Let's face it - parenting can be very stressful. Often times parents face day-to-day difficulties that make life seem overwhelming and can affect how they feel and act when they are home with their families.

**Things that can make parenting stressful:**

- **Trouble handling stress.** Problems with work, money, or relationships put a strain on family life. If a parent or caretaker has trouble managing stress, it can lead to abuse.

- **A lack of parenting skills.** Some parents might not understand how to care for a child's basic needs or they might have unrealistic ideas about a child's abilities and behavior.

- **A problem with alcohol or other drugs.** Alcohol and other drugs impair a person’s ability to act as a responsible, caring parent. They can also make it harder to control emotions, especially anger.

It's important to have a toolkit of things you can do to manage those stressful moments. Here are simple things to do when you feel stressed:

- Put your children in a safe place and leave the room.
- Take a deep breath and count to 20.
- Ask for help.
- Phone a friend.
- Take time out and leave your children with a responsible adult.
- Be aware of your body language and try to change it so that you are more relaxed.
- Take a walk outside.

Find out more at: [http://www.helpandhope.org](http://www.helpandhope.org)
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services