear your mind. Concentrate on a peaceful, serene place and go there in your mind.
- Find help. Talk to friends, your health care team, a therapist, a support group, and look for community resources.
- Breathe. Deep, slow breaths will help relax you.
- Stretch. Move around. Shrug your shoulders. Point your toes.



### RELAX IN NATURE

Being surrounded by nature is very good for our minds and bodies. Take some time in the next several days to get outside for a walk, go to a park or garden.