

THE PMDD PROJECT

PARENTING WITH PMDD

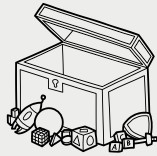
Parenting is challenging, but living with Pre Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD) can add an extra layer of difficulty.

It's important to have coping strategies and a way to explain your condition to your children in a way that makes them feel secure and informed.

COPING STRATEGIES FOR PARENTING WITH PMDD

Prepare “Luteal Phase Kits” for your children:

Prepare small activity kits or boxes for your children that you can pull out during your luteal phase. Include toys, books, or crafts they can enjoy independently. This not only keeps them engaged but also helps them understand that it is a time when mum needs extra rest.



Use positive reinforcement to encourage cooperation:

During the luteal phase, it's common to feel more irritable or easily overwhelmed. Use positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour, like offering praise or small rewards for cooperation and quiet play. This reduces stress and helps maintain a positive atmosphere.

Plan low-effort, bonding activities:

Opt for easy, low-energy activities that still allow you to bond with your children. Watching a film together or doing simple crafts can help maintain closeness without overwhelming you.

This way, you're still connecting without needing to exert too much energy.

Prepare meals and snacks ahead of time:

Meal preparation can be exhausting when you're experiencing PMDD symptoms. Try prepping easy meals and snacks ahead of your luteal phase. Keep simple, healthy options on hand that your children can access independently, such as fruit, yoghurt, or pre-made sandwiches.



Teach emotional awareness:

Children can benefit from learning about emotions. Teach them about “feeling days” when emotions are stronger and that it’s okay to feel different sometimes. This can help them understand why you might need more quiet time and allows them to express their feelings too.

Take breaks outside:

When possible, take your kids for a walk, visit the park, or head to the library. Fresh air and simple outings can lift your mood, and these activities help keep everyone happily distracted.

Involve your partner or support network in parenting duties:

Ask your partner, family, or friends to step in during your luteal phase. Having someone handle tasks like school runs or bedtime routines can give you much-needed time to rest and recuperate.

Take care of yourself with compassion:

Parenting is hard enough without adding the challenges of PMDD. There’s no shame in needing extra support. Reach out to your GP, a therapist, or your support network when you’re feeling isolated or overwhelmed.

Involve your children in calming activities:

If your children are old enough, try involving them in calming activities like yoga, mindfulness exercises, or simple breathing techniques. These not only help you relax but also teach them valuable tools for emotional regulation.

Use visual cues for boundaries:

Set up visual cues to signal when you need rest. For example, you could hang a sign on your door or wear a specific item to let your children know it’s “quiet time,” helping them understand your need for space without having to explain each time.

Simplify daily tasks:

Focus on essential parenting tasks, such as providing safety and love, and let go of non-essential chores during this phase. Lower your expectations, and don’t hesitate to let the housework or other responsibilities wait until you’re feeling better.

Remind yourself it’s okay not to be perfect:

It’s easy to feel like you’re falling behind, but remember that it’s okay if everything isn’t perfect. Focus on what’s most important: your wellbeing and your children’s happiness. Let go of the pressure for perfection, especially during the luteal phase.

HOW TO EXPLAIN PMDD TO CHILDREN

It's important to talk to your children about PMDD in a way that's age-appropriate and reassuring.

Here are some tips on how to explain it:

Keep it simple:

For young children, you can explain PMDD as something that happens in your body each month that makes you feel tired or upset. Let them know that it's not their fault, and it will pass soon.

"SOMETIMES MY BODY FEELS TIRED AND A BIT UPSET, BUT I'LL FEEL BETTER SOON."

Reassure them:

Let your children know that even though you might feel different during certain times, you still love and care for them the same way. Reassurance is key to helping them understand that your mood isn't a reflection of them.



Explain it's a medical condition:

For older children, you can explain PMDD as a medical condition that affects how you feel emotionally and physically.

"PMDD IS SOMETHING THAT AFFECTS HOW I FEEL BEFORE MY PERIOD. IT MAKES ME FEEL TIRED AND EMOTIONAL, BUT I'M WORKING ON TAKING CARE OF MYSELF SO I CAN FEEL BETTER."

Answer their questions:

Encourage your children to ask questions and provide honest, age-appropriate answers. This helps them feel involved and reduces any anxiety they might have about your symptoms.

Teach empathy:

Use PMDD as a way to teach empathy. Explain that sometimes people feel different emotions due to things happening in their body, and it's okay to ask for help or take breaks when needed.

Set boundaries gently:

When you're feeling irritable or overwhelmed, let your children know that you might need some quiet time.

**"MUMMY NEEDS A LITTLE
QUIET TIME TO REST RIGHT
NOW, BUT WE'LL PLAY
TOGETHER LATER."**

Parenting with PMDD can be challenging, but with the right strategies in place, it's possible to manage both your symptoms and your family life.

By explaining PMDD to your children in a way that they understand and reassuring them of your love, you can help them feel secure even on tough days.

Remember, it's okay to ask for help, lower your expectations during difficult times, and take care of yourself.



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