

## Creating a sense of calm

We can all feel like we're on an emotional rollercoaster at the moment. This is particularly true for children who are developmentally young, and for teenagers with their developing brains.

Here are some ideas to help our children feel calm:

### 1. Be boring!

We can feel under pressure to make our children's days fun and exciting and educational! But when our children are highly stressed, it's better to be low-key. This means making things highly predictable and consistent. Lots of children need repetition, where we do the same things every day, or over and over again. Your child may also race through activities. Try to help them slow down and be present, by asking: How does that feel? What do you notice?

### 2. Talk about it

Our daily lives have radically changed, and our children need us to acknowledge that. Help your child to make sense of what is happening, using visuals, words and videos. Support your child to communicate how they are feeling, using signing, or visual resources such as colours or emotion faces.

### 3. Breathe

How we breathe and hold our body gives our body important feedback about whether it's safe to relax. The trick is to make sure that our breath out is longer than our breath in. Some children might like to lie on the floor with a teddy or book on their tummy, and watch the teddy rise and fall as they take long slow breaths. Other children may need to have their hand on our tummy so they can sync their breathing to the rise and fall of ours. Some children might enjoy the counting element of breathing in for five and out for seven. Others who want more independence might enjoy breathing along with YouTube videos or apps- [there are some links below for these](#).

### 4. Play music

Music can be so helpful in changing our emotions. Play calming music in the background at home. Put on a high energy song and dance together in the kitchen. Play the familiar rhymes and songs which soothe your child. Help your teenagers to choose music which soothes or calms them.



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## 5. Exercise

Exercise helps our bodies to feel calm. If you go for a family walk each day, choose the time when it's most calming for you all. Do some yoga or stretching exercises with your child. If your child needs more intense exercise, encourage them to run hard on the spot, or do 50 jumping jacks. Join in with your child as much as you can!

