

Improving Literacy Through Self-Regulation



On the 5's

RESOURCE GUIDE

Practical Guide for Caregivers

Welcome

Nothing is more important in the lives of our children than literacy - the ability to read, write, speak, understand, and solve problems. To absorb the information needed to develop strong literacy skills, our learners must be calm, focused, and engaged.

Concentrating on the task at hand can be difficult for our young people, and this document is intended to equip our caregivers with tools to help their students control their thinking, emotions, and behavior. It encourages engaging in breathing exercises and taking regular, five-minute "brain breaks" to strengthen the brain's learning connections.

I believe you will find this document exceptionally useful, and that you will refer to it often. I want to extend my deepest thanks to the dedicated education professionals who created it.

Kirsten Baesler
North Dakota Superintendent of Public Instruction



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Improving Literacy Through Self-Regulation: **On the 5's**

Literacy is an essential skill for *all* children and is the foundation for lifelong success at home, school, and in the community. Literacy is more than just reading and writing. It involves a wide variety of skills, including listening, speaking, comprehension, and problem-solving. Literacy also requires the ability to remain calm and focused while engaging in learning. Self-regulation, the ability to remain calm and focused, is the foundation for literacy.

To effectively support our children, we must work together. Whatever your role, our first mission is to help the child. But *how* we help is not always easy to figure out.

"On the 5's" Resource Guide seeks to help parents and caregivers with a quick, easy-to-use toolkit. These brain break activities are designed to be done in 5 minutes or less and help both you and your child. Individuals of all ages can improve their memory, focus, and calming skills.

Although this resource guide effectively supports all learners, it is especially important for those children with a disability, trauma or drug/alcohol exposure. Learning new skills can be challenging for youth. It takes practice for a child to have the ability to self-regulate, but with your help, it is possible!

Building self-regulation and working memory skills helps us remain calm, engaged and focused. You and your child are creating a strong foundation for comprehensive literacy.

"You are Braver than you Believe, and Stronger than you See, and Smarter than you Think."

~ Christopher Robin



On the 5's

Take a Brain Break

In just five minutes, your child can build connections in the brain to boost their POWER to learn, while improving calming and focusing skills.

Decide what times work best, then set aside 5 minutes each hour to take a Brain Break.

Set your phone, timer, or watch on **One of the 5's**. The average individual is awake 16 hours; thus, there are 16 teachable moments each day. Do hourly Brain Breaks when you are with your child, then **partner** with your teacher or caregiver to **keep your child "On the 5's"** when you are apart.

Set your clock,
timer or watch
on one of the 5's



"On the 5's" examples: 8:05, 9:05, 10:05 AM, etc.
or 5:45, 6:45, 7:45 PM, etc.

Brain breaks are designed to improve self-regulation and working memory.

- **Self-Regulation** helps children and adults control their emotions, thinking, and behavior. These skills assist in managing impulse control, while improving concentration and focus.
- **Working Memory** includes the skills we all need to get things done; to plan and organize; to respond to changing situations. Working Memory is a primary predictor of educational achievement and is essential for learners of **All** ages.

"On the 5's" can be easily taught and practiced throughout the day in short, **five minute intervals** to strengthen learning connections in our brain. The activities are equally effective if your child needs Brain Breaks every 15-30 minutes.

Begin by trying 2-3 strategies that are of high interest to you and your child. Determine which one(s) are most effective and write those down. Each day, try new ones to add to your **"Playlist"** and record the ones that work. **"On the 5's"** includes a variety of coping skills that involve **Movement, Sensory, Distraction, and overall Calming** strategies. As you **build your Playlist**, include choices from each of the above groups, as different strategies work better in different settings.

"On the 5's" is designed to be a universal **toolkit** for children and their caregivers to use together, as we nurture and empower our children to achieve their fullest potential.



Basic Breathing Exercise

Do all 4!!!

