

Positive Behavior at HOME

Calming Kit Self-Regulation

What you will find inside:

Self-regulation gives your child the ability to control their impulses. When children have strong feelings, they may not know how to calm themselves down. Many young children are still learning how to self-regulate and they need our help to strengthen those skills.

The activities in this kit are designed to help teach and strengthen self-regulation skills.

Here is what you will find inside:

- 4 Activity Cards for Building Skills Together
- 4 Independent Activities allowing children to explore these skills on their own
- Additional Resources

Building Calming Skills Together Activities:

- Musical Feelings
- Floating on a Cloud
- I am in Control
- Counting My Heartbeats

Independent Calming Activities:

- Upside down Time
- Animal Exercises
- Zen Garden Sensory Bin
- My Calming Rain Stick

Activity 1

Teaching Your Child to Identify Emotions

MUSICAL FEELINGS

It is no secret that children learn through different variations of play. Play a fun and silly game of Musical Feelings to help children learn different emotions, identify how to manage those emotions, and enjoy some large muscle play! When large muscle play is implemented, children have an easier time learning a new skill!



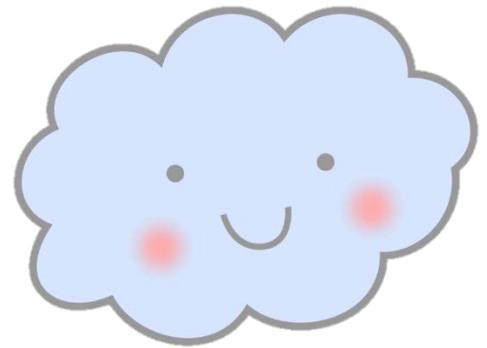
Instructions:

1. Work with your child to create different emotion cards. You can print the ones off at the end of this kit, or create your own!
2. Lay all of the emotion cards on the ground in a circle. Explain to your child that you will turn on some music and when the music stops, they must land on an emotion.
3. Once they have landed on an emotion, prompt them to identify the emotion, act it out, explain what it feels like in their body, and talk about different ways to handle that emotion.
4. Keep playing until your child no longer shows interest. Review the emotions and ways to handle those emotions throughout the day.

Activity 2 Teaching Your Child to Relax

FLOATING ON A CLOUD

Clouds are great inspiration for relaxation! The way they peacefully float through the sky can help encourage children to relax their bodies! This technique is a quick practice that children can use to help their emotions drift away! With a clear mind, they can focus on handling situations in an appropriate way.



Instructions:

1. Talk to your child about clouds, you can even take them outside to look at the clouds! Talk about the way they float through the sky and relate it to letting their emotions float away.
2. Then, practice floating on a cloud! Stand with your feet apart and rock your body gently from side to side.
3. Put your hands up and allow them to float with your body as you move from side to side.
4. Talk to children about this practice. Explain that when children are feeling upset or feel strong emotions, they can begin to practice swaying side to side. This will allow them to help those emotions drift away.

Activity 3

Teaching Your Child Self-Control

I AM IN CONTROL

One of the main reasons children become overwhelmed and upset is because they no longer feel in control of what is happening around them. By giving your child the tools to regulate their emotions, you are giving them the tools to be in control in a positive way.

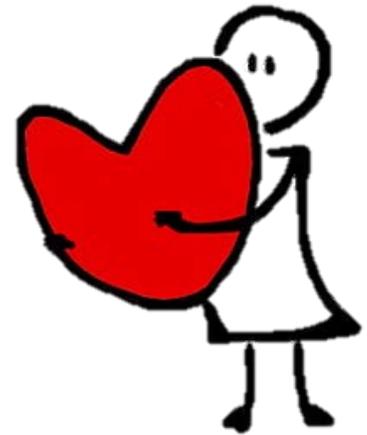


Instructions:

1. Discuss emotions with your child and talk about the things that make them feel upset or out of control.
2. Then, introduce the technique of deep breathing and taking control. They will do this by first putting their hands over their mouth, in a cupping manner.
3. Once they have done this, encourage them to take a deep breath and blow their feelings into their hands.
4. Their hands are there to catch their emotions and put them in control!

