

# Making

# SPACE

# for Learning

Trauma Informed Practice in Schools

## Brain breaks

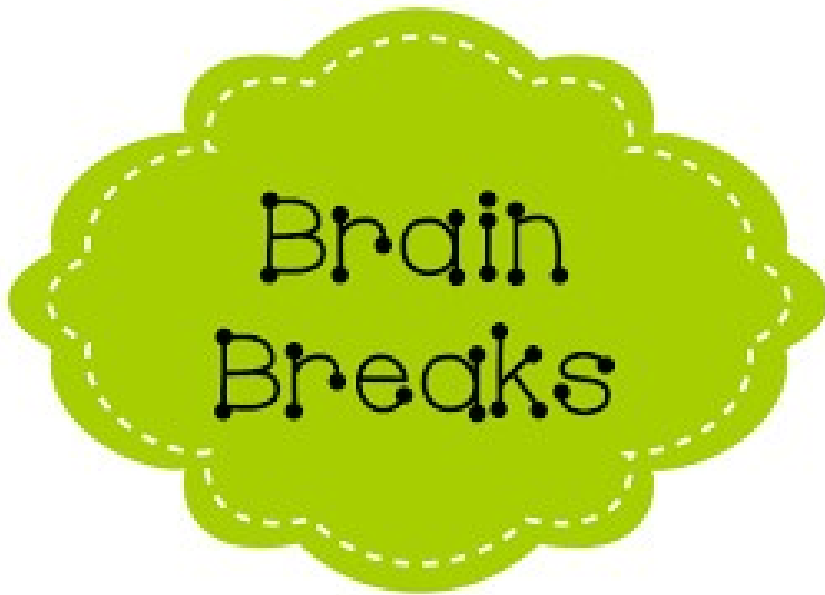


Image source: clipart.com

- What are the benefits of “brain breaks”
- When would you use them?
- When would you not use them?

ACTIVITY – at your table group come up with ten brain break activities – one of which you would be happy to share with the group

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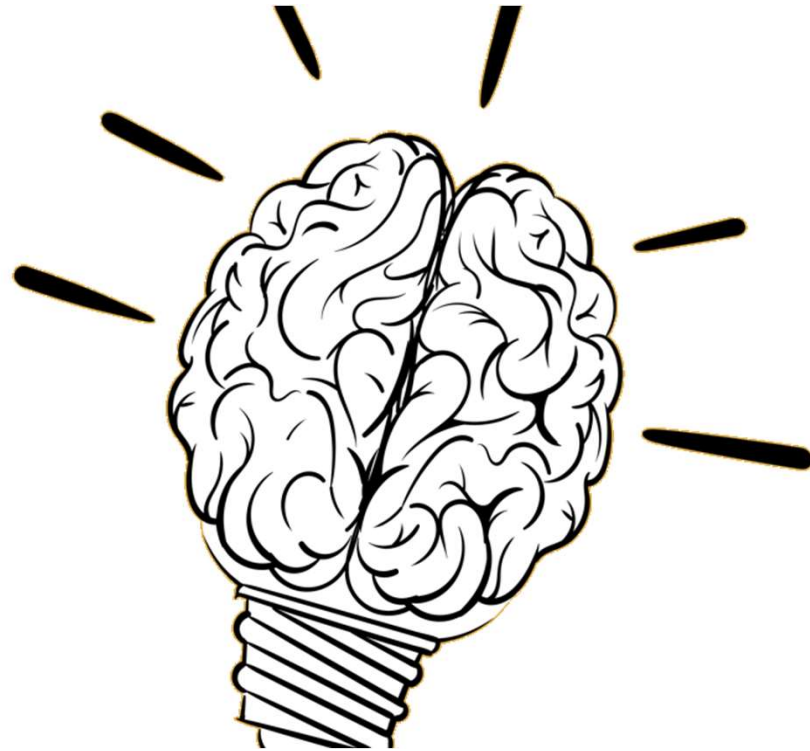
## Brain Breaks

Energising activities	Calming activities
<a href="#"><u>Jump In ~ Jump Out</u></a> (Years 8 - 12)	<a href="#"><u>Squiggle Story</u></a> (Years 6 - 12)
<a href="#"><u>Finger Snatch</u></a> (Years F - 7)	<a href="#"><u>Invisible Pictures</u></a> (Years 6 - 12)
<a href="#"><u>Pop!</u></a> (Years F - 6)	<a href="#"><u>Movement</u></a> (Years 6 - 12)
<a href="#"><u>Snowball Fight</u></a> (Years F - 8)	<a href="#"><u>Mindful Memories</u></a> (Years 6 - 12)
<a href="#"><u>Birthday or Name Line Up</u></a> (Years 6 - 12)	<a href="#"><u>Mindful Mandalas</u></a> (Years 6 - 12)
	<a href="#"><u>Calm Corner</u></a> (Years F - 10)

