

10 Tips For Improving Family Mental Health



Creating a mentally-healthy environment for you and your family is easy. Regardless of who or how many members make up your family, there are endless ways to achieve mental wellness while relieving stress and spending time with the people you love. Here's a quick list of ideas, and feel free to make your own – the key words are fun and easy!

1. **Eat dinner together** – As so many families know, finding time to sit down for a family meal can be a challenge, but doing so once a week or even every other week is a prime opportunity to talk, listen and enjoy a good meal together.
2. **Get some exercise** – We all know exercise can be hard work, but it can also be lots of fun for the family and help you feel great. Plan to get together with loved ones to shoot some hoops, go swimming or play a favorite sport.
3. **Go to the zoo or a museum** – Choose a free day and take a trip to the local zoo or museum to learn and explore. Afterwards, treat yourselves to a family lunch or a healthy snack.
4. **Take a walk** – Walking together can be a simple and fun way to get your blood flowing while enjoying the outdoors and the company of family members. Pick a scenic route and get moving.
5. **Watch a movie** – Pick up a good family film, make some popcorn and stay inside for the night.
6. **Get enough rest** – Mental and physical health go hand in hand and you can only be at the top of your game when you've gotten plenty of rest. Make sure you and your family members get a full seven to eight hours of sleep each night.
7. **Pack a healthy lunch** – Encourage the healthy eating habits of your family by packing a healthy lunch. Substitute chips and a soda with healthier snacks like carrots, raisins and fresh juice or water.
8. **Read a book together** – Reading a good book can be one of the simple pleasures of life and a great way to exercise your mind. Select something the whole family can enjoy and read a portion of it aloud each night.
9. **Plan a picnic** – Choose a sunny day, pack a nice lunch and head to the park. Bring tennis rackets or a soccer ball and challenge your family members to a game of one-on-one.
10. **Take a vacation** – Getting away from home and work for a couple days or more is always a treat. Plan a fun and affordable getaway where you and your family can rest, relax and escape your busy schedules.



Sentara EAP is available to provide assistance with the types of challenges we can all face in work or home life. If you are currently faced with a challenge, please call us to schedule a *confidential* appointment with one of our licensed or clinical professionals. 1-800-899-8174 or 757-363-6777

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