Activity 4**Teaching Your Child to Manage Strong Emotions****COUNTING MY HEARTBEATS**

Part of self-regulation is understanding how our emotions affects our bodies. When we are upset and feeling strong emotions, our heart can beat rapidly. On the other hand, when we slow down and practice deep breathing, we can feel our heart begin to slow down. This is an important skill for children to understand so they can practice managing their own emotions.

**Instructions:**

1. Show your child how to locate their heart and what to do to feel their heartbeat. Encourage children to slow down and really pay attention to how their heart feels.
2. Talk about the things that increase your heart rate, such as being upset, exercise, or feeling scared.
3. Then, talk about the things they can do to help slow their heart rate. For example, when they feel their heart racing, they can help minimize those feelings by placing their hand over their heart and counting their heartbeats.

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

UPSIDE DOWN TIME

Did you know that hanging upside down actually stimulates your vestibular system? When hanging upside down, the brain receives vestibular input that can actually help children calm themselves down! Plus, it is a fun calming technique that most children probably practice already!

I can hang from:

- The Couch
- My Bed
- An Outside Toy
- A Chair



Directions:

1. Introduce this technique to your child and explain how hanging upside down can be both fun and calming!
2. Show your child how they can practice hanging upside down on the couch or on their bed! You also want to show children how to safely practice hanging upside down.
3. When your child is done, talk to them about how they feel!

It is important to note that if your child does not want to hang upside down or gives cues that they are uncomfortable, then you should not continue practicing this technique.

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

ANIMAL EXERCISE

Exercising is another large muscle play opportunity that can actually help children calm down without realizing it. Introduce the Animal Exercise cards to your child. Practice each movement for 30 - 45 seconds and then rest for 15 seconds. Repeat until your child loses interest.

Frog Jumps	Bear Walk	Starfish Jumps
		
Crab Crawl	Elephant Stomps	Kangaroo Jump
		

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

ZEN GARDEN SENSORY BIN

A Zen Garden is commonly known as a rock garden and provides children with a small world to explore natural materials. Children of all ages can enjoy this wonderful calming activity! Work with children to create their own Zen Garden!

Materials:

- Sand, flour, rice, or dirt
- Rocks
- Sticks
- Forks, small rakes, etc
- Small tub



Directions:

1. Work with your child to gather the materials listed above.
2. Talk to them about what a Zen garden is and how they can practice exploring the items in the bin.
3. Help your child put their Zen Garden together and encourage them to explore with their hands whenever they feel overwhelmed.
4. It is important to understand that this type of sensory input helps children naturally calm down. Talk to children about the different textures they feel.

(Parent supervision and assistance is needed to create)

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

MY CALMING RAIN STICK

Rain sticks are a wonderful, calming experience that allow children to self-regulate while also experimenting with different sounds. Gather the materials listed below and help your child create their very own rain stick!

Materials:

- Paper towel tube
- Rice
- Stickers, tape, markers
- Rubber bands
- Paper



Directions:

1. Work with your child to gather the materials listed above.
2. Talk to your child about the different sounds a rain stick can make and introduce some of those sounds to them.
3. Listen together and talk about how those sounds make you feel.
4. Once you have helped your child create their rain stick, encourage them to use it when they feel they need to!

(Parent supervision and assistance is needed to create)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Recommended Websites:

Understood.org

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/trouble-with-self-regulation-what-you-need-to-know>

PBS

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/strategies-for-teaching-kids-self-regulation>

Child Mind Institute

<https://childmind.org/article/can-help-kids-self-regulation/>

Zero to Three

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/developing-social-emotional-skills>

Calming Art Projects

Art is a great way to help the mind relax through different sensory experiences. Art can help you understand yourself, relax, and manage emotions. Try some of these additional activities to help your child feel calm!

- **Pipe Cleaner Fun:** Gather some pipe cleaners and show your child how to manipulate them! Then, teach them to build different things using the pipe cleaners. This is a great way to show children how to be in control of their feelings and a fun calming activity to settle their minds.
- **Ice Cube Smash:** Add some food coloring to an ice cube tray and allow it to freeze. Introduce the ice cubes to your child and talk about how the different colors can symbolize different emotions. Then, let them have fun and smash the ice cubes using a small hammer or mallet. **Parent supervision is needed during this activity**
- **My Water Bin:** Sensory bins are one of the best ways to help children quickly calm down. It also allows them to practice patience and self-control. Fill a tub with soap and water and add some toys. Give your child a sponge or scrub brush and encourage them to wash their toys!