



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Oakland & Macomb County

SELF-CARE WHEN YOU HAVE A CHALLENGING CHILD



Self-Care Isn't Selfish. Raising a child who struggles with behavior or connection is some of the hardest and most meaningful work you'll ever do, but here's the truth: you matter too!

"Self-care isn't something you do after everything else gets done. It's something you do so you can keep doing everything else." - Nicole T. Barlow, Wellness Coach

Many parents and caregivers hear "self-care" and imagine bubble baths and candles. While those things are nice and sometimes necessary, self-care when raising challenging kids is much deeper than that. It's about building rhythms of rest, regulation, and connection into your daily life, so you don't burn out or break down.

When you care for yourself—body, mind, and spirit, you strengthen your ability to show up with patience, compassion, and creativity. Self-care isn't about perfection; it's about sustainability.

- **Start small:** Take five minutes to breathe, walk, or rest. Say "no" to something non-essential. Go to bed 15 minutes earlier.
- **Reconnect who you are outside of your parenting or caregiving role:** Read for pleasure, laugh with a friend, revisit a hobby or learn a new one, even for ten minutes a week. Remind yourself you are more than your parenting role.
- **Build rhythms, not lists:** Self-care isn't a task to check off. It's a rhythm to live by, like setting boundaries on your time, eating regularly, or building in quiet moments to rest your heart and mind.
- **Ask for help:** Accept and ask for support from friends, family, or sitters—you weren't meant to do this alone.
- **Find your people:** Join a support group or community that truly understands your journey.

Orchards
Children's
Services

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For more information
on the Post Adoption
Resource Center
please contact us at
313-530-9746

Or visit our website at
PARC-orchards.org



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SELF-CARE WHEN YOU HAVE A CHALLENGING CHILD (continued)

When you're raising a child with challenging behaviors, it's easy to feel like there's no time or energy left for yourself. But skipping self-care has real consequences for you and for your child.

Why It Matters

Skipping self-care can lead to burnout, isolation, or detachment. But even small acts of care help you respond with empathy, set calmer boundaries, and model resilience for your child.

Without rest and support, you are more likely to:

- React with anger or detachment
- Struggle to stay consistent with discipline
- Feel isolated or hopeless
- Burn out and disengage

But with regular care, even small amounts, you are more likely to:

- Respond with empathy
- Problem-solve with creativity
- Set and hold boundaries more calmly
- Model regulation and resilience for their child



Blocked Care

Blocked Care happens when the ongoing stress of parenting a child with challenging behaviors leaves you feeling numb, resentful, or disconnected. It's a biological protection response, not a personal failure. Blocked care can look like: feeling emotionally distant, dreading interactions, irritability or hopelessness, or losing joy in parenting.

Your brain shifts into survival mode, and even though you keep doing the tasks of parenting, you may feel overwhelmed or shut down inside. If this sounds familiar, you're not alone—and you're not broken. Healing begins with support from others who understand, whether that's a trauma informed therapist or a community of caregivers walking a similar path.



Hope for You and Your Child

Change and growth are possible. With compassion, consistency, and connection, you help create the space your child needs to heal. And you don't have to do it alone—resources and community are here for you.

Take a breath. Notice the small wins. Remember: ***you are doing important work, and it matters!*** Even if your child can't show it right now, your efforts are making a difference. Keep going – we are with you all the way!

**Information expanded from: Creating a Family—Navigating Challenging Behaviors*

PARC in the Community

PARC continues to hold the Macomb and Southfield parent supports group on a monthly basis and starting in the new year, we're excited to add a brand new group in Wayne County!

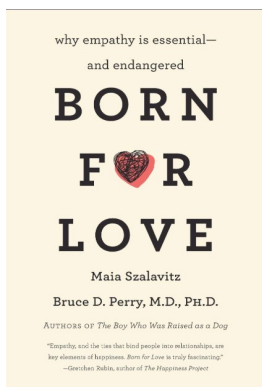
In October, families joined PARC in Ortonville at Therapy Ranch at Stillwater Stables and Stays for a day focused on Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy. Families were able to explore the services offered and were able to meet and interact with the horses, while enjoying activities including an art therapy project, a horse-powered reading exercise, yoga alongside the horses, a live psychotherapy demonstration, and of course, lunch! Parents got to participate in an informational session on how equine therapy can be accessed through the Adoption & Guardianship Assistance Office. We were so lucky to have such a beautiful fall day for this event!



In December, PARC held a holiday party. Families came together to enjoy holiday crafts, glitter tattoos, cookie decorating, and a delicious pizza lunch. The highlight of the day was a visit from our very special guest, Santa, who brought plenty of smiles as families posed for photos to put in their new frames.

PARC has several things in the works for the upcoming months, be sure to keep an eye out. As always, if you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to reach out!

Suggested Read



Born for Love: Why Empathy Is Essential - and Endangered **Authors: Bruce D. Perry & Maia Szalavitz**

In this book, the authors explain how empathy develops, why it is essential for our development into healthy adults, and how to raise kids with empathy while navigating threats from technological change and other forces in the modern world.

Perry and Szalavitz show that compassion underlies the qualities that make society work—trust, altruism, collaboration, love, charity—and how difficulties related to empathy are key factors in social problems such as war, crime, racism, and mental illness. Even physical health, from infectious diseases to heart attacks, is deeply affected by our human connections to one another.

As *Born for Love* reveals, recent changes in technology, child-rearing practices, education, and lifestyles are starting to rob children of necessary human contact and deep relationships—the essential foundation for empathy and a caring, healthy society. Sounding an important warning bell, *Born for Love* offers practical ideas for combating the negative influences of modern life and fostering positive social change to benefit us all. It reveals how and why the brain learns to bond with others—and is a stirring call to protect our children from new threats to their capacity to love.

Valuable Resources



NEED A HAND FEEDING YOUR FAMILY? YOUR NEIGHBORS WANT TO HELP!
REQUEST A FREE LASAGNA DELIVERY WITH THESE 5 STEPS:

- 
1
Scan the QR code or visit lasagnalove.org
- 
2
Get matched to a local lasagna mama or papa
- 
3
Coordinate a delivery day and time
- 
4
Get a safe, contactless delivery
- 
5
Sign up again the next month!

Upcoming Meetings, Trainings & Events

ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

When: 2nd Tuesday of the month **Time:** 6:00 - 7:30 PM
Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 500, Southfield, MI 48075
Facilitator: Betsy Thomas



MACOMB COUNTY PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

When: Last Wednesday of the month **Time:** 6:00 - 7:30 PM
Where: New Life Presbyterian Church -11300 19 Mile Rd., Sterling Heights, MI 48314



DAN DUBOVSKY: 2-DAY HYBRID PARENT TRAINING

When: Saturday, January 24, 2026 &
Saturday, January 31, 2026
Time: 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Topic: ADHD, ODD, Autism...Maybe Not. Interventions and understanding when all that you have been taught isn't working
Where: Orchards Children's Services **OR** via Microsoft Teams
24901 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 601, Southfield, MI 48075 **OR**
Microsoft Teams ID: 216 487 209 233 0
Microsoft Teams Passcode: e5st2Cd2



A light breakfast and lunch will be served.
Childcare is limited and will be available on a first come first serve basis

NEW WAYNE COUNTY PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

When: 3rd Tuesday of the month - starting February 17, 2026
Where: Lincoln Park - be on the lookout for more details!

★ Please keep an eye out for updates via email and social media! Connect with PARC at:
Website: parc-orchards.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/OCSPostAdoptionResourceCenter
Email: parcocs@orchards.org