



# Mental Health Essentials: How Can Parents Help?

## Apply the power of Self-regulation and Co-regulation

- **Self-regulation** - Ability to recognize when you are upset and to calm your brain; ability to regulate mood
- **Co-regulation** - Responsive interactions that provide
  - Support
  - Coaching
  - Modeling

Children need these to understand, express and manage thoughts, feelings and behaviors

## Good Health Habits Matter

- Sleep - yours and theirs, wake without alarm clocks, regression for each hour of sleep lost
- Exercise - clinical evidence of reducing depression
- Brain calming practices and relaxation
- Healthy diet - feed children whole food, avoid processed food - nutrients regulate mood and behavior
- Do things you enjoy, practice the habits of happy people

## Pay attention to your own mental health

- Recognize effects of your childhood on your thoughts, feelings and behaviors
- Consider your self-care and self-compassion, take action if you wouldn't treat loved ones the way you are treating yourself
- Address mental health symptoms
  - Trust your gut
  - Talk with a professional, seek treatment

