

Calming and Regulating Ideas - for young people, parents and carers

Things to try (please be mindful of the child's safety and consent during all these activities). When completing any activities please make sure the area you are working is safe and the activity is safe for the child.

Proprioception

Activities need to be fun and incorporated into the child or young persons routine. You may need to try different ones to see what is successful or not.

- Press ups, chair press ups or wall presses (make sure feet are flat on the ground and movement is coming from bending elbows) regularly through the day e.g. before school, lunch time, after school



- Prayer pushes – pushing hands firmly together to increase pressure and awareness of arms and hands



Information provided by Children's Therapy Services from

- Therapy ball/peanut ball ideas; Ensure the correct size ball is used and the area is safe. A peanut ball has more stability than a round ball.
- **Ball squash** - child lies on their tummy on a mat and a large exercise/fit ball is rolled up and down the child's arms and legs slowly (not directly onto the tummy area) using maintained and consistent pressure. Check with the child or young person that they are happy and comfortable.



Wall walk- ask the child or young person to stand with the ball between their back and a wall. Using their body to press the ball into the wall with their back and see if they can 'walk' the ball up and down or along the wall.

Walkover- Ask the child/young person to roll forward carefully over the ball with weight through outstretched arms, as if doing a press up, roll backwards and forwards over the ball.



Information provided by Children's Therapy Services from

- **Ball push or throw-** Push a large therapy ball across or around a room. Roll or throw and catch with a partner.



- Use a Theraband or stretchy tubing to stretch between arms/hands. (ensure this is stored safely)



- Play tug of war together using a skipping rope/stretchy fabric or blanket. Play 'Row the boat' with a smaller/younger child.
- Play jumping games, such as hopscotch and skipping
- Commando crawling games/races.
- Rub out chalk or pen from boards in classroom.
- Wipe the tables or windows down.
- Ask students to help rearrange chairs or desks in classroom or carry books with both hands.

Information provided by Children's Therapy Services from

- Pilates plank exercise - the child lies face down on the mat, comes up onto their forearms and onto their toes, forming their body into a 'plank' position
- Lycra material or bags to push and stretch against with arms and legs.
- Try animal walks e.g.
 - Frog jump - squat on floor, placing hands on floor in front. Move both hands forward, then bring feet up to hands in jumping motion
 - Bear Walk - with hands and feet on floor, move right arm and leg forward simultaneously, then move left arm and leg. If this is too difficult, try it on hands and knees
- 'Chewing' food such as stringy cheese, cereal bars, dried fruit, sweets, chewing gum and bagels
- Sucking and blowing activities such as:
 - Sucking yoghurt / thick milkshake/ smoothie through a straw
 - Sucking lollipops, hard sweets
 - Sucking water bottles through sport bottle tops
 - Sucking items using a straw to transfer them from one container to another
 - Sucking drinks through several straws at once or one narrow cocktail straw
 - Blowing bubbles using a straw
 - Blowing musical instruments
 - Blow football using cotton wool balls or feathers

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- Help with heavy work e.g. pushing sofa, relocating plant pots, hoovering, digging soil, carrying the washing basket, shopping bags or buckets of water, rake grass, push wheelbarrow, wash the car
- Put on a heavy coat or heavy blanket over the shoulders as part of 'chill out' time. Carry a heavier back pack.



- Wrapping the child tightly in a blanket or rolling the child up in the blanket to make a 'hot dog'

Information provided by Children's Therapy Services from

Vestibular

Activities need to be fun and incorporated into the child or young persons routine. You may need to try different ones to see what is successful or not.

- Play jumping games, such as hopscotch and skipping
- Trampoline or trampette play.



- handstands wall stands.
- Slow rocking e.g. rocking chair, rocking horse, chair swing, linear movement on a gym ball
- Gentle bouncing on a gym ball



- Bouncing around a coned course on a Space Hopper or gym ball.
- Riding a scooter, balance bike or bike.
- Walking along a balance beam.
- Swinging on a swing, hammock or rope
- Use the equipment at local play areas
- Obstacle courses going over, under, around items.



Information provided by Children's Therapy Services from

Tactile/deep pressure

Activities need to be fun and incorporated into the child or young persons routine. You may need to try different ones to see what is successful or not.

- Bear hug
- Firmly stroke down arms or legs



- Encourage the child or young person to do this themselves perhaps with a ball or roller



- Use Lycra sports wear to provide constant firmer pressure to the skin
- Use a heavy beanbag or pillow on the child's knee whilst sitting
- Sausage roll'- roll the child up in a blanket and gently squash.
- Squashy sandwich' –make a “sandwich” out of your child between couch cushions. Gently add pressure as you pretend to put on pickles, cheese, lettuce, etc

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Other

Activities need to be fun and incorporated into the child or young persons routine. You may need to try different ones to see what is successful or not.

- Utilise a range of relaxation techniques 5-10 minutes in duration, which can be administered after break times or lunch
- Allow chill out time, prior to homework in a daily routine
- Try to structure the young person's time and consider introducing an 'activity schedule' to reduce anxiety
- When the young person cannot hear what others are saying or cannot focus, a visual timetable or written list of what to do may help as a reference
- Developing a routine and a consistent way of doing things is really helpful and can reduce the impact of over-reacting. Organisation can give the young person a sense of control over how they plan their day
- Calming scents such as Lavender or scents the child likes e.g. Dad's aftershave on a piece of fabric/tissue or on the sleeve.
- Encourage the child to listen to quiet or 'environmental sound' music with headphones
- Use flannel sheets for calming warmth at bedtime
- Use low level lighting or dim lights

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- Use a soft voice and slow down your movements and your speech
- Avoid rushing or hurrying the child as much as possible; plan ahead
- Paint the young person's room soft, pastel colours and put dark blinds or lined curtains on windows to prevent light distracting the young person
- For community visits consider is there a quieter supermarket? Off-peak time or on-line shopping? Is there a quiet space available e.g. dining booth?
- Consider snug clothing e.g. lycra undergarments / skins / body armour
- Consider the wearing of earplugs or noise cancelling headphones

Scan the QR code to watch our video on calming and regulating strategies and check our webpage for further advice and ideas



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