

# Tips to Reduce Stress Before Your Child's Therapy Session



As parents and caregivers of children with special needs, it is easy to overlook your own well-being. It is important to ask “How can we care for our children if we are not caring for ourselves?” Here are some tips that may help:

- **Getting a good night's sleep is vital for both parents and child. Enabling you to productively participate in your child's therapy.**
- **Plan ahead:**
  - **Arrange childcare for siblings.**
  - **Check local weather , traffic and plan appropriate transportation.**
  - **Allow plenty of time to travel to your appointment, including arranging pick up early enough if you are using a transportation service (e.g. Logisticare) to ensure you will arrive at your scheduled appointment on time.**
  - **Pack something entertaining like a good book, magazine or coloring book, for your other children who can't participate in therapy.**
  - **Bring a healthy snack for you and your child (e.g. fruit and water).**
  - **Pack an essential emergency bag (diaper, wipes, extra clothes, medicines/medical supplies and water).**
  - **Prepare a written list of questions and concerns; include any new medication, news from other therapies and school concerns to share with the therapist.**
  - **Bring all of your child's equipment (i.e. braces, splints, sensory vest, wheelchair, etc.).**
- **Prepare your meals or have a meal plan for after your session.**
- **Things you can do to mentally shift gear and get ready for therapy. ( Listen to music, do a few breathing exercises, or simply sit in silence).**
- **Practice positive self-talk. Once you arrive to the outpatient site for therapy remember to breathe for a few seconds and give yourself a positive compliment “Good Job!”. Remember that bringing your child to therapy takes courage, self-discipline, and commitment.**
- **Remember to make sure that you and your child are physically and emotionally available for therapy. Learn strategies , ask questions and don't allow your phone to distract you in any way unless it's a true emergency.**

For additional resources to assist you, please visit

<https://www.childrens-specialized.org/for-patients-and-families/care-connector-main>