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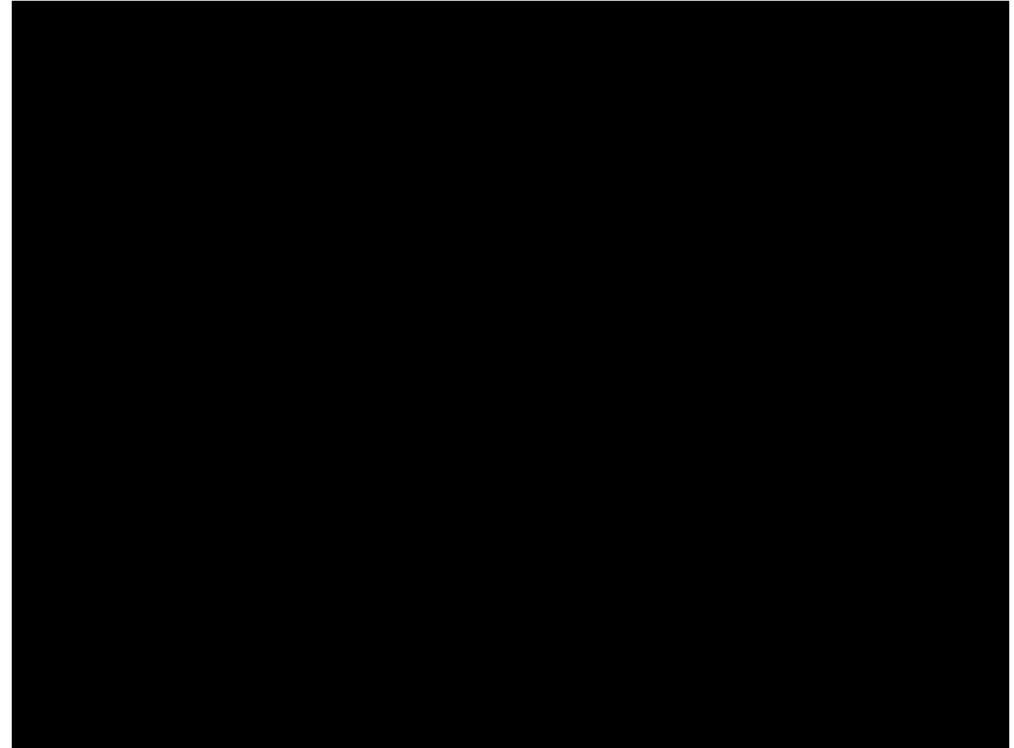
## Energising brain breaks



## Jump In ~ Jump Out

**This is a challenging but fun energising activity (suitable for Years 8 – 12)**

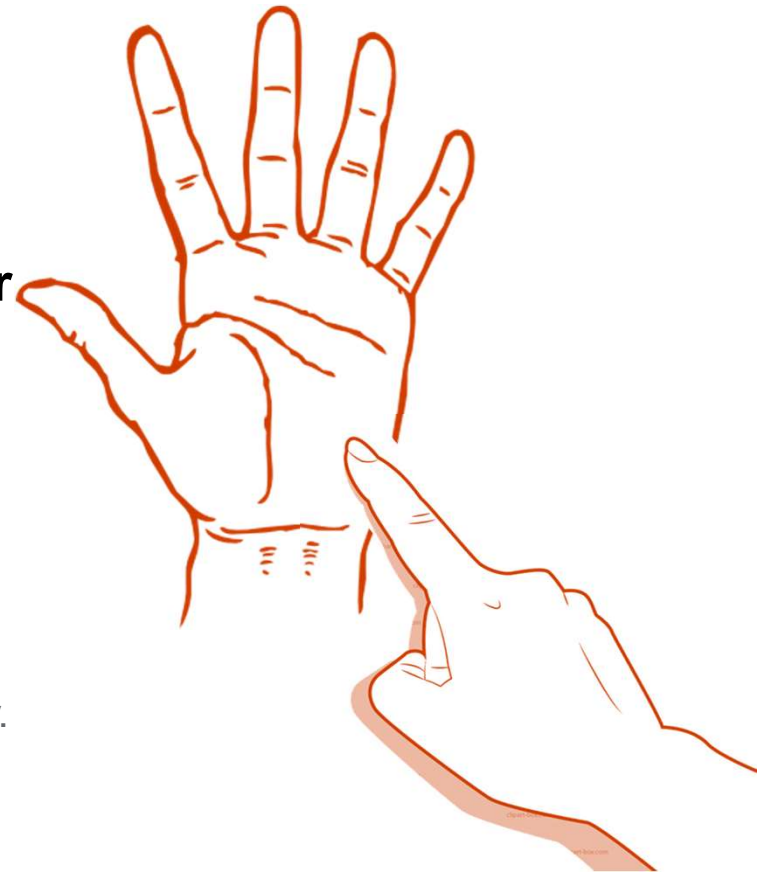
1. Say what I say and do what I say
2. Say the opposite of what I say but do what I say
3. Say what I say but do the opposite of what I say