Smell the flower

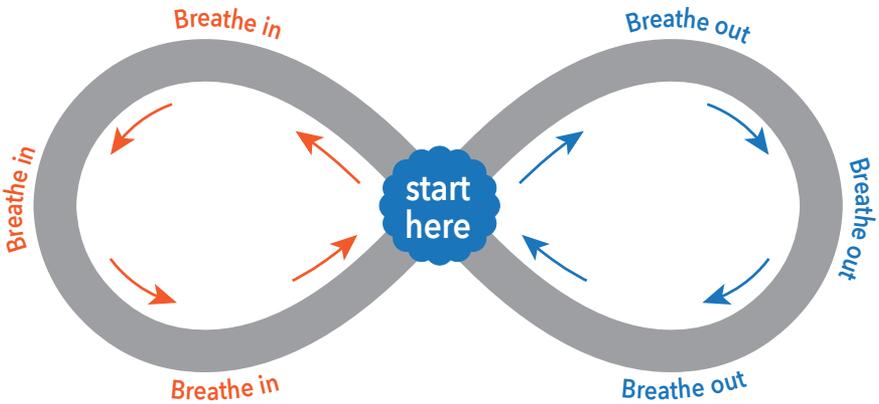


Blow out the candle

1		
2		
3		
4		

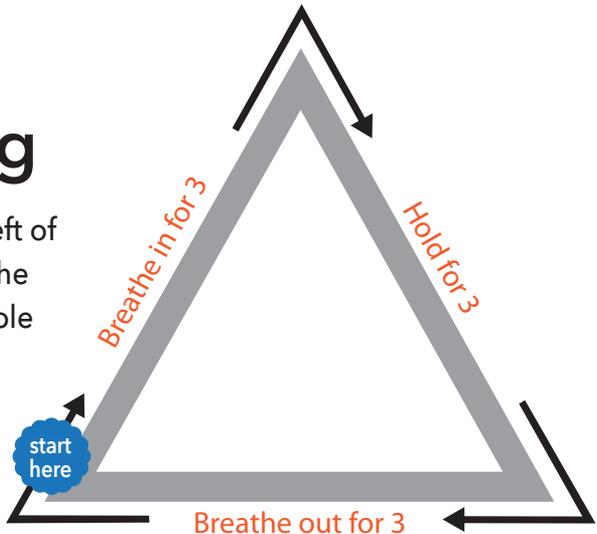
Lazy 8 Breathing

Start with an 8 on its side. Starting in the middle, go up to the left and trace the left part of the 8 with your finger while you breathe in. When you get to the middle of the 8 again, breathe out while you trace the right part of the 8 with your finger.



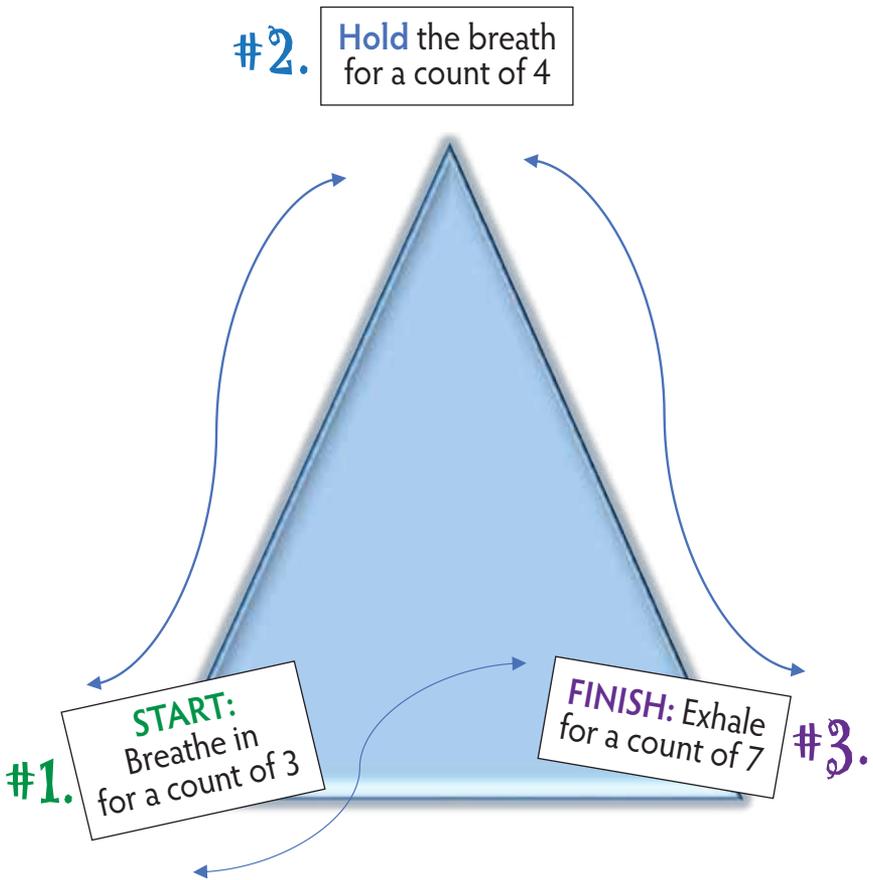
Triangle Breathing

Start at the bottom left of the triangle. Follow the sides around the whole triangle to complete one deep breath.



