

Ideas for parents to help your child feel calm

Some of our children are feeling anxious at this time, here are some ideas from the Brighter Future team of activities you could do with your children at home to help them feel calmer.

Bubble breathing - Take a pot of bubbles, tell your child you are going to do some bubble breathing to help them feel calmer. Get your child to dip the wand into the bubble mixture, take a deep breath in and slowly blow out through the wand. Watch the bubbles float away, imagine the bubbles are taking away your worries and fears.

Bee breathing- Sit somewhere comfortable, place your hands over your ears, take a breath in, as you breathe out making a humming noise. Repeat a few times.

Bubbles in a bowl- Put some bubble bath into warm water in a bowl, if possible use some calming bubble bath e.g. lavender scent. Use a straw to blow bubbles to the top of the bowl.

Rocking toy to sleep- Get your child to lie on their back and put a toy on their tummy. Explain they are going to rock the toy to sleep. Get them to take deep breaths, as they breathe in and out their tummy will lift up and down, rocking the toy to sleep.

Barefoot walking- Do this activity together, if you can go outside in a garden or on a grass area, check the area for sharp things, etc. Take your shoes and socks off and walk on the grass, notice how it feels on your feet, notice how it makes you feel.

Senses exercise- You can do this outside or through an open window. Close your eyes and listen to what you can hear, listen to how many different noises you can hear. Open your eyes, notice the different colours you can see. Sniff the air, what can you smell.

Foot bath- Fill a bowl with warm soapy water, invite your child to take their shoes and socks off and put their feet in the bowl. Gently massage their feet.

Hand massage- Use some hand cream and gently give your child a hand massage

Eye spy bottles- Get an empty bottle and collect some small items from the house, put these inside the bottle, fill the bottle with rice and glitter. Add a label to the bottle with a list of things to spy. Get the child to see how many things they can spy by gently shaking the bottle.

Calming bottle - Fill an empty bottle with water, add some glitter. Get your child to shake the bottle, place their hand on their tummy and breathe in and out slowly as the glitter settles.

Make a happy book- Draw or stick pictures in the book of things that make them happy, when they are feeling sad or need to find some calm, they could look at this.

Hot Chocolate calming- Make a cup of hot chocolate, breathe in sniffing the warm mug of hot chocolate, breathe out blowing on your hot chocolate to cool it down

Create a calm space - together create a space in the house that can be safe and nurturing, a space to go to when they feel stressed. Make it cosy and put in a favourite toy, blanket, cushion etc. Explain this a space to go in and feel safe and calm.

Lay in a blanket -Find a big blanket, get your child to lie in it and wrap them gently in the blanket, if the child isn't too big, you could take both ends, lift it slightly off the ground and gently rock them in the blanket.

Play calming music - Find some music that you all find calming, lie down or sit and listen to it

Do some yoga - Do some Yoga together, cosmic kids on Youtube offers yoga and mindfulness sessions. <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>

Finger breathing



Inhale as you trace up the thumb, exhale as you trace down the thumb, inhale tracing up the next finger, exhale down etc until you have traced all five fingers.

Resources: Cloud dough

- 1 cup of cornflour
- 1/2 cup of hair conditioner

Mix together until it looks like dough. This is very soft to play with, it can become crumbly, playing with it in a large bowl stops it getting everywhere. You can keep this in an airtight container.

Home made stress balls

- 1 balloon
- cornflour
- funnel

Put the funnel into the top of the balloon, 3/4 fill the balloon with corn flour. squeeze the remaining air out and tie the balloon, use this as a stress ball to let out feelings of frustration. You could draw a face on the balloon.

Worry dolls taken from <https://abcdoes.com/home-learning/>



Worry Dolls

What are Worry Dolls?

Worry dolls are tiny dolls that children tell their worries to before placing them under their pillow at night.

The worry dolls take the children's worries away while they sleep.

They are a lovely opportunity to encourage children to talk about how they are feeling.

What you need:

- small sticks or twigs
- wool, ribbon or thread
- felt tip pens

What to do:

- Break your sticks or twigs into small lengths (about 5cms).
- Wrap different colours of wool, ribbon, or thread around your stick (use a skin colour towards the top for a face). Tie off the ends.
- Felt tip a face onto your doll.

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