## Finger Snatch

**A fun physical & energising activity (suitable for Years F - 7)**

1. Face your partner
2. Each partner places their left index finger in their partner's right palm.
3. Count down 3-2-1 Snatch
4. Try to Snatch (catch) your partners finger before they pull it away.



# Pop!

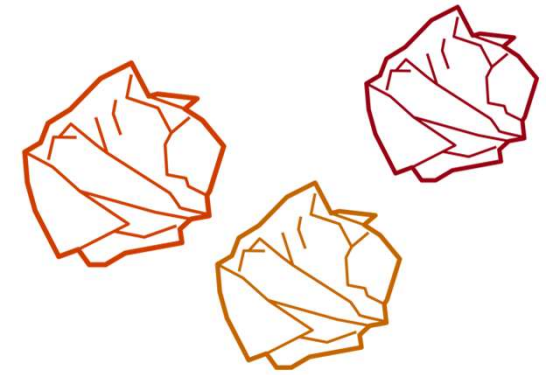
## A fun energising + maths activity (suitable for Years F - 6)

1. This is a skip counting game.
2. A student or teacher decides the number and says “Pop by 3’s” (could do it by 4’s or 5’s).
3. Then go around the circle with each child saying a number, but saying “POP” every 3rd number (example: 1, 2, POP, 4, 5, POP, 6, 7, POP, etc.).



## Snowball Fight

### A fun and very energising activity (Years F - 8)



1. Give youth a clean sheet of white unlined paper.
2. Have them write 3-5 unique things about themselves.
3. Tell them NOT to put their name on the paper. (If they can't write--have them draw a picture)
4. Next, have them crunch the paper into a ball.
5. Have them stand in a large circle around the room.
6. Then allow them one full minute to have an all-out snowball fight!
7. When one minute is up, have them locate a "snowball" nearest to them, unfold it, and take turns trying to guess who it is.

They absolutely LOVE this activity! It loosens them up real quick and they will remember it always. Many students say it's the best minute of fun they had all year! (Adapted from Betsy Pollard)

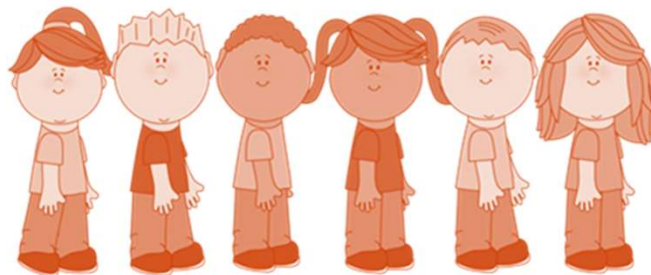


## Birthday Line Up or Name Line Up



This is a great, energising team building or ice breaker activity (suitable for Years 6 - 12)

1. Inform that group that they can not talk from this point forward until you give them permission.
2. Have the group get in a line.
3. Tell them they must, in silence (no talking at all), get in order by height.
4. Once they successfully compete this challenge, you can give the following line up tasks: line up by birthday month, first name, etc.



# Making **SPACE** for Learning

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## Calming brain breaks



TAKE  
5  
CALMING  
BREATHS!



# Squiggle Story



This is a great, calming activity (suitable for all ages)

1. On a blank sheet of paper, whiteboard, or Promethean Board, draw one squiggly line. Give students one minute to stand and draw with their opposite hand, turning the line into a picture or design of their choice. Once they successfully complete this challenge, you can give the following line up tasks: line up by birthday month, first name, etc. **OR**
2. On a sheet of blank white paper, take a few seconds to make random scribbles all over the page. Then take one minute or so to find images or designs in the scribbles. Outline these in a darker colour.



