

Calming Strategies

Heavy Work:

Heavy work uses the big muscles in our body in an organized way, which has an organizing effect on our brains! Ways to get Heavy Work Include:

- Play chase games around your house, or through your house.
- Have children pull each other in laundry baskets or on blankets/pillows.
- Animal walks
- Help vacuum or sweep.
- Playground play, especially climbing or pulling.
- Yoga
 - Cosmic Kids Yoga <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga/playlists>
 - Yoga for Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X655B4ISakg>
- Jumping Jacks (saying "out like a star fish, in like a pencil" can help kids learn the movement).

Limit Distraction:

- A quiet, darker space can help your child calm.
- Use fewer words. When a child is upset or over excited, their ability to understand language decreases. Use gestures, and guide/show them what you want rather than tell them.
- Turn off the screens. Children's brains are over stimulated by screen time. This means that you have to work harder to get them to listen to you and pay attention to others.
 - <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/screen-time-and-young-children>
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/images/ps-screen-time-guidelines.jpg?la=en>

Deep Breathing:

- This can be done with your child. Slowly take a big breath in through the nose (count to three), and slowly blow out through the mouth (count to three). Repeat 3-5 times (or more!).
 - <https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>

Deep Pressure:

Deep pressure helps to calm the mind and body. Think about how you swaddle and hold a baby to settle them. Ways to get deep pressure include:

- Encourage them to give themselves a big hug and hold.
- Wrap them in a blanket (make sure they can get out).
- Encourage them to rub their hands together or have someone else rub lotion onto their hand.
- Get a big hug.
- Firm back rubs with a flat open hand.