



Seeking Emotional Support

Let's face it: we are all human. From time to time, our emotions take over and we find ourselves with strong negative motions: overwhelmed, lost, alone, confused, or even angry! Reaching out to seek emotional support can be one of the most powerful gifts and healing experiences you can give yourself. When a parent or caregiver connects with a support group or another parent who has faced similar challenges and “walked in your shoes,” it offers a powerful reassurance that *you are not alone*.

Emotional support can come from many sources. Family and friends know you best. Doctors, therapists, and religious organizations can help to address unanswered questions. There is also a community of people who have much in common with you, available through support groups, online forums, conferences, workshops, and parent-to-parent connections. Feeling supported in even small ways can help to lighten your feelings, make it easier to cope with your emotions or situation, and help you to see that there are “silver linings” and “light at the end of the tunnel.”

Actively look for emotional support: you can “connect” in person, online, at a support group meeting, or through a call from a Family TIES Support Parent. Figure out which form is the right fit for you. By dealing with your emotions, you can find a sense of peace and calm, gain new perspectives and focus, learn new strategies for parenting, and cope with the everyday struggles of being a parent or caregiver for someone with special needs.

One of the most important things you can do in caring for someone with special needs is to care for your needs first, so you can be a more effective parent and caregiver to the ones you love. Family TIES of Massachusetts staff can help in finding the right supports for you.

**For more information, contact your Family TIES Regional Coordinator
at 1-800-905-8437 or www.massfamilyties.org**