## Invisible Pictures

**This is a great, calming activity (suitable for all ages)**

- Have students work in pairs.
- Students take turns to draw a picture in the air while their partner guesses what it is.
- You could give them categories such as foods, places, or other ways to narrow the guessing.



## Movement

**This is a great, calming activity (suitable for all ages)**

- For younger children, direct students to stand and, as they inhale, lift an arm or leg and wiggle it, exhaling it back to its original position.
- Older students it is good to use the inhale and exhale with any type of movement (e.g. inhale as you stretch up with both arms above the head and exhale as you bring them back down to your side; inhale as you stretch out with both arms at shoulder height and exhale as you bring them back to your side; exhale as you reach down to your toes with fingertips extended and inhale as you come back up to standing).

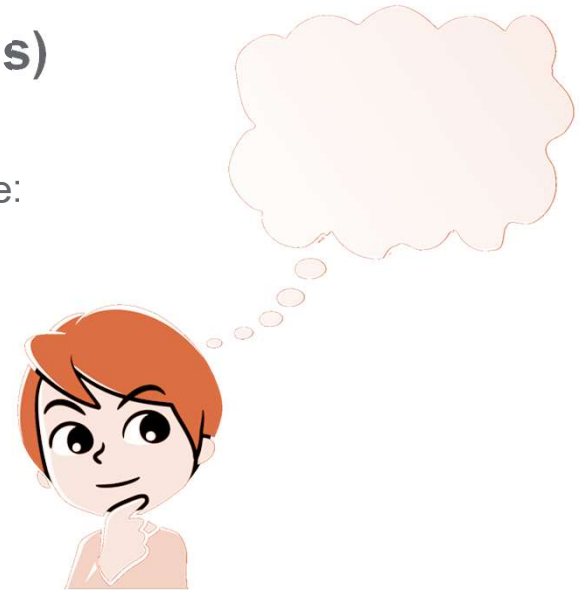


## Mindful Memories

**This is a great, calming activity (suitable for all ages)**

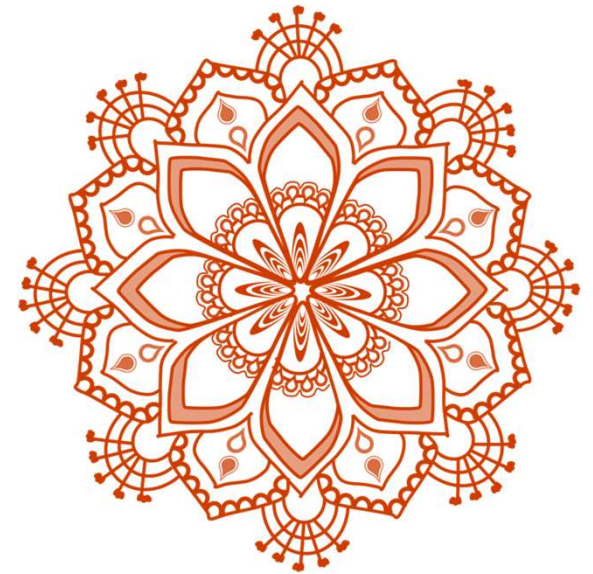
Think of a happy memory/something you really enjoy doing. Now imagine:

- 2 things you can see
- 2 things you can hear
- 2 things you can feel
- 2 things you can smell
- 2 things you can taste



## Mindful Mandalas

This is a great, calming activity for all ages and can be very helpful as a transition activity (often a trigger for students struggling to regulate).





## Create a Calm Corner

This is a calming activity that can be part of any classroom or included in office space (suitable for all ages)

- In your calm corner/space include a few options for students to choose as calming activities such as:
- A small library of books and a beanbag
- A calm/sensory box can be very helpful when students need time to calm and regulate
- Reversible sequined cushions
- Fish tank/bubble tank
- Noise reducing headphones

Go to the  
calming corner



The Talking Teacher

# Calm/Sensory Box

## Rules and equipment (suitable for all ages)

### Rules

- Please take care of the items inside the box...you helped to make these items so be PROUD of them!
- The sensory box is only to be used with permission from an adult
- After using the items, put them back in the box neatly.
- If something is broken give it to an adult
- Share
- Have fun!



