



Leah Chandler



SPECIAL CARE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

It isn't just a child with special needs who needs EXTRA CARE – so does the WHOLE FAMILY says supermum *Leah Chandler*.

I am a mum who has three children. Two of them just happen to have special needs.

It can be hard identifying how to help and then to find the strategies that can help them live a happy life. It can also be very straining on the whole family, especially if there is tricky behaviour involved such as epic meltdowns over certain foods or getting dressed, amongst other things.

I have been there and find that I am still there quite often.

I have so much empathy for the families that deal with this on a day-to-day basis. I want you to know that you are not alone and there are some simple things you can do to stay 'sane' and help your family cope. Here's my own survival guide.

1. BUILD A NETWORK

Get help from the right people that will assist your child and build a network (occupational therapists, behavioural psychologists, physiotherapists, paediatricians). Don't be afraid to ask questions. You are your child's biggest advocate, so ask for what you need.

2. COMMUNICATE

Talk to your family about what is happening and open up the discussion about helping one another and coping techniques.

3. INCLUDE EVERYONE

The children in the family without disability often get less attention than the ones with a disability. Make sure you have strategies in place for these children to have time with you as it is also very stressful on them.

4. TAKE TIME OUT

Make time for yourself and your partner. Even if it is only a small amount of time – find time for a bubble bath, a walk in nature, dinner or fun with your friends. You can't help each other when you are burnt out, and you can't work as a team either.

5. KEEP HEALTHY AND MOVE

If you encourage your whole family to do fun active things, you will all be able to cope well and have a better family connection, not to mention great health! Kids-Fit Australia (kidsfitaustralia.com) provides an excellent online program which makes this easy.

6. EAT WELL


You are what you eat! Respect yourself and your family enough to take care of your body, and get the whole family involved. Better gut health means better behaviour.

7. PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Find time each day to practice mindful breathing i.e. when you get up and before you go to bed. You will connect your mind and body, become more aware of how you feel and have a better day and sleep. Five minutes can make such a difference!

8. LIMIT TECHNOLOGY

It is important to have rules for technology for the household. Switch off, relax, slow down and teach your kids to do the same.

Leah is the founder of Kids-Fit Australia + Family-Fit Online, a program providing the tools for a family to become fit for everyday life! 

"YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S BIGGEST ADVOCATE. SO ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED!"

FAMILY-FIT ONLINE:

LAUGH – PLAY – CONNECT // REGISTER AT KIDSFITAUSTRALIA.COM