3-4-7 Advanced Breathing Technique

This exercise can be helpful to anyone but is especially useful for those with anxiety. The pattern and timing of breathing work to reset and calm the body. The cycle must be done 4x in a row.



Ways to Give Pressure to Your Body

Deep pressure activities are calming and organizing when a child is anxious or over-stimulated.



Create a Calm-Down Corner for Your Child

A calm-down corner is a great way to learn to self-regulate. Include items such as stuffed animals, pillows, books and other personal favorites.



Ideas for my Calm-Down Space:

Create Your Own Calm-Down Space

A calm-down space is great for adults, too. Be sure to choose your favorites like a good book, a cup of tea, calming music or a cozy blanket.



Ideas for my Calm-Down Space:

Yoga for Stress

Yoga is great for your body AND MIND. You must concentrate, which helps to calm and relax you.

Try these six easy poses:

Start at #1. End at #6. Hold each pose for 30 seconds. KEEP Breathing Deep. Stay Quiet.

<p>(1) Down Dog</p>  <p>© Can Stock Photo</p>	<p>(2) Cat/ Cow</p> 
<p>(3) Cobra</p> 	<p>(4) Bridge</p> 
<p>(5) Fish</p> 	<p>(6) Rest</p> 

Weighted Activities

Heavy work activities combine movement and anything that involves pushing, pulling, or lifting heavy objects or items. Many playground activities and household chores qualify as heavy work activities.

Weighted activities provide a sense of body awareness through deep pressure. They can help us calm down even if one of our other senses is out of balance.

- 1) Jump on a mini trampoline
- 2) Outside play: monkey bars, swing or jungle gym
- 3) Wheelbarrow, leapfrog, crab crawl
- 4) Carry/deliver boxes, your backpack, books or laundry to another room
- 5) Move furniture, vacuum, sweep, rake
- 6) Balance on yoga ball; play catch with yoga ball
- 7) Ride a bike, rollerblade, skateboard
- 8) Squish/knead/play with play dough or silly putty
- 9) Ride a scooter board on tummy using hands
- 10) Body tunnel: Fold stretchy fabric in half and sew as shown below.

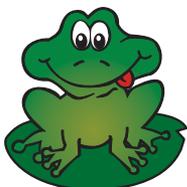


6 Quick Ways to Calm Down

<p>Wash your hands for 2-3 minutes. Really <u>feel</u> the water.</p> 	<p>Jump up & down for 1 min. Close your eyes; put your hand on your heart and count the beats.</p> 	<p>Draw BIG figure 8's in the air. Do it with each hand. Repeat 2x.</p> 
<p>Squeeze your hands into fists; tense body. Relax. Breathe out. Repeat 5x</p> 	<p>Do 20 Jumping jacks; then touch hand to opposite toe 20x.</p> 	<p>Cross-Crawls: Lift knee to chest level while touching hand to opposite knee. Switch hand to other knee and march in place. Repeat 10x.</p> 

Kids' 5-Minute Workouts for Self-Regulation

Set an interval timer and complete each animal movement for 45 seconds with 15 seconds of rest in between. Do as many as you can!



Frog Jumps

Hop, hop, back and forth like a frog.



Bear Walk

Hand and feet on the floor, hips high - walk left and right.



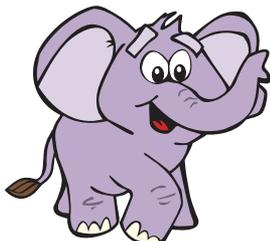
Starfish Jumps

Jumping jacks as fast as you can, with arms and legs spread wide.



Cheetah Run

Run in place as FAST as you can, just like the fastest animal in the Sahara Desert.



