STRESS REDUCTION TIPS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

Bury your guilt in the backyard.

Be a mother or father; not a therapist.

Reach out - parents helping other parents are powerful and healing.

Consider how your child’s illness or disability impacts the family in a positive way. Examples:
  
  Your family has become more accepting of differences.
  You have met some great people who, otherwise, would not be part of your life.

Live in the present and enjoy the good times.

Keep a picture of the good times with you.

Take deep breaths regularly. Take more deep breaths.

Laughter is therapeutic.

Guilt is a self made emotion....make time for you.  
  Do something you enjoy doing; even if it doesn't include your family.

Recognize your family’s strengths and build upon them.
COPING WITH YOUR CHILD’S SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Understand your feelings.
Express your emotions.
Educate yourself about your child’s illness or condition.
Keep communications open.
Talk to other parents.
Focus on the strengths and goals that are achievable.
Believe in your child.
Establish routines.
Maintain your sense of humor! There is no co-pay for laughter!!

Remember that taking care of yourself is caring for your family.

Helpful websites:
www.parenttoparentnys.org
www.parenting-ed.org/handouts.htm
www.medicalhomeinfo.org
www.caringtodaymagazine.com
www.caregiver.com

Contact your regional Parent to Parent office to network with other parents.