

# Parents, children and stress

What can you do?

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Families all over the world can have stress.

That is normal.

You feel stress when you worry, when something bad has happened, or when you are afraid.

When you have stress, you do not feel good.

In this story, we give tips and advice about stress in the family.



This is a family in the Netherlands. The parents are called Marian and Daniel. They have four children: Lina (11 years), Mo (8 years), Hana (4 years) and Sem (1 year).

Marian and Daniel love their children and are proud of them.



Marian and Daniel often worry about money, family, where they live, and about the future.

They have a lot of stress, their heads are full.

With all this stress, it is not nice at home.

The children are still young, but they feel that sometimes things are not going well with their parents.

Sem is only 1 year old, but he also feels the stress.

The children cannot always understand why Marian and Daniel are angry or sad and sometimes shout.



Sometimes the children are active or they do not listen.  
Because Daniel has stress, he cannot stay calm.  
He wants to stay calm with the children, but he still shouts.  
Sometimes he holds his children tightly by their arms.  
The children do not understand why dad does that.  
They are scared and sad.



Marian is very tired and her head is full.

A lot has happened in her life.

Marian has many worries.

Because of this, she does not feel good and is often quiet.

Marian does not answer the children's questions.

She does not know what to do.

The children do not understand why mom does not talk much.

They feel alone.

Daniel and Marian want things to go well for the children and they want to protect them, even in a difficult time.

But that is not so easy because they have stress.



Sara is an aunt of Marian. She comes to visit.

Marian says that she and Daniel have a lot of stress and that is why they get angry with the children quickly.

Sara says it is good if the parents talk about this together.

Sara says:

“Everyone has stress sometimes.

When you have a lot of stress, you do not feel good, you cannot think well, and you do things you do not want to do.

When something bad happens then, you get angry or sad quickly.

It happens to me too!

You also feel it in your body.

You are often very tired or you have, for example, a headache.”



Sara continues:

“When the children feel good, they become happy and healthy. To help the children, it is important that the parents take good care of themselves and relax.”

Marian and Sara decide to go for a short walk outside together every day to relax.

When they walk outside, they can talk for a moment about stress and problems.

They can also talk about nice things then.



Sara gives a few more tips.

She says that it is important to eat and drink healthy and to go to bed on time when you have stress.

Sara continues:

“You can choose something that makes you feel better.

For example, go to the market or ride a bike, do sports, listen to music, read, write or work as a volunteer.

Or do something nice with the children, talk with friends or family, breathe calmly, or pray.

The problems are not gone then, but you can still do something that makes you feel better.”



Marian talks with Daniel about her conversation with Aunt Sara.

Daniel listens to the tips that Sara gave.

They make plans together about how they will do things differently at home.

These are their plans:

- If the children do something wrong, the parents try to stay calm. They do not get angry and do not shout.
- If the parents do get angry, they count to 10 to stay calm, take a deep breath, leave the room for a moment or go for a short walk outside.
- The parents give the children a compliment when they do something well.
- The parents do more fun things with the children.
- Together with the children, they make plans about tidying up, eating together and doing homework.



Marian and Daniel try to deal with stress in a different way.

Marian goes for a short walk outside when she feels stress and Daniel listens to music.

The parents play games with the children more often, or they go to the park together.

And Daniel gives the children a compliment when they do something well. The children are happy that things are going better with their dad and mom.

When things go well, it is nice at home, the children listen well and they are happy.



Daniel and Marian are happy that things are better at home. They also talk more about their feelings and they support each other. When they do not know something, they call someone for advice. Someone they trust. For example, family, friends, the doctor, or child health care. They find it important that things go well with each other and the children.

## Do you also have stress?

Then talk about it with your partner, friends or family.

Or look below!

### **Sometimes more help is needed**

- You can talk with someone from your neighborhood. Someone you trust.
- Do you want to talk with someone about your problems at home? Call child health care or the neighborhood team for help or advice.
- Is it dangerous at home for you or for someone else? And do you want to talk about this with someone? Call Veilig Thuis (0800-2000) for help or advice. This can also be anonymous, without saying your name.
- Are you very afraid that someone will hurt you? For example, someone hits, or someone has a weapon in their hand? Call 112. Someone on the phone will ask what is happening. If needed, the police, the fire brigade or the ambulance will come.
- Watch a video about stress [here](#).

## Colophon

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