

Calling on Support of Others During Times of Need

You and your family do not need to face life's challenges alone; you can call on the support of others in your immediate family, extended family and local community during difficult times.

A family who has a range of support systems to call on during difficult times has the support of others to call on when required.

Support systems available to support your family during difficult times could include relatives, close friends, neighbours, people at school, child care services, your healthcare team, services that help with the house or the yard or other community services.

Remember that just because a support system is 'paid for' (such as After School Care) doesn't undermine its value in providing much needed support to your family during difficult times. To prepare for difficult or stressful times, it is useful to identify the support people and services available to your family in advance. You can write these down on the table below for easy reference.

Immediate Family	Extended Family	Community

Circle possible support options once plotted in the table above.

Immediate Family	E.g. Mum, Dad, Brother, Sister, Carer.
Extended Family	E.g. Grandmother, Grandfather, Uncle, Aunty, Cousin.
Community	Teachers, hospital staff, community health staff, babysitters, school friends, workmates, GP, social worker, neighbour, church friends, support group members.

Below are some other strategies that your family could use during a challenging family time:

1. Think through the main people in the various circles of support who could act as 'spokesperson' on your family's behalf to others who are concerned. This may mean you identify one work colleague, one family member (on each side of a family) and one or two key friends who you can keep informed on a regular basis and ask them to pass on certain information to other people. Just be clear about what detail of information they can pass on as maintaining privacy is important.
2. Find creative ways to communicate – send group emails or text messages. Be sure to thank people for their concern and show your appreciation.
3. Write a list of some key tasks which could be handed over to certain people for a few days or weeks. For example, you could ask one or two neighbours to be in charge of collecting your mail and mowing your lawn for a short period of time. Or, you could ask a really good friend to make sure they get your child over to play on the weekend or an extended family member to coordinate the provision of one or two home cooked meals.

Asking others for help during tough times can sometimes feel like a daunting task in itself and many families may feel reluctant to do so. It is important to remember, many family members may not know that you need help, but would be more than happy to step in if asked. Communication and working together is a key feature of building resilience to cope during challenging times.

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