# Sensory Box

## Equipment

### Weighted/deep pressure/calming equipment

- **Weighted blanket:** the blanket provides deep pressure to the overall surface of the body and help students to calm and organise themselves when they feel anxious or upset. Beanbags must be removed prior to washing.
- **Weighted animals:** lap/shoulder snakes provide extra weight and deep pressure to help calm student.
- **Spandex hugs:** can be wrapped around a students shoulders, then pulled tightly around them to help calm. They are washable.
- **Large ball:** can be used to sit on, bounce on, or roll over the body. The ball provides pressure to help calm student.
- **Music maker:** has a variety of soothing sounds that can be helpful in calming students when they are stressed or anxious. They run on either mains or battery power and help provide focus.



# Sensory Box

## Equipment

### Tactile (touch) equipment

- **Shaving cream:** can be used on a table or floor and provides many creative ways for students to express themselves artistically and relieve anxiety.
- **Flarp:** can be calming or energising. It has a sticky and cool texture that can be squeezed or stretched and kneaded.
- **Silly putty:** is another fun way to help students de-stress by pulling, squeezing, stretching and kneading.
- **Sensory ball:** can be used as a fidget tool. Students can pull on the ends, squeeze it or run it up or down their arms or legs. Helps relieve anxiety.

## Equipment

### Tactile (touch) equipment cont.

- **Rice and bean/cornmeal container:** a balloon filled (not too full!) with rice &/or beans or cornmeal and rolled over your hands can be very calming and relaxing. As an alternative, a sensory tray can be made by adding sand, rice, beans &/or cornmeal and sometimes other small objects so that students can run their hands through the mix.
- **Moon sand:** can be a calming and relaxing activity that also allows self-expression. This sand never dries out and moulds into any shape as many times as you like. A great way to relieve stress.

# Sensory Box

## Equipment

### Oral-motor equipment

- **Hard lollies/licorice/gum/pretzels:**  
sucking and chewing can be good ways to satisfy oral-motor needs. It also provides input to muscles and can also wake up hypo-aroused people
- **Bubbles:** blowing bubbles and/or using the scented bubbles can provide sensation to the mouth instead of chewing on pens/pencils or nails

## Equipment

### Scented equipment

- **Lavender air freshener or oil:** can be very relaxing. Simply spray or dot onto a cotton pad or ball and leave it somewhere nearby.
- **Scented hand lotion:** rubbing good quality lightly scented lotion on hands, arms and/or legs can be very relaxing.

# Calm down tools for older students

## Items for auditory sensory input

- **Noise canceling headphones** (good for listening to music or audiobooks)
- **Hearing protection ear muffs**
- **Sound machine**
- **MP3 player**: with audio books, music, nature sounds etc.

## Items for oral motor sensory input

- **Chewing gum**
- **Hard lollies** like lollipops, or anything else that can be sucked on
- **Crunchy snacks**
- **Gummy snacks**
- **Chew necklace**

## Items to help calm the mind

- **Rubik's cube | Wooden/metal logic puzzles | brain teasers**
- **Activity books | dot-to-dots | mazes | crosswords | sudoku**
- **Brain Quest cards**
- **Doodle books**
- **Mad Libs books**
- **One player board games** Rush Hour | Laser Maze | Logic Game
- **Blank notebook/journal and writing utensils**
- **Colouring books | Chapter books to read**
- **Lego kits**

## Items that offer proprioceptive support

- **Punching bag or bop bag**
- **Weighted blanket**
- **Weighted lap cushion**
- **Heated blanket | stress balls**
- **Resistance/exercise stretchy bands**
- **Compression clothing**
- **Skipping rope**
- **Hand weights or small dumbbells**
- **Mini massager**

# Calm down tools for older students

## Items to support breathing and relaxation

- Book of yoga poses or yoga pose cards
- Rescue Remedy spray

## Items to visually calm

- Eye mask
- Lava lamp
- Sunglasses
- Look and find books
- Kaleidoscope
- Bop It, Simon, or similar game that uses auditory or visual input

## Items for oral motor sensory input

- Chewing gum
- Hard lollies or anything else that can be sucked on
- Crunchy snacks
- Gummy snacks
- Chew necklace

## Items olfactory sensory support

- Calming essential oil spray
- Scented lotion
- Scented candles

## CALM DOWN TOOLS FOR OLDER KIDS

www.andnextcomesL.com

### Items that give kids a brain break

- Puzzles
- Chapter books to read
- Blank notebook/journal and writing utensils
- Coloring books
- Scratch art doodle pad
- Activity books
- Brain Quest cards
- Doodle books
- Mad Libs
- One player travel sized games

### Items for auditory sensory support

- Noise cancelling headphones
- MP3 player with music, nature sounds, audiobooks, etc.
- Sound machine

