

TIPS FOR HELPING STRESSED PARENTS

People caring for children put in long hours and love their children completely. Yet, the work of caring for children often goes unappreciated and can be exhausting. Here are some suggestions that might help you help other parents.



SYMPATHIZE with the parent. Say something like, “She seems to be trying your patience,” or “My child used to get upset like that.”

DIVERT the angry attention away from the child. Strike up a conversation with the adult. Ask a question or directions – anything to provide a distraction and time for the parent’s anger to subside.

COMPLIMENT or **PRAISE** the parent or child. Say something positive. “What a big, strong boy you have! How old is he?” or “It’s a lot of work to shop with a toddler. You have my admiration for managing it!”

OFFER SYMPATHY and **HELP**. Sometimes a parent’s anger is fueled by some embarrassment at the fuss the child is making. Say something like, “Children sure can wear you out! Is there anything I can do to help?” “Taking kids out to eat is hard! I’m sure everyone here is remembering that and giving you credit for your patience!”



QUIETLY stand by if the child is being neglected and is in jeopardy—for example, if a child is left unattended in a grocery cart or a toddler is left at a street or parking lot curbside.



DO NOT give angry looks or make negative remarks. Disapproval or anger will only increase the parent’s anger and make matters worse. If someone else is clearly disapproving, step in and be an obvious ally to the angry parent by offering a kind remark or some help.

ALERT the store manager if you are concerned about the child’s physical safety. Ask someone with authority over the parent to communicate that this is a safe place for children.

Provided by the
Colorado Children's Trust Fund



*Because their hands
are in our hands...*