

TIPS FOR “POSITIVE STRESS” RELIEF AT HOME!

Stress is a normal and healthy part of life! Our bodies are made to handle positive stress - like the feeling you get when it is the first day of school or work, or right before taking a big test. Here are some simple things you and your child can use at home to help manage stress that comes before a big event or change in their life

- Find ways to relax your body and calm your mind before a day you think could be stressful.
 - Practice belly breathing.
 - Picture a calm place.
 - Take a warm bath/shower.
 - Stretch.
 - Listen to relaxing music.
- Get a good night’s sleep. Try to avoid video games, tablets, and TV right before you go to bed and have your children “check-in” their electronics with you at night. This helps them go to sleep on time.
- Eat healthy and balanced meals, especially on days you know might get stressful.
- Set a routine for yourself and for your child.

Review and remind your child of what helped them get rid of stress the last time that they had a big event or change in their life.

Here are some simple exercises you can do at home with your child.

Think Positive Thoughts!

1. Picture a calm place
2. Repeat positive message or practice positive self-talk. Think to yourself:
 - I will be okay
 - I can do this
 - I am prepared
 - I can do my best
 - I believe in myself
 - I feel calm, relaxed, focused and confident
 - I know I will remember just what I need to know
 - I am excited to show what I know
 - I will do one thing at a time
3. Remember to feel proud of yourself for doing your best
4. Celebrate your accomplishments with the people around you!

Rise and Fall Breathing

1. Find a comfortable place and sit or lie down.
2. Place both hands over your belly.
3. Take a deep slow breath in through your nose and feel the air travel down into your belly, making your abdomen and hands rise.
4. Slowly let air out and exhale through your mouth. Feel your hands and belly go down.
5. **If you are having a hard time doing belly breathing, just do slow and deep breathing.**
6. Repeat 4 – 5 times.

Squeeze and Relax:

1. Sit up straight on a chair or lie down on the bed or floor. Make sure you are comfortable.
2. Place your hands on your legs or at your side.
3. Close your eyes and drop your chin onto your chest, and bring it back to normal position.
4. Tense (squeeze) the muscles on the top of your head as tight as you can. Hold tight and then relax.
 - Tense, hold, and then relax your face.
 - Tense, hold, and then relax your shoulders
 - Tense, hold, and then relax your arms and hands
 - Tense, hold, and then relax your stomach
 - Tense, hold, and then relax your legs and feet

Beautiful Places:

1. Think of a beautiful place. You may have been to this place. Or, it could be a place you want to go.
2. Imagine you are there for a few minutes. Relax.
3. Think about what you:
 - See at this place.
 - Hear at this place.
 - Smell at this place.
 - Feel at this place.
4. When you are ready, open your eyes.