### Items for oral motor sensory support

- Chewing gum, hard candies, or lollipops
- Snacks with a variety of textures
- Chew necklace

### Items to support breathing & relaxation

- Book of yoga poses or yoga activity cards
- Rescue Remedy Spray

### Items that provide proprioceptive support

- Punching bag or bop bag
- Mini massager
- Weighted lap cushion
- Hand weights
- Resistance/exercise bands
- Compression clothing
- Heated blanket
- Weighted blanket
- Skipping rope

### Items to squeeze, fidget with, or keep hands busy

- LEGO kits
- Stress balls
- Rubik's Cube
- Wooden or metal logic puzzles
- Craft kits
- Cat's cradle

### Items to visually calm

- Kaleidoscope
- Eye mask
- Look & find books
- Lava lamp

### Items for olfactory sensory support

- Calming essential oil spray
- Scented lotion



**Figure 1.**  
**Sensory Box Rules**  
**and Equipment**



#### **Rules for the Sensory Box**

- Please take care of the items inside the box...you helped to make these items...be PROUD of them.
- The sensory box is only to be used with permission from a staff member.
- After using the items, put them back in the box neatly.... They do not go into your room.
- If an item is broken, please give it to a staff member.
- Share the items with other girls.
- Enjoy!

#### **Equipment for the Sensory Box**

##### **Weighted Deep Pressure/Calming Equipment**

1. **Weighted Blanket:** The blanket provides deep pressure to the overall surface of the body. This extra pressure helps to calm and organize you when you are feeling anxious or upset. The blankets are washable, but be sure to remove the bean bags before washing.
2. **Weighted animals,** lap/shoulder snakes: The items provide you with extra weight and deep pressure to help calm and organize yourself when you are stressed out or upset.
3. **Spandex Hugs:** This is wrapped around your shoulders, then you pull the ends tightly around yourself. It provides deep pressure to the shoulders which helps to calm and organize you. The spandex hugs are washable.

4. **Large Ball:** The ball can be used to sit on, bounce on, or roll over the body. The ball provides pressure to the body which helps to calm and organize you when you feel anxious or stressed out.
5. **Music Maker:** The music maker has a variety of soothing sounds. It can be plugged in or battery operated. The music helps provide a soothing feeling to help and focus you during times of a lot of stress or when you need to pay attention.

##### **Tactile (touch) Equipment**

1. **Shaving Cream:** Be creative! Use shaving cream on a table or floor and draw or write in it. This is an easy and fun way for self expression. It also helps to relieve anxiety.
2. **Flarp:** Flarp can also be calming or it can help "wake you up." It has a sticky and cool texture and can be squeezed or stretched.
3. **Silly Putty:** Silly Putty is another fun way to de-stress by pulling, squeezing, or stretching it. It provides input to your joints, which can be calming or stimulating. You can also use this to make objects or to write your name.
4. **Sensory Ball:** A sensory ball can be used as a fidget tool. You can pull on the ends, squeeze it, or run it up and down your arms and legs. This can also be used to help you relax when you're feeling anxious.
5. **Rice and Bean/Cornmeal Container:** Running a mixture of rice, beans, and cornmeal over your hands is a way to relax. Be creative and add objects to

the mix, then try to guess what they are without looking.

6. **Moon Sand:** Moon sand can be a calming and relaxing activity that also allows self-expression. This sand never dries out and you can make whatever you like time and time again. It is moldable and a great way to relieve stress.

##### **Oral-Motor Equipment**

1. **Hard Candy/Licorice/Gum/Pretzels:** Sucking on hard candy, eating licorice sticks, chewing gum, or eating pretzels are good ways to satisfy your oral-motor needs. These activities also provide input to your muscles and can wake you up if you're feeling tired.
2. **Bubbles:** Blowing bubbles and/or using the scented bubbles if you like to smell objects can provide sensation to your mouth, instead on chewing on pens or your nails.

##### **Scented Equipment**

1. **Lavender Air Freshener:** Many people find lavender to be relaxing. If you are feeling agitated, try opening the solid lavender air freshener and putting it near the area where you are sitting.
2. **Lavender lotion:** Spreading lavender lotion on your body can help calm you through your senses of smell and touch. Squeeze a little lotion between your hands and warm it up before you spread it on your arms and legs. You might find it more relaxing if you use firm, slow movements when you rub it in.



**2.**

Take 3 deep breaths  
or count slowly  
to 10.

