

Sensory Concepts

Breath control

Breathing deeply and consistently is an important part of self-regulation. It helps us to focus and to concentrate on the task at hand and can help to regulate behaviour as it is calming to the sensory systems. It can have positive impacts on mood and energy.

Many children who have difficulty with self-regulation are shallow breathers, especially when under pressure or feeling challenged.

Teaching a child to breathe well in order to calm and focus themselves is an important life skill. Extended outward breaths encourage deep inwards breaths and as such many play activities involving breathing will engage this sequence.

Favourite activities for breath control:

Visualisation:

- Picture a flower and a birthday cake – your job is to smell the flower and then blow out the birthday candles – be slow and steady with your breaths



- Blow up a balloon – you can place your hands by your mouth and make them bigger as you pretend to slowly blow up a balloon

Vocalisation:

- Make a long vowel sound – animal noises are perfect – who can make the longest sound?
Mooo, Baaa, Neigh, Snake sound Ssssss
- Tarzan noises (complete with chest beating for vibration) who can make the longest call?
- Say the days on the week with one breath – try 2 or three weeks together
- Say the alphabet with one breath



Using tools:

- Bubble blowing - blow slowly to make the bubbles as big as possible
- Blowing up a balloon
- Blowing on a windmill toy
- Use whistle toys
- Bubble mountain - place a little detergent in a bowl of water - use a straw to blow the biggest bubble mountain possible
- Blowing races - use a feather, cotton wool or anything which moves readily when blown - blow through a straw with long steady breaths



Children's yoga and conscious breathing

- Lie on your back - place hands on stomach - breathe in and feel your stomach rise, breathe out and feel it fall - you may want to place a toy on your stomach so you can watch it move with your breath
- Children's Yoga is great for breath control. There are many online resources

Elmo and Breathing - to tame the "monster" inside

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mZbzDOpyIA