

# Identified Life Supports

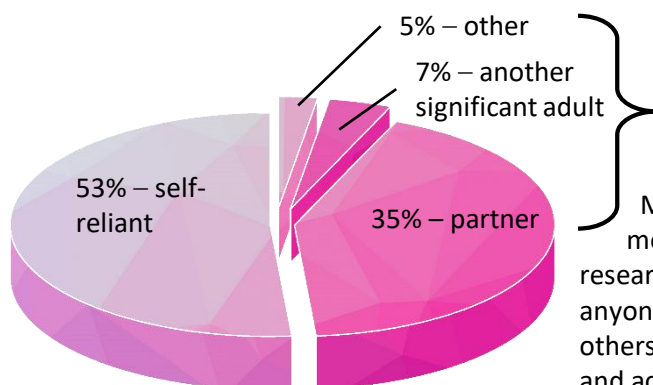
Research findings for mothers (Bourke-Taylor PhD©)



This fact sheet reports on research findings that showed that identified life supports are a major influence for maternal stress (Bourke-Taylor, 2019). Identified life supports are people that you choose to surround yourself with and who are supportive towards you. They can be anyone close to you, including a friend, partner, professional, relative or another mother of a child with a disability. Identified life supports are important for your overall health and well-being. Giving and receiving support in relationships we share with others makes life meaningful, enjoyable and fun! Another added benefit of healthy relationships is a sense of security and stability in life.



## Identified life supports for mothers of children with a disability



**Research showed that mothers with stronger life supports had the best health and well-being.**

Mothers of children with a disability can feel, or be, more isolated than other parents in the community. In research, many mothers say they rely on themselves above anyone else. Because of the link between having supportive others in life and your health, it is very important to find and accept support.

## So what can I do?

The first step towards change is understanding that spending less time and losing touch with your identified life supports can happen. Reflect and decide whether this is something that has happened to you.



Make time for supportive people in your life.

'...Twelve months ago I was pushing everyone away. I just thought, they don't understand ... But it's up to me to change that. It's not up to them, because only I can inform them.'

Pay attention to the people around you.

- Who makes you feel good?
- Who brings out your good side?
- What characteristics do these people have that you appreciate?

It is important to keep people who you find supportive close, or to find and connect with people that share these qualities if these people are missing in your life.

'I realised the importance of social support or friendships to my health. I don't think that I had really made that link before ...'

**You are not alone. Life is more enjoyable when we share time with others. Challenges can be easier to manage when we share the load.**



Visit our website at <http://www.healthymothers-healthyfamilies.com/> for references and more information.

If this fact sheet has raised any concerns, please seek medical advice from your local GP. Alternatively, please call LifeLine on 13 11 14 or Carers Australia, who can provide short-term counselling and emotional support for carers and families, on 1800 242 636.