



My Family | Single Parenting Worksheet

Although children are important, they do not substitute for relationships with other adults. Everyone, including single parents, needs and benefits from having a circle of close friends. Having this support system serves as a source of strength, makes it easier to handle problems, provides a buffer against stress and may lead to a more positive parenting experience. Children also benefit from a parent's support network. Parents tend to be more patient and loving with their children when their own emotional needs are met. Studies show one of the most important factors for effective single parenting is having a strong support network of friends.

Who do you turn to for help?

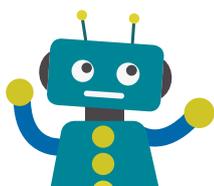
Write down who provides the following types of support for you.

- Who provides emotional support - someone to talk to and share?
- Who helps you to handle stress?
- Who reminds you that you are cared for and valued?
- Who do you talk to about specific needs such as where to get bargains for children's clothes, what doctor to choose, how to handle discipline etc?
- Who answers questions or gives suggestions about personal, legal, or medical concerns?
- Who can help with concrete support such as money, food, and clothing?
- Who can help with emergency assistance, transportation, or child care?



Do you have enough people supporting you?

1. Write your name in the middle of a piece of paper and draw a circle around it.
2. Next, write the names of people who provide emotional, financial, or other types of help to you.
3. Place the names of people who provide the most support for you closer to your name on the paper. Include friends, family members, professionals, neighbours, and anyone else who provides support.





You now know how many people make up your support network. You also know how strong your support network is by seeing how close your name is to the other names on the paper.

4. Next draw lines between the names of the people on your paper who spend time together. This will help you see how connected your network is.

5. How does yours look? If your circle is too small, think about people you would like to get to know better. If your network is too large, it becomes difficult to stay connected. You may have too many demands on your time and energy. How might you reduce the size?

6. How are people in your network connected to you and each other? A tightly connected network may provide more support, but it may also have too much control over you. The group may expect you to do things their way.

7. How can you change your support network to fit your needs?