**3.**

Use my words to say  
how I feel and what  
I wish would happen.

**4.**

Ask for help  
to solve the  
problem.

**1.**

Remind myself that  
it is never okay  
to hurt others.

**5.**

Take time to  
calm down.

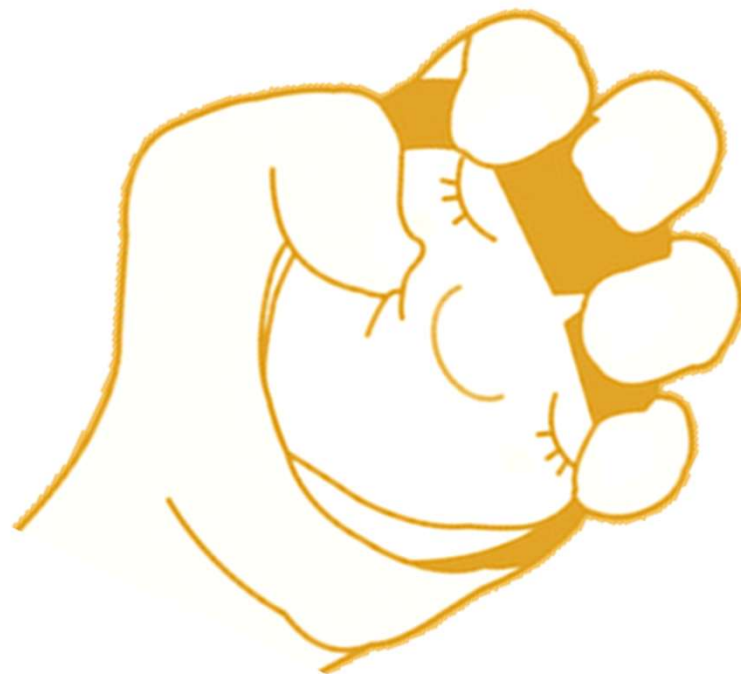


Think  
**happy**  
thoughts!

