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Five strategies to reduce the stress on single parents

Single parents are overburdened with responsibilities. They must care for the children, the house, and the yard, as well as prepare meals, pay bills and work full-time.

Written by [FE Lifestyle](#)

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Most single parents suffer at some point.

A survey by the United Nations suggests that 7.5% of households in India are headed by single parents, the majority of which are managed by single moms. A rarity in the 1990s, the percentage of one-parent homes in India almost quadrupled in the previous four years, from 4 percent in 2015 to 7.5 percent in 2020. We presumably all know a single parent in our own families or communities; they could be our siblings, friends, co-workers, or even our parents! So, it should not come as a surprise that being a single parent can be daunting and tiring, given that over 60% of single parents are employed and the majority are single mothers.

The adversity faced by single parents, and specifically single mothers, in particular, is:

- 70% of them strain to meet their living expenses; 65% are in paid jobs, but many are still fighting to make ends meet.
- 90% are concerned with their future financial security.

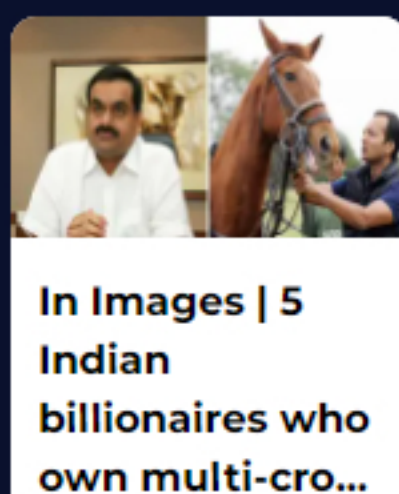
Most single parents suffer at some point. Despite the fact that financial hardships may be the first thing that comes to mind, single mothers struggle in a variety of other ways. And while money might have been a solution to a number of problems, there are other ways in which people could help that are significantly more meaningful and beneficial.

If you want to help struggling single parents, consider one of the following options suggested by Dr. Malini Saba. She is a psychologist, single parent, former Saba Group chairman, and founder of the Anannke Foundation:

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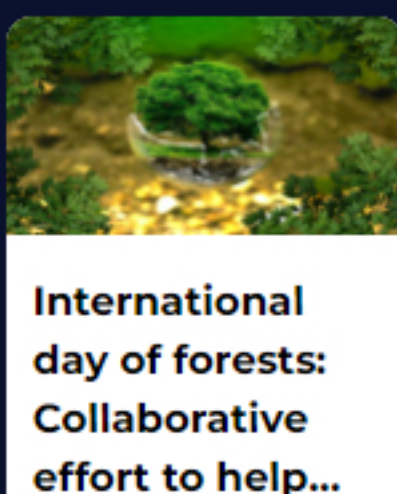
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1. Consider giving them a few small treats sometimes:

Seldom do single parents have a companion to send them flowers, perfume, or chocolates. And because parents are so focused on taking care of their children, they rarely consider rewarding themselves. Hence, sending them occasional treats is a terrific way to support them. It might be as simple as sending them a handwritten card expressing your admiration for their accomplishments. The treats need not be large or costly. Yet, a small gift they would not purchase for themselves might go a long way toward making them feel special, cherished, and more at ease.

2. Look after:

Single parents are overburdened with responsibilities. They must care for the children, the house, and the yard, as well as prepare meals, pay bills and work full-time. They seldom receive a break, and even when they make an effort to manage everything, they frequently fail.

Offer to care for something for an entire day; Mow their grass, Offer to help by bringing up their sick child or staying with them at home. Tell them that you are willing to care for her children and bring her nutritious food, medications, etc. if she falls ill. You can also save them a substantial amount of time by collecting their grocery list, doing their shopping, picking up their dry cleaning, and volunteering to bring their children to school every day while you do these things for yourself.

If you commit to performing anything consistently, make sure to provide ample notice if you need to fully stop or miss an instance.

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3. Help with babysitting:

Childcare expenses are difficult enough for two-income families, so you can imagine how difficult it is for single parents. While the majority of single parents work and so pay for childcare, they rarely pay for additional, non-essential childcare. This limits the amount of time the parent has to spend alone, with friends, or on dates.

Offer to be their daytime or overnight babysitter and let them have the opportunity to have a drink with a friend, go on a date, or simply run errands without the children. Take the children to your home or to a park so they can spend a few hours alone reading, taking a bubble bath, watching a movie, or engaging in other activities they may not have the opportunity to do regularly.

If you want to go above and beyond, attempt to do it once a week or once a month so that they can have regular time for themselves. But, even if you can just offer it once, they will be grateful.

4. Provide emotional support and keep vigilance:

Sometimes, having someone willing to listen while you vent about your difficulties might mean more than anything else. Provide them with the emotional support of knowing you are there to listen and are on their side. Be supportive, even if you don't really agree with everything they say. And if you notice that they can change something or that they portray themselves as victims when they are not, you should wait until they are in a better mood before bringing it up.

Often, struggling single parents are poor communicators; they may see your text message or listen to your voicemail but forget to respond. If you truly want to support them, simply be the friend who checks in on them, even if they do not react frequently or immediately. Let them know they will always have a buddy who cares. Offer invitations, inquire about their well-being, and let them know that while they are under no obligation to respond, you're available when they want to talk.

5. Invite them and their children to holidays and serve them occasional meals:

The holidays can be one of the most difficult times for a single parent, particularly if they have no other family but their children. Whether they will be with their children or alone, the holidays can be difficult. Thus, invite them and their children to celebrate the holidays with you if they will not be with the other parent.

Consider that if a single parent cannot prepare a meal, they can only dine out or have someone else cook for them, and give them a meal. Unfortunately, the budget does not always permit dining out, and not everyone considers cooking for them. But, a dinner that was not prepared by them may appear just as warm and generous as a big hug and a monetary gift, if not more so. Moreover, you may make two meals for them, one for immediate consumption and one for freezing. Knowing that they can rely on something in the freezer when they are exhausted can be a blessing.

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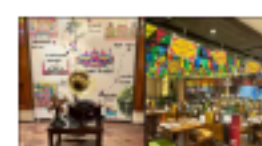
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