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Being a Single Parent

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Before having children, most people may picture a family with two parents. However, for many people, the reality is that they are the only parent. Although raising a child as a single parent can be challenging, it can also be rewarding. The following are some tips to help you deal with the challenges of being a single parent and create a positive environment for your child.

Finding Help

You may be a single parent, but you are probably not alone. If you have family members or friends who are willing to help, let them. If you don't have family members or friends who can help you, look for a support group for single parents. You'll meet other people who are in similar situations. Participating in a support group gives you a chance to share your feelings and get advice.

Balancing a Busy Life

The life of a single parent can be very busy. In addition to parenting and taking care of your home, you may be working and/or going to school. It's important to find a way to balance all of the parts of your life. The following are some tips:

- Accept help. If friends and family offer their help, take it! This can mean having someone play with your child while you run errands or having someone to call when you need to talk.
- Take advantage of local resources. Many communities offer play groups, after-school activities and parenting classes. These can give you and your child a chance to have fun, learn and make new friends.
- If you don't get enough time with your child, look for creative solutions. For example, find out if your job lets you work flexible hours.
- Don't forget to have fun. Take a break from your busy routine to plan something special for you and your child. For example, take a trip to the zoo or go out for ice cream together.
- Make time for yourself. You need to relax once in a while too! This can be as simple as taking 15 minutes to look at a magazine after your child goes to bed.

Providing Role Models

Children benefit from good role models (adults who set an example of how to behave) of both sexes. Look for family members or friends of the opposite sex to be role models for your child. Invite a positive and responsible family member or friend to spend time with your child. If you don't have a family member or friend available, groups like Big Brothers Big Sisters can help. Check your phone book or [look online](#) for programs in your area.

When You're Overwhelmed

Parenting is hard work. All parents have times when they get angry or frustrated. But don't take out your feelings on your child. If you are worried that you might hurt your child, get help right away. Call the Childhelp USA 24-hour hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453).

Other Organizations