# Count to 10



# Squeeze a stress ball



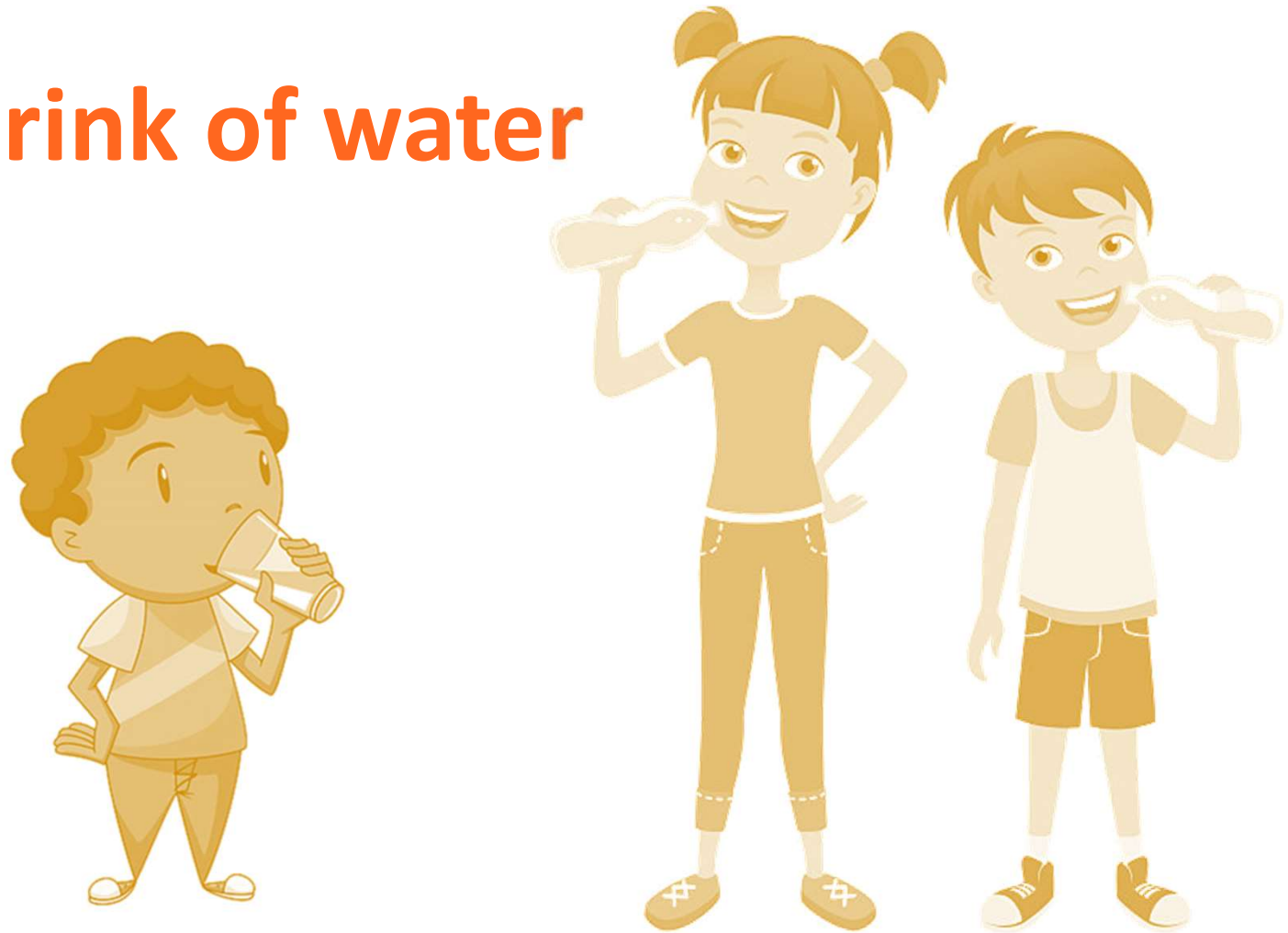
## Play with blue tack



# Do some exercises



# Get a drink of water

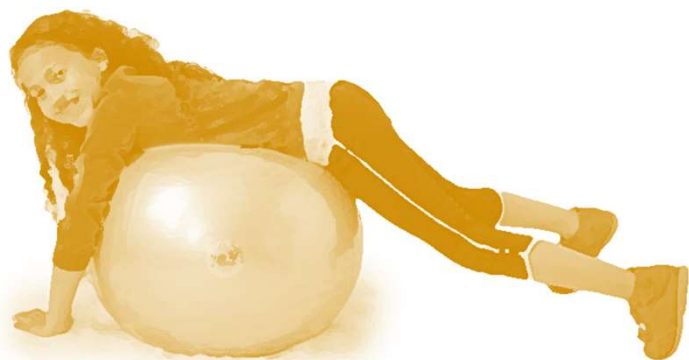




# Read a book



# Rock gently on a ball



# Relax on pillows or a beanbag



# Listen to music



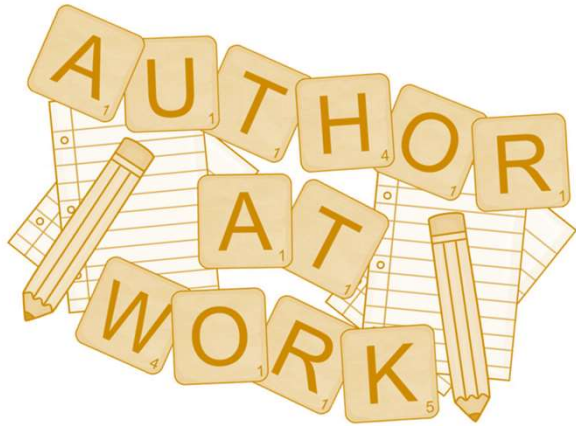
# Do yoga



# Play quietly



# Write in your journal



# Give yourself a hug





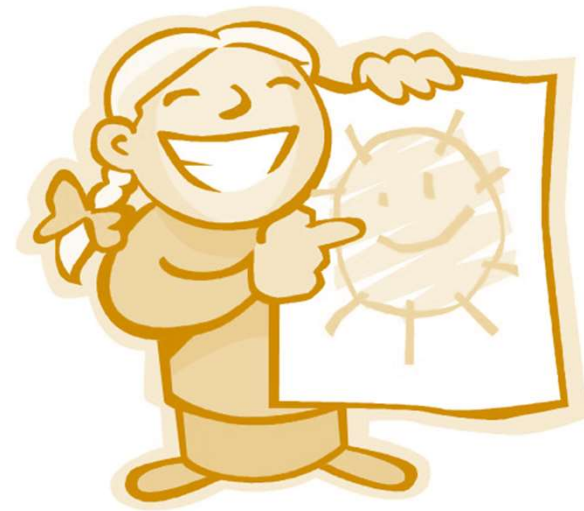
# Jump on a mini trampoline



# Use the swing



# Draw a picture



# Balance on a stool



# Go to a quiet area

