



## Pause for a child

When you're raising children without a partner, it's not unusual to feel lonely, overwhelmed or exhausted.

Your circumstances may not be ideal, but with some creativity and self-care, you and your children can be happy and healthy.

- **Schedule “me” time.** Despite your list of obligations, take some quiet time to relax and just “be”, whether five minutes every day or for a few hours a month.
- **Stay active.** Take regular walks or do other forms of exercise that help keep you organized.
- **Ask for help.** Call on supportive relatives, neighbors, members of your church or the parents of your children's friends to lend a hand. Many would appreciate the opportunity to spend time with your children.
- **Listen to your body and to your children.** When you're overly tired, go to bed early. If your kids want to talk, pause, make eye contact and hear what they have to say. Be honest with them about your circumstances without putting adult worries or burdens on their shoulders.
- **Journal** about your experiences as a single parent and document the things for which you are grateful.
- **Be open to new ideas and opportunities.** Swap child care with other parents; enroll your children in a reputable program offering adult mentors; or use the time your children spend with their other parent learning a new skill or hobby.
- **Take life one day at a time.** Pat yourself on the back for small successes. They eventually add up to big ones.