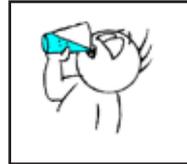
Elephant Stomps

March in place, lifting your knees as high as you can, and stomping the ground as hard as you can.

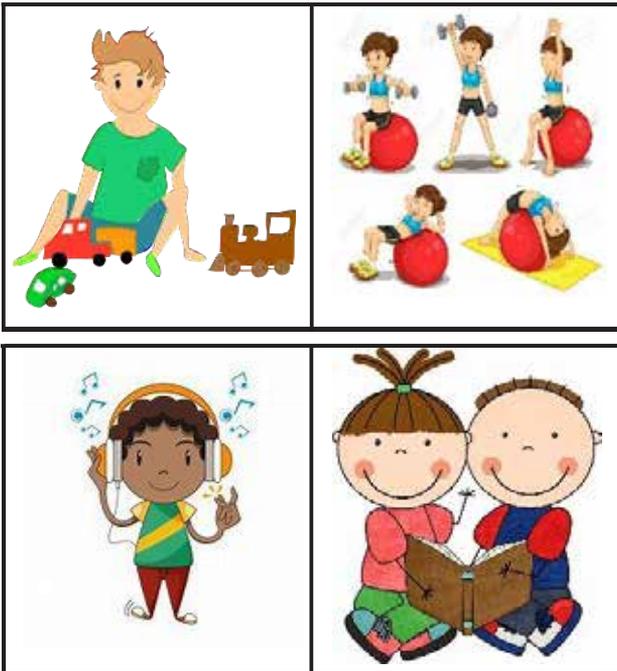
Calm Down Strategy

In **"First, Then"** the child is given a choice, but within a framework; i.e., they must complete the **FIRST** task you provide before having the choice of the second. Teaching **"First, Then"** routines provide the first steps in learning sequencing.

FIRST, get a drink of water.



THEN, (choose ONE of these):



10 Games & Activities for Self-Regulation

Games that support planning, problem-solving and attention can help children self-regulate.

1. Red Light; Green Light
2. Simon Says
3. Duck, Duck, Goose
4. Freeze Dance
5. Hand-Clapping Games
6. Balloon Volleyball
7. Jenga
8. Operation Game
9. Hopscotch
10. Drumming Patterns

Tap a rhythm on a table or a drum for your child to copy. Then, take turns as your child sends you a drumming pattern to follow.



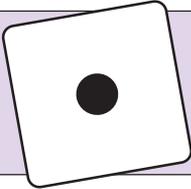
Independent Choice Activities

Visual choice boards empower children to express themselves by making independent choices.

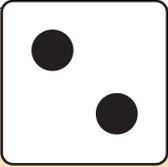


Roll-A-Break

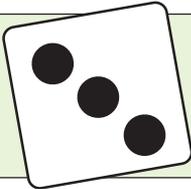
Toss a die to see which activity you will do on your break.
Repeat dice rolls until you reach the 5-minute mark.



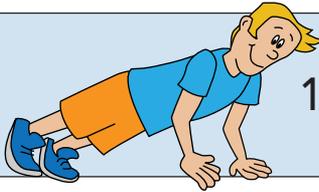
20 Jumping Jacks



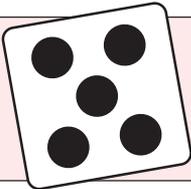
10 Sit-ups



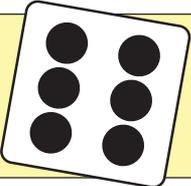
Hop on one foot



10 Push-ups



Touch your toes
(hold for 15 seconds)



Run in place



5 ★ 4 ★ 3 ★ 2 ★ 1

SLOW DOWN & CALM DOWN

First off - Take 3 slow, quiet, deep breaths!

5

List 5 things you can SEE.



4

List 4 things you can FEEL.



3

List 3 things you can HEAR.



2

List 2 things you can SMELL.



1

List something POSITIVE about yourself.

make
today
count

Finished? Now, take 3 more slow
and quiet deep breaths!

Play Cards

Playing cards builds working memory by remembering your cards while tracking other's cards and the rules of the game.

While all card games are helpful to improve self-regulation and memory, the following games are most effective:



Memory

Go Fish

Uno

Concentration

Rummy

Hearts

Crazy Eights

Solitaire

Cribbage



Have Your Child Teach You

Encouraging your child to explain how to do something strengthens working memory and builds connections.



