

Calming Toolkit for Parents of Children on the Autism Spectrum

Deep Breathing with Visuals

- Use bubbles, pinwheels, or 'smell the flower, blow the candle' analogy.
- Encourage slow, deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth.
- Pair with a visual timer or breathing app.

Weighted Items

- Use a weighted blanket, lap pad, or vest during quiet time.
- Provides deep pressure input that calms the nervous system.

Calm-Down Corner Setup

- Create a cozy space with soft pillows, dim lighting, and sensory tools.
- Include fidget toys, noise-canceling headphones, and calming visuals.
- Let the child choose when to go there (not as punishment).

Rhythmic Movement

- Rocking in a chair, swinging, or gentle bouncing on a therapy ball.
- Repetitive motion helps regulate overstimulation.

Music and Sound Therapy

- Play soft, predictable music or nature sounds.
- Use headphones if the child is sensitive to ambient noise.

Visual Schedules and Social Stories

- Reduce anxiety by showing what is coming next.
- Use picture cards or AAC devices to support transitions.

Massage Techniques

- Gentle hand or foot massage with calming scents like lavender or chamomile.
- Use firm, slow strokes to avoid ticklish sensations.

Oral Motor Input

- Offer chewy snacks, straws, or oral sensory tools.

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- Helps regulate through the mouth and jaw.

Compression Clothing

- Use body socks or snug-fitting compression garments.
- Provides full-body proprioceptive input during play or quiet time.