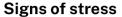


Looking after yourself

FOR PROFESSIONALS

As a professional working in out-of-home care (OOHC), it's vital to look after yourself. Staying attuned to your emotions, stressors and anxieties is extremely important. Your emotions can also impact the decisions you make.



- Feeling physically or mentally exhausted most of the time
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Loss of concern for the kids or families you're working with
- Feeling like you can no longer make a difference
- Feeling unsatisfied in your work or relationships
- Taking longer to complete work tasks, or spending more time procrastinating
- Feeling moody or frequently lashing out at others
- Often feeling sick, suffering headaches or stomach upsets
- Using alcohol, food, caffeine or drugs to help you cope or feel better

Helpful strategies

There are a range of strategies and supports that will help reduce the impact of working in the OOHC space. These include self-care strategies and supports in your workplace. Once you identify strategies that work for you, they will be most effective if you make them part of your day-to-day routine.

Set boundaries

Prioritise, set limits and work with your manager to detemine what you can say 'no' to

Self-Care Strategies

- Learn to recognise your body's signs of stress
- Set limits learn to prioritise tasks and actions
- Schedule time for relaxation, leisure and exercise
- Maintain consistent sleep routines
- Maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle



- Be optimistic in your thinking reflect on the positive aspects of your life, including the impact of your work with kids and families
- Seek support talk to a friend, family member or therapist
- Take leave and plan for regular breaks
- Wherever possible have lunch away from your desk
- If you are not on duty, limit responses to work emails, phone calls or texts
- Take time to connect with culture and spend time with your community
- Take time to be spiritual in a way that's meaningful to you

Social connections

- Maintain social connections outside of work. Keep in touch with family and friends
- Develop and maintain networks with colleagues and those working in the same field
- Join professional networks or bodies to build relationships with others in your

Field supervision

- Participate in regular reflective supervision to discuss concerns, issues and successes relating to kids on your case load
- Talk openly about any concerns or anxieties around kids on your caseload
- Tell your supervisor if work tasks are becoming overwhelming, and discuss strategies to manage or reduce the burden
- If you participate in group supervision, ensure you discuss kids on your caseload. Seek support, ideas and alternate perspectives from your colleagues
- Use supervision to discuss and plan workloads, access to leave and training opportunities
- Use supervision to discuss the expectations and parameters of your role

<u>Developing knowledge and competency</u>

- Improve your knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting kids in OOHC
- Attend training LINKS Training and Support offers a range of professional training
- Join professional associations and bodies to access current information, research and professional support

If you identify a change in your ability to cope, please speak to your manager. Your employer has wellbeing initiatives and services to support you.