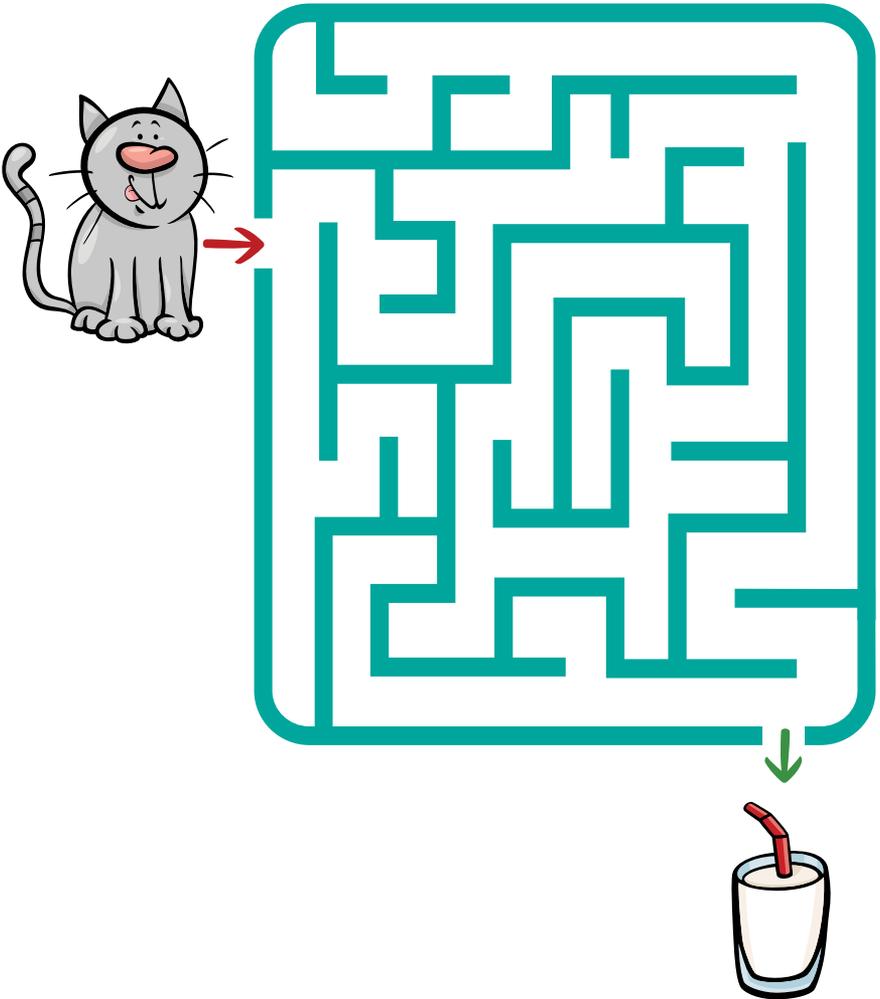
Things my child can teach me:

