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## About Us

Front Range Psychological Associates, LLC is a mental health practice dedicated to promoting and providing mental health care to children, adolescents, adults, seniors, families, and couples. We provide counseling services as well as psychological testing. We work with insurance carriers and also accept fee-for-service payment.

Dr. Bridget Engel and Dr. Stephanie Smith are both licensed clinical psychologists in Colorado, and have extensive experience working with clients in improving psychological health.

## Ribbon Cutting

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting a ribbon cutting and open house at our Erie location on Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. Even though we have been in Erie for several months, this will be an “official” way for us to celebrate our Northern expansion efforts! Please stop by and join us at 5:30 p.m. for food and fun – and to check out our new home!

## Stress Management In the Real World

I just finished reading an article on stress management in a popular magazine. It had some very familiar tips for dealing with daily stress: don't pig out on carbs or other “bad” foods, don't zone out in front of the television, don't smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol. Instead the authors suggested long walks, warm baths, regular exercise, wholesome meals – sounds great, right? Maybe for people with loads of free time on their hands!!! What about those of us who work, raise kids, have a significant other, have cats, dogs, fish, and gerbils, and have a long driveway and sidewalk to shovel? Well, forget it – those solutions just aren't practical!

It's true that stress is a major problem for a lot of us. It can cause serious emotional problems and has recently been shown to be a major risk factor for physical health problems as well. And it is also true that it needs to be managed in a sensible, healthy way. But what can we do when we get home at 6 p.m. with 2 starving kids, no veggies in the house, and an armload of homework to do before bedtime?

## Contact Us

<http://www.frontrangepyschology.com/>

**303-828-3080**

If you would like to be removed from our email list, please send a note to:

[drsmith@frontrangepyschology.com](mailto:drsmith@frontrangepyschology.com)

## Pass It On!

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to your co-workers, friends, or family members.

### **PLAN AHEAD**

1. Buy as many easy, made-ahead meals as possible. There are more and more healthy choices at the grocery store that are also easy. Pre-made salads, veggie pizzas, rotisserie chickens, are all sensible choices for busy families. Much healthier – and often tastier than fast food or chips and dip!
2. Pack a snack for the kids (and yourself) for the ride home from school/daycare/work. If this is too overwhelming - just eat the leftovers from lunch – this way you won't be so hungry when you get home – and you might buy yourself 5 minutes before the meltdown period begins.

### **GOOD SLEEP GOES A LONG WAY**

1. As any parent can tell you, we can live with very little, and often-interrupted sleep. But the truth is, most of us get much less sleep than we need – parents or not. We can all deal with life's stresses better with adequate sleep. Try going to bed early just ONE night per week. And when I say early, I mean early – like 8 p.m.– or whenever the kids are in bed. See what a difference those few extra zzz's can make the rest of the week.

### **TURN OFF THE TUBE**

1. Having the television, radio, iPod, or MP3 player on is often enjoyable, but in times of high stress, they can just make things worse. Try turning them off when the kids are screaming, and see if it makes a difference. Sometimes we all need the TV to do a little “babysitting” at the end of the day when we are making dinner, but when the adults are talking, the baby's wailing, and the toddler is singing - it just makes life more crazy.

### **GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK**

1. Can't be everything to everybody? Not Super-mom? Not a perfect dad? Have kids who throw tantrums? Make a mistake at work? Could stand to lose a couple pounds? Me too. I'm not perfect, neither are you...but I bet we both do the best we can with the things we have. Give yourself a break, and allow yourself to be imperfect sometimes, and let things go undone for a day or two. Does anyone really care if the plants are limp from lack of watering, and the bathtub ring is so dark it looks like a stencil? Well, maybe I care a little bit, but these are not the things that make life great. An important part of stress management is knowing what is worth fretting about, and what is worth letting go. Making sure your family is safe and loved is important, having a perfectly clean house is not.

## **CHANGE THE SCENERY**

1. Even if you don't have the time (or desire) to go to the gym, or hike up the Flatirons, most of us have a minute or two to go outside. Once out there, walk to the end of the street, pick up the trash in your yard, or kick the ball around with your kids. All of this counts as exercise – take advantage of it! This outside time can also double as quality time with your kids!
2. Try out a new activity when you have a free hour on the weekends. There are a lot of neat free or low cost activities that can provide family fun, while also getting you out of your daily grind. When was the last time you went to the rec center for a swim, walked around the library, cruised Pearl Street, or even just tried a different grocery store?

## **HAVE SOMEONE TO COMPLAIN TO**

1. OK, maybe “complain” isn't the best word, but support systems can go a long way in stress management. Neighborhoods, playgroups, craft groups, church groups, other parents, co-workers, and family members can all provide an ear – and some advice – when you're feeling overwhelmed and need some relief – they might even offer to help out with some of your responsibilities!

## **GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT**

1. If you have tried everything you can think of to manage your stress and it still seems overwhelming, it may be time to seek professional help. Psychologists are trained to assist people in managing life's stressors, and work with their clients to improve mental and emotional health. If you are wondering if counseling is for you, give a psychologist a call and they can help you decide if a pro is what you need.

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## Feedback

**Please let us know what you think about our newsletter! And also feel free to email or call us with questions, or for more information about the information presented in this newsletter, or about the services provided by FRPA.**

**We are happy to answer your questions, and take pride in responding quickly and thoroughly to our clients' needs.**

