

Tips for Coping with the Stress of Parenting

- **Parents need support from other adults.** Try talking with your spouse, family, friends, neighbors, church members, school personnel and/or co-workers. You are not alone.
- **Keep your sense of humor**—especially when things don't go the way you had planned.
- **Take time for yourself!** Take a walk, a long bath, read a good book, watch your favorite television show, listen to peaceful music, call a friend, etc.
- **Set rules appropriate for your child; then be consistent and follow through.** Children feel comforted by routine, commitment and promises that are actually kept.



If you're having a difficult parenting moment, here are some places to call for help:

Visit this web site for more information: <http://www.health.state.ok.us/program/mchecd>



Child Guidance Service

Oklahoma State
Department of Health

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Seven Challenging Areas of Parenting Young Children



The Seven Challenging Areas of Parenting are actually Seven Normal Stages of Development...

Research has shown the following 7 stages are typical for young children. Even though they are normal, these 7 stages are often frustrating for parents.

Here are descriptions of the 7 stages and suggestions for helping parents to cope with them. For more information contact your county health department or go online to : <http://www.health.state.ok.us/program/mchedc>

Seven Normal Stages of Development:

“Colic” **Newborn—3 months**

Colic is crying not due from hunger or pain that lasts from 20 minutes up to four hours. It can be worse in late afternoon and evening. Parents often feel helpless and overwhelmed. It doesn't last forever. Here are a few tips:

- Rock your baby.
- Walk while holding your baby.
- Try a short car ride with the baby.
- Call a friend to relieve you for awhile.



“Trained night crying/awakening” **4 months up to 2 years**

Trained night criers are babies over 4 months of age who wake during the night and cry for their parents' attention. It is normal, but can be very frustrating. Here are a few tips:

- Eliminate long afternoon naps.
- Lay sleepy baby in crib while still awake.
- Night checks should be brief and boring.

“Separation Anxiety” **6 months through first year**

Separation anxiety is when your baby doesn't want to leave you. For example, when you have to leave your baby at day care and they cry. This is normal, but can be frustrating for both of you. Here are a few tips:



- Try staying a few minutes for the first week, gradually diminishing the time you spend inside the daycare.
- Be reassuring and tell your child you will see them in a few hours.
- Say your goodbyes and then make your exit quick. The longer you stay, the harder it is for your child.

“Saying ‘No’” **18 months and up**

Toddlers are trying to become their own person. Saying “no” is a push for independence, not a personal attack towards you. Saying “no” for everything at this stage is normal.



- Offer choices to them
- Let them say no



“Picky Eating” **18 months and up**

Children's appetites typically decrease around this age. Their rapid growth is beginning to slow down. This is normal.

- Give small amounts
- Give them a variety of foods
- Try to make meals fun

“Getting into Everything” **12 months or when child starts crawling**

Toddlers are highly active and curious about their worlds. They seem to get into everything. They want to explore. This is normal.



- Put breakables out of reach
- Let there be things to explore they can't hurt

“Toilet Training” **18 months up to 4 years**

Many children are not ready to toilet train before the age of 3 years. This is normal. If you start toilet training too early, it can be very stressful for both the parent and the child.



- Wait until he/she can follow directions.
- Praise for successes; do not ever punish for accidents

For more detailed information on each of the seven stages, call:

