

Guidance Notes on Calming Strategies

Try to include frequent calming breaks into your child's day to help them with their emotional regulation.

You may wish to use YouTube videos to teach your child how to take a deep breath and introduce this at the beginning and end of calm breaks.

Other calming activities may include

- Stress ball
- Colour me calm pictures include colouring pencils
- Hidden Pictures/Where's Wally?
- Favourite book
- Playdough
- Jigsaw
- Bubbles
- Small soft toy
- Note book and pen/pencil
- iPod and earphones
- Kaleidoscope
- Spinning Toys
- Light up toys

Please be mindful that the list above is not exhaustive. Your child is unique; it is not a one size fits all approach therefore, together with your child choose calming activities which your child enjoys.

With your child create a calm box so that calming activities are easily accessible and in the one place. Try to rotate calming activities so that they remain effective.

Introduce your child's calm box when they are calm so that they know how to use it before they begin to feel overwhelmed. Remember your child may not recognise when they need to use their calm box. It is good to check in with them regularly to see how they are feeling. Using calm time before, during and after demanding tasks can help support emotional regulation.

When your child is using their calm box, it is not the time to discuss what went wrong or why they felt overwhelmed. It is not the time to ask questions; rather acknowledge their feelings and validate them. Allow your child time to regulate their feelings by using their calm box; it may take 5 minutes to get back to happy or ok and other times it will take much longer, this is ok.