



FREE PRINTABLE GUIDE

Family Wellness Guide

Simple, everyday practices to help your whole family feel grounded and connected.

Wellness starts at home, in the lakou

In Haiti, the lakou is the shared yard where families, neighbors, and friends live side by side, cooking, raising children, celebrating, and carrying each other through hard times. Wellness was never something one person did alone.

Life in a new country can pull families in many directions: long work hours, new schools, two languages, worry about loved ones back home. This guide brings the spirit of the lakou into your home with small, everyday practices that help each person feel grounded and the whole family feel connected.

What we mean by family wellness

Body

Rest, food, movement, and caring for our health.

Mind & heart

Naming our feelings, handling stress, and asking for help.

Connection

Time together, listening, and feeling that we belong.

Spirit & culture

Faith, traditions, language, and pride in who we are.

How to use this guide

- Start small. Choose **one** practice to try this week, not all six.
- Include everyone: children, teens, parents, grandparents, and anyone who lives with you.
- Use the check-in pages at the back. Print as many copies as you like.
- Be gentle with yourselves. *Gerizon pran tan* — healing takes time.

Small habits, strong family

01

Start the day with a check-in

Before everyone scatters, take two minutes to ask how each person is doing. Small moments of attention tell children they matter.

Try this: Ask at breakfast or in the car: *Kijan ou santi w jodi a?* How are you feeling today?

02

Share a meal together

The table has always been the heart of the lakou. Eating together, even once a week, builds connection, routine, and a sense of belonging.

Try this: Pick one regular family meal. Phones go in a basket. Each person shares one good thing from the day.

03

Breathe when things get heavy

Slow breathing calms the body when stress, anger, or worry rises. It works for toddlers, teens, parents, and grandparents.

Try this: Breathe in for 4, hold for 4, out for 6. Repeat 3 times. Say it together: *Pran yon souf.*

04

Move your body, together

Dancing, walking, stretching, or playing outside all lift mood and release tension. It does not need to look like exercise to count.

Try this: Put on konpa or a family favorite and dance for one song. Or take a 15-minute evening walk.

05

Protect rest and sleep

Tired bodies are short-tempered bodies. Steady bedtimes help children's moods, focus, and growth, and help parents too.

Try this: Keep the same bedtime on school nights. Turn screens off 30 minutes before. Try a short story or prayer to wind down.

06

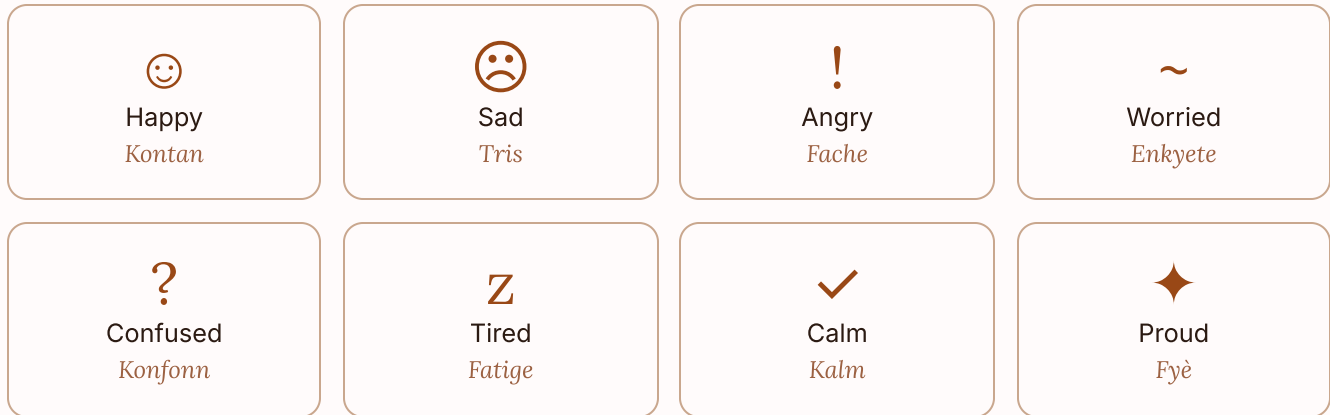
Practice gratitude

Naming what we are thankful for, even on hard days, helps us notice what is holding us up.

Try this: At dinner or bedtime, each person names one thing: *Mèsi pou lavi.* Thank you for life.

How are you feeling today?

Children often show feelings through behavior before they have the words. Help them name what is happening inside. Point to a feeling together, in English or Kreyòl, and remind them: *Tout santiman yo valid* — all feelings are okay.



"Mwen wè ou santi w _____. Mwen la pou ou."

"I see you're feeling _____. I'm here for you."

When big feelings show up

- **Get low and stay calm.** Your calm voice helps their body settle.
- **Name it.** "You're angry because playtime ended." Naming a feeling helps shrink it.
- **Breathe together.** Smell the flower (in), blow out the candle (out).
- **Reconnect after.** A hug, a snack, or a quiet moment together repairs the moment.

My feelings today

Draw or write how you feel:

Our week together

Fill this in together on Sunday, or stick it on the fridge and add to it through the week.

Day	One good thing	Practice we tried	How we felt
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

This week, our family is grateful for...

Something that was hard this week...

Next week, we will try...

Asking for help is a strength

Every family goes through hard seasons. Reaching out to a doctor, counselor, pastor, or community organization is a way of caring for your family, not a sign of weakness. Consider getting support if someone in your home:

- Seems sad, withdrawn, or angry most days for two weeks or more
- Has big changes in sleep or eating
- Has stopped enjoying things they used to love
- Is struggling at school or work in a new way
- Talks about feeling hopeless or being a burden
- Is using alcohol or drugs to cope

If you or someone you love needs help right now

911

If someone is in immediate danger or has a medical emergency.

988

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Call or text 988, any time, free and confidential. Interpreters are available by phone; ask for Haitian Creole.

211

Connects you to local help for food, housing, counseling, and more. In Palm Beach County, dial 211.

741741

Crisis Text Line. Text HOME to 741741 to reach a trained crisis counselor.

Looking for something closer to home? Browse trusted local organizations in our **Resource Directory** at lakoulokal.org/directory, or write to us at info@lakoulokal.org.



Men anpil, chay pa lou.

Many hands make the load light.

Lakou Lokal is a virtual community center supporting Haitian and immigrant families with culturally grounded wellness, mental health, and parenting resources, in English and Haitian Creole.

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