- Games
- Dance moves
- Crafts
- Songs
- Jokes
- Magic tricks



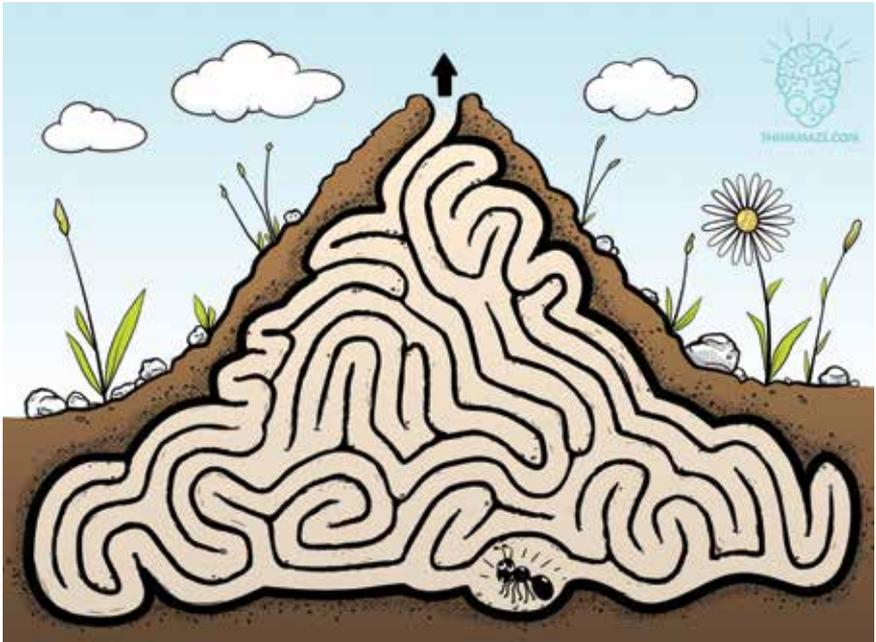
Cat and Milk Maze

Mazes help build skills in planning and problem-solving, while boosting self-confidence. Have your child start by moving a finger through the maze. Next, have the child use a pencil. For more challenge, work the maze backward.



Ant Maze

Mazes develop working memory, focus, and visual-motor skills. Start by using your finger to find your way through the maze. If you have a sleeve protector, insert the maze and use different colored markers each time you repeat the maze. The goal is to beat your previous time, while maintaining accuracy. This improves processing speed. If sleeve protectors are not available, use different color crayon/pencils over the top of the last color.



5 Steps to Managing BIG Emotions

Say this aloud with your child as you practice the finger movements.

2.

Take 3 deep breaths & 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 to be kind and safe with others.

5.

Take time to Relax.



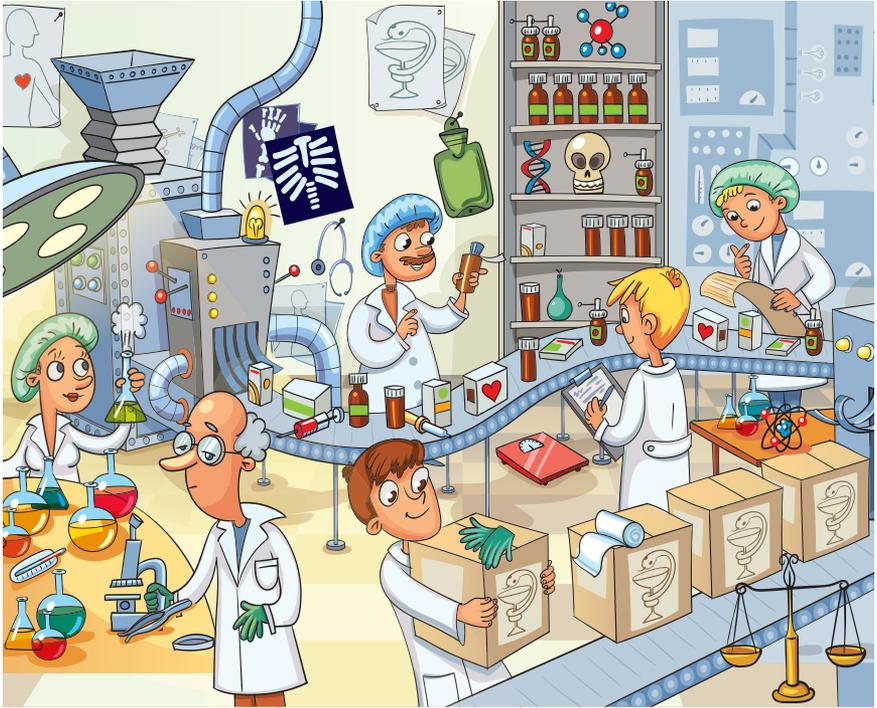
Anger Choice Cards

When you're feeling worried, angry or stressed,
try using anger choice cards.

<p>I can... Draw a picture</p> 	<p>I can... Sing a song</p> 
<p>I can... Walk away</p> 	<p>I can... Imagine a peaceful spot</p> 
<p>I can... Remember a happy time</p> 	<p>I can... Talk to a friend</p> 
<p>I can... Go to my quiet spot and use my calm down box</p> 	<p>I can... Breathe deeply</p> 

Find the Hidden Objects

Hidden pictures and jigsaw puzzles are great for visual memory.

