



Pause for a child

Parenting can be a tough job at every stage, and that's especially true if your child has special needs.

Whatever your child's challenge may be, it's important to find ways to enjoy his childhood.

- Define your child by his personality and things he enjoys, not by his special need.
- Include your child in family activities whenever possible, and give her tasks appropriate for her abilities, to help her feel like part of the family team.
- One of the best things you can do for your child is take care of yourself.
- Join a support group in which parents who live with similar experiences can encourage you.
- Participate in a respite care program, so your child can be well cared for when you need some occasional time away.
- Seek information from organizations that can help you advocate for your child in school, within the medical community, and elsewhere.
- Give yourself a break. Sometimes you'll feel frustrated or wish things were different. Express yourself in a journal or with a trusted friend. Remember to celebrate the positive things your child brings to your life.
- Tell your child you love him every day. Whatever his level of understanding, words spoken from the heart can have a positive impact.

