

HELPFUL ACTIVITIES FOR ADDRESSING WORRIES

Calming the nerves in times of uncertainty

BEING NERVOUS IS NORMAL

Our bodies are generally great at keeping us safe and healthy. Worries can be a normal response to uncertainty and can be viewed as our brain trying to getting our bodies ready to respond to a situation. Stress can weaken a person's immune system, however. Therefore, it is important we thank our brains for trying to keep our body safe by feeling nervous in response to recent events while also engaging in ways to calm us down and release that stress.



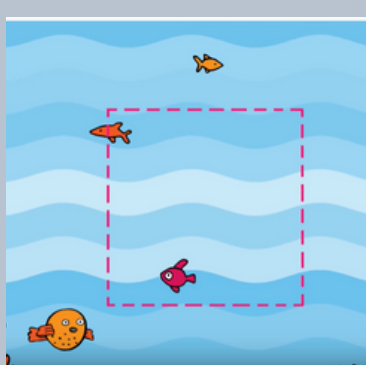
MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is the practice of compassionately connecting with one's mind and body by developing awareness of and honoring the presence of here-and-now thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. Practicing mindfulness has been found to improve one's self-regulation, emotional adaptability, experiences of anxiety and stress, self-compassion, social connection, chronic pain, and experiences of depression. Below are some kid-friendly videos on mindfulness (some of which your students may remember from guidance class).



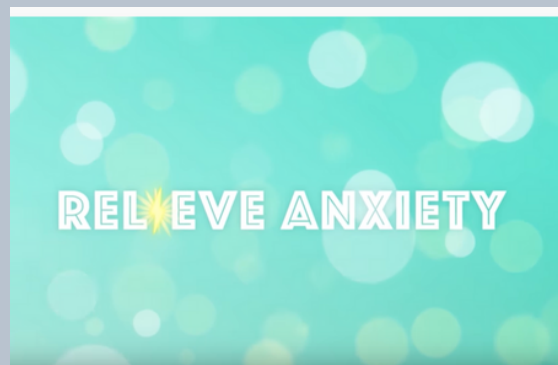
RAINBOW BREATHING

[Click Link](#)



**SQUARE
BREATHING**

[Click Link](#)



RELIEVE ANXIETY

[Click Link](#)

SENSORY ITEMS

Many of our students enjoy engaging with sensory items in order to calm down and regulate their emotions. Focusing on our senses is a helpful way to lower anxiety and check in with ourselves. There are many different ways to make sensory items. A favorite among many children is making slime! There are SO many different ways to make slime and the video to the right is just one of them! Another popular sensory object is a calm down bottle or a galaxy bottle. Like with slime, there are so many ways to create these! Sometimes creativity in making sensory items can be just as anxiety-relieving as using the product!



SLIME FOUR WAYS

[Click Link](#)



CALM DOWN BOTTLE

[Click Link](#)

MOVING THE BODY

Exercise can be a great stress reliever. Certain exercises like yoga and stretching can be helpful at releasing stress from the body. There is no "wrong" way to be active. Even if leaving the home isn't possible, there are plenty of exercises that can be done inside and even in a chair! The videos below are just a few of the many possibilities for using physical activity as a way to reduce stress and nervousness.



HOME EXERCISES

[Click Link](#)



FAMILY FUN CARDIO

[Click Link](#)

READ A BOOK

Reading can help children forget about the stresses around them. Encouraging your student to read their favorite book that can occupy their brain may be helpful to reduce stress. Reading can help connect students with their imagination in a more productive way than worrying.



DRAWING AND COLORING

Coloring has recently emerged as a helpful strategy for people of all ages to re-engage with themselves in a mindful, stress relieving way. The following links have free printable coloring pages for anyone to color! Additionally, giving your student a prompt of something to draw could be a helpful goal-directed way to lessen anxiety. Prompts could be anything from "draw yourself as a superhero" to "draw what your favorite day would look like."



[ASSORTED COLORING PAGES LINK](#)

[ANIMAL COLORING PAGES](#)

FOOD PANTRIES

Missing the school breakfast and lunch? There are a variety of food pantries in the Triad area that can be located through foodpantries.org/st/north_carolina Making a meal as a family can be a great way to engage with children and distract from any nervousness.



NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS HELPLINE



The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has a free HelpLine that provides free, nationwide peer-support services for information, resource referrals and support to people living with a mental health conditions, their family members and caregivers, mental health providers and the public. HelpLine staff and volunteers are experienced, well-trained and able to provide important guidance. The NAMI HelpLine can be reached Monday through Friday, 10 am-6 pm, ET. 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) or info@nami.org