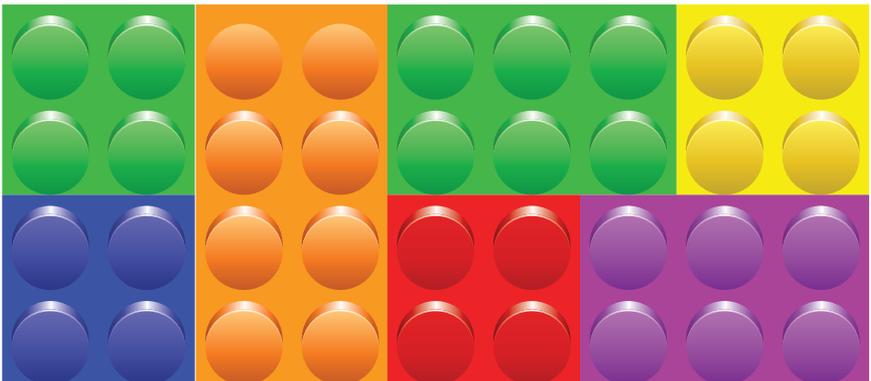
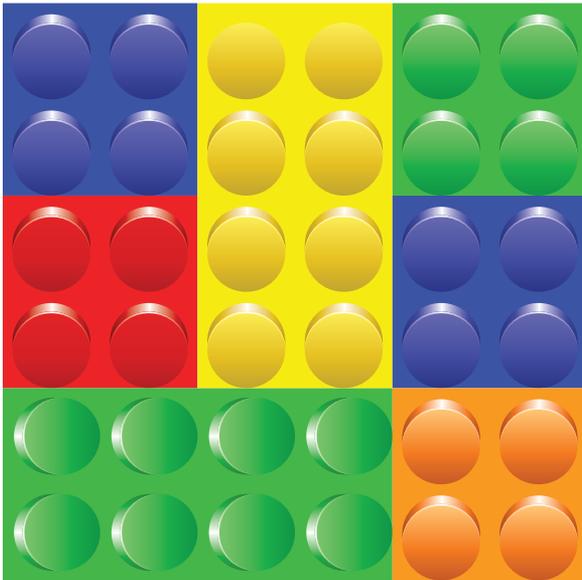


Find 15 objects in the picture



LEGO Fun

Legos are a great way to build visual memory and sequencing skills. Use the templates below to lay out your Legos. For extra challenges: Build your own 3D Lego; have an adult build a Lego structure and you recreate it; have your child build a Lego, then you recreate it. Do it again and try to beat your time. Finally, come up with your own challenge!



Coping Skills Checklist

- Check off the ones that you do now
- Circle the ones you want to try
- Cross off those that don't work

Calming Skills

- Run water over your hands
- Practice deep breathing
- Hug a pillow
- Remember/sing the words to a song you love
- Touch objects around you
- Make a fist; then release it
- Take a shower or bath
- Take a drink of water
- Put on headphones with music or without for silence

Movement Skills

- Squeeze a stress ball
- Do slow stretches
- Shred paper
- Pop bubble wrap
- Use a sand tray
- Create a Jacob's Ladder
- Sit/rock in a rocker
- Dance to your favorite song
- Take a walk outdoors

Distraction Skills

- Tell a story or joke
- Sudoku or crossword puzzles
- Bake or cook
- Clean
- Play with your pet
- Think about (or draw) your favorite place
- Doodle or color
- Read or look at books
- Listen to music/create a playlist

Sensory Skills

- Cover up with a heavy weighted blanket
- Sit in a bean bag chair
- Eat a crunchy snack or chew gum
- Sip a drink through a straw
- Do wall push-ups
- Turn upside down
- Stretch on an exercise ball
- Run around your yard
- Use your favorite body lotion

Mindfulness

Breathing in Positivity for Caregivers and Youth

Today we are doing a breathing exercise and focusing on bringing positivity into our lives.

As we begin, close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. Continue to breathe deeply, taking time to focus on your breathing and how it feels.

Now, think of your favorite color or a color you really like.

When you breathe in, focus on breathing in that color. Let this bring positive things into your day and into your life.

When you exhale, imagine you are breathing out a color that you don't like. Breathe out the negative things in your day and in your life.

Continue to breathe deeply, focusing on breathing the positive color in and the negative color out.

When you are finished, take one last deep breath through your nose and out your mouth, and open your eyes. You are in a state of mindfulness.



Affirmations

Think Positive & Positive Things Will Happen

Choose 1-2 affirmations to say throughout the day.

