

UNH Researcher's New Book Helps Women Tackle the Stresses of Motherhood

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, a research associate in the University of New Hampshire's Family Research Laboratory, has written a book for every mom who is coping with the stresses and difficulties of being a mother in today's world.

Depression is so common in new mothers that the American Psychological Association considers young motherhood a risk factor for depression. In "The Hidden Feelings of Motherhood: Coping with Stress, Depression and Burnout," Kendall-Tackett -- a health psychologist and postpartum depression expert who works with breastfeeding women -- helps mothers explore negative feelings and cope with them. She discusses anger, powerlessness, feeling trapped and the loss of intimacy with a partner.

"Mothering can be one of life's most rewarding experiences, but it can also be one of the most challenging," says Kendall-Tackett, a mother of two herself. "Many mothers are tired, stressed out and angry. They feel frustrated, guilty or overwhelmed. Mothers describe feeling always on call, that they never have any downtime, that everyone depends on them. They feel stuck. Given these challenges, it should not surprise us when mothers are sometimes harsh or abusive with their children. What should surprise us is the fact that most mothers are not."

Already experts are saying the book will "open the floodgates on a discussion that has been put off for too long" and that Kendall-Tackett "has dared to dispel the myth that mothering is an instinctive, blissful, and

joyous endeavor."

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