

# QUICK CALM DOWN STRATEGIES

All children get dysregulated from time to time. Here are some easy and quick strategies to try with your child when they get angry, frustrated, overwhelmed, or anxious. You can teach them ahead of time or use them in the moment.

**TAKE A DEEP BREATH.** Get your child to take a minimum of five deep breaths. Ask them to close their eyes and try to inhale and expand their belly. They can picture blowing up and deflating a balloon.

**BLOW IN HANDS.** This is another great technique to help kids with deep breathing. By blowing into their hands, as opposed to in the air, your child can feel the strength of their breath.

**TENSE AND THEN RELAX.** Clench fists for five seconds and then relax them. Do this five times. Often kids do not realize how much tension they carry when upset and this exercise can help them relax.

**APPLY DEEP PRESSURE.** Ask your child to put their hands in their pockets or sit on their hands. They can also place their hands on the opposite shoulders and squeeze (Clam Cuddle). Applying deep pressure has been found to help relieve anxiety. Tell them about the "Thunder Jacket" for dogs. A tight vest for dogs that applies deep pressure to help keep them calm during thunder storms.



**COUNT TO FIVE.** This is a simple tactic that can help children build up their impulse control skills and help them think before they act.

**GET OUT THE HEADPHONES.** Have your child put on music that they enjoy. It does not have to be relaxing music, instead try fun music that they can sing along to.

**ASK FOR A HUG.** Encourage your children to hug it out when they are upset. If they don't ask for one, ask them if they would like a hug.

**GRAB SOME ICE.** Your child can chew or suck on some ice. Ask them to concentrate on the cold and melting feeling in their mouth.

**TAKE A MENTAL VACATION.** Help your child visualize a place she finds relaxing. Have her close her eyes and picture somewhere she really likes to go, such as the beach.

**COLOUR OR DRAW.** This can serve as both a distraction as well as a way to express one's self.

**CHANGE THE SCENE.** Move to a new location. Whenever possible, go outside!

