

## Brainstem



### **PRACTICE FOCUS:** Predictable and Calming



**Discussion Paper 1:** Responding to children who have experienced abuse related trauma – Ideas for school-based treatment



### **Transforming the brainstem:** safe containment and deep pressure

- Pea Pod/egg chairs/beanbags
- Nestling in a hammock
- Weighted toys
- Heavy blankets or jackets
- Wall squats
- Giving/receiving safe hugs/self-hugs
- Doing planks, push ups, wall presses
- Carrying heavy items



### **Transforming the brainstem:** rhythmic and repetitive for regulation

- Allowing and using rocking
- Swinging – provide swings/swinging chairs
- Using singing activities
- Clapping
- Drumming activities – desktop
- Rhyming activities
- Playing musical instruments
- Reading
- Writing music and songs
- Use audio books/read-a-long books
- Using rote activities- times tables etc
- Marching
- Physical movement activities
- Cardio activities
- Brain gym activities
- Zumba type/ Go Noodle activities
- Playing music (60 – 80 bpm)
- Jumping and bouncing
- Practicing skipping
- Patting or brushing animals/pets
- Shooting hoops/bouncing balls
- Provide water or crushed ice to swallow
- Having “rhythmic furniture” - Stools
- Allowing chewing/eating in class - snacks
- Having class rocking chairs
- Using movement through dance
- Individual/class wobble boards
- Brushing hair
- Swinging in a hammock
- Including water play
- Using stationary bikes, treadmills
- Hand Clapping Games \* (see resources)
- Playing with kinetic sand/other mediums
- Having routine in all school aspects
- Having structured lessons/breaks
- Using circle time to provide routine
- Integrating heart rate monitors into lessons – to teach about heart rate regulation
- Wool based activities – knitting, crocheting, Knitting Nancy, gods eyes



### **Transforming the brainstem:** sensory needs and soothing

- Use soothing activities – ie music
- Provide calming boxes
- Provide cool water to drink
- Provide different sensory options
- Provide ice to suck and crunch on
- See “Diencephalon” for more ideas

# Cerebellum



## **PRACTICE FOCUS: Predictable and Calming**



**Discussion Paper 1:** Responding to children who have experienced abuse related trauma – Ideas for school-based treatment



## **Transforming the cerebellum: movement and balance**

- Balancing activities
- Yoga
- Drumming activities
- Painting nails
- Stretching
- Hand massage
- Physical challenges
- Aligning the spine activities
- Spine support – lumbar supports
- See “Brainstem” for more ideas



## **Building a “rhythmic/balance-connecting” classroom**

- bring rhythm and balance into the classroom – physical movement breaks, short exercise bursts
- use brain breaks or “brain kits” – for regulation
- have “rhythmic, containing and balance supportive furniture” for regulation
- design school routines with a rhythmic sense to the lesson, day, week, year
- embed “circle” routines and morning meetings with a sense of rhythm, positive emotion, fun and relational attunement
- integrate heart rate activities and heart rate monitors in both personal and learning development (ie great to include in maths or science lessons)
- replace bells/sirens with music/metronome, initially set at 150 bpm, then reduce to between 60 – 80 bpm



**What I am already doing.....** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What I would like to do...** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Brainstem & Cerebellum Session Strategies and Activities



### Roll a Brain Break Activities

**Roll a task:** <https://www.chino.k12.ca.us/cms/lib/CA01902308/Centricity/Domain/5723/RollaTaskBrainBreak.pdf>

**Roll some brain breaks:** [https://www.yourtherapysource.com/files/Roll\\_Some\\_Fun\\_Freebie2.pdf](https://www.yourtherapysource.com/files/Roll_Some_Fun_Freebie2.pdf)

**Roll a brain break worksheets and teaching resources:** <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Browse/Search:roll%20a%20brain%20break>



### Rhythmic Activities

**Cup Song:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5kYLOb6i5I>

**Desktop Drumming:** <https://youtu.be/2-MpzjxEVBU>

**Hand Clapping Games:** <https://professionals.childhood.org.au/resources/>



### This that this that

This is a fun hand clapping game for groups of two or more. It is rhythmic, repetitive and has a focused element.

This this (two palms together)

That that (backs of palms together)

This this

That that

This

That

This

That

This this

That that

