

Calming and Regulating things to try for parents, carers and schools

Quick Fixes 3 pages

- Apply deep, steady pressure to the child's shoulders
- Tucking legs up and squeezing
- Deep pressure massage
- Slow rocking e.g. rocking chair, rocking horse, chair swing, linear movement on a gym ball
- Child gives themselves a hug
- Lavender scents or scents the child likes e.g. Dad's aftershave on a piece of fabric
- Squeezing and relaxing a small fidget toy, cushion, blanket or soft toy
- Squeezing and relaxing face and/or hands
- Snuggling into a small space e.g. table draped with a tablecloth, a small play den, a low hammock, reading barrel or large beanbag
- '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

- Bear hug
- Firmly stroke down arms or legs



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



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- Encourage the child to listen to quiet or ‘environmental sound’ music with headphones
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- Use flannel sheets for calming warmth at bedtime
- Use low level lighting or dim lights
- 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
- Small water garden features including musical chimes, light reflectors or spinning toys can offer calming visual and auditory input

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Longer Lasting

When completing any activities please make sure the area you are working is safe and the activity is safe for the child.

5 pages

- 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



- 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
- Wearing a backpack when walking in the community
- Put on a heavy coat or heavy blanket over the shoulders as part of 'chill out' time
- Wrapping the child tightly in a blanket or rolling the child up in the blanket to make a 'hot dog'
- Have a calm area with cushions and blankets for the child to wrap up in and escape other sensory stimuli from the environment
- Gentle bounce around Space Hopper or gym ball.



- Push a large therapy ball across or around a room (you can buy weighted therapy balls)



- Play catch with a heavy ball or medicine ball. Bounce and roll the ball.

- Use a Theraband to stretch (ensure this is stored safely)



- Two children can play tug of war together using a lycra or a blanket
- Play jumping games, such as hopscotch and skipping
- Rub thing out on a large board
- Ask students to help rearrange chairs or desks in classroom or carry books with both hands
- Trampoline
- Pilates plank exercise - the child lies in prone on the mat, comes up onto their forearms and onto their toes, forming their body into a 'plank' position
- This can also be completed over a peanut ball or gym ball



- Ball squash - child lies on their back or tummy on a mat and a large exercise/fit ball is rolled up and down the child's arms and legs slowly. using a maintained and consistent pressure. Please watch our video for this to be demonstrated.



- Try animal walks:
 - 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
 - Caterpillars - squat on floor with hands in front. Keeping feet stable, walk hands forward as far as you can so that you are stretched out. Then keep hands stable and walk feet up to hands back to squatting position
 - Kangaroo Jump - squat on floor, hands at sides, raise up and jump forward, sinking back into squatting position as you land
 - Crab Walk - lean back and put hands on floor (supine with buttocks off floor); walk backwards using hands and feet alternatively
 - Duck Walk - squat on floor with hands at sides. Remain in position while walking (waddling) forward
 - Elephant Walk - bend over with arms dangling toward floor. Clasp hands together to form trunk. Maintain position while walking and swinging trunk from side to side

Other

- Use 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

Please 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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