1. I am amazing.
2. I get better every single day.
3. Today is going to be a great day.
4. I can do anything I put my mind to.
5. All my problems have solutions.
6. I can get through anything.
7. If I fall, I get back up.
8. I have what it takes.
9. I can make a difference.
10. I choose to do great things.
11. Every day is a fresh start.
12. I believe I can do it.

Journaling

Journaling is an excellent way to help organize your thoughts, which helps to calm you down and improve self-esteem. Most of us just don't know where to start. Here is an idea to help get started.



Weekly Journal

Monday

Something I did well today...

Tuesday

I felt good about myself when...

Wednesday

I had a positive experience with...

Thursday

3 good things about me are...

Friday

Something I did for someone...

Saturday

Today I achieved...

Sunday

Today I overcame...

Calm Down

Comforting Phrases to Calm Down

C • A • L • M

I'm listening
I hear you

I can tell
this is hard
for you

It's okay
to be sad
or mad; all
feelings
are okay

Let's work
this out
together

If you want
to be alone,
that's okay,
I'll be right
here when
you're ready
to talk

That was
a scary
situation!
Are you ok?

It doesn't
seem fair

Can you
tell me
about it?

I'm here
for you

I love you,
you are safe

Can you
help me
understand
why you
are crying?

Silence while
hugging your
child

D • O • W • N

DE-ESCALATION

techniques for defusing meltdowns

1. Get on your child's level.
2. Whisper to be heard over a screaming child.
3. Validate their feelings, not their actions.
4. Be aware of your body language.
5. Use positive language to state what you want your child to do.
6. Silence.
7. Answer questions + ignore verbal aggression.
8. Avoid the word "no."
9. Deep breathing exercises.
10. Avoid making demands.
11. Don't try to reason if your child is upset.
12. Respect personal space.
13. Use a distraction.
14. Listen and rephrase what the child is saying.
15. Be non-judgmental.
16. Movement break.
17. Decrease stimulation.
18. Calming visuals.

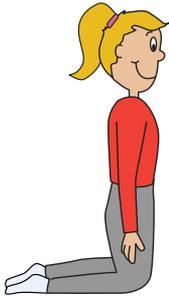
Dragon Yoga

Twist and stretch poses are wonderful to unwind, let go of stress and tension, and renew yourself. Do them slowly; one step at a time, breathing evenly, and discover how deep you can go.



Dragon

Powerful • Alert • Fiery



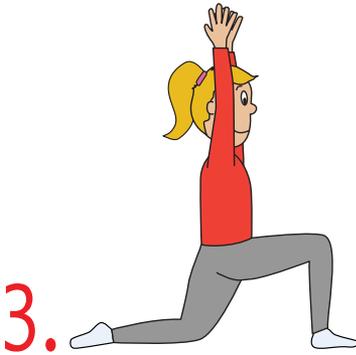
1.

“I am a powerful dragon.”
Stand on your knees, arms
at your side.



2.

“I am alert and aligned.”
Lunge one foot forward,
hands on thigh.



3.

“Inhale and expand.”
Stretch forward and
reach arms up.



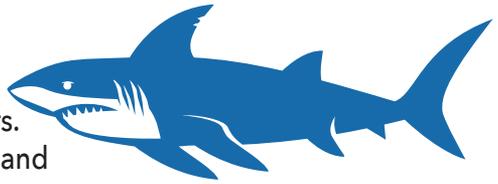
4.

“HA! I breathe out fire!”
Exhale with a big “HA!”
Spread your fingers.

Use this pose to cleanse and strengthen your lungs.

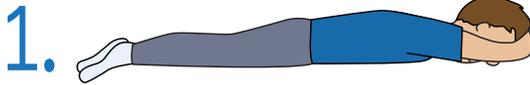
Shark Yoga

Back bends are great energizers. They help you open your heart and build trust in yourself.



Shark

Sleek • Powerful • Determined



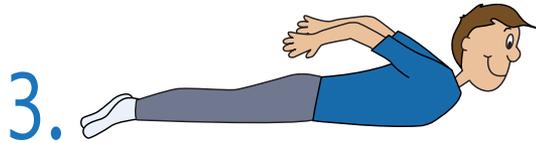
“I am long and sleek.”

Lie on your tummy.



“I am a strong swimmer.”

Clasp your hands behind you.



“I am determined.”

Roll your shoulders back, lift your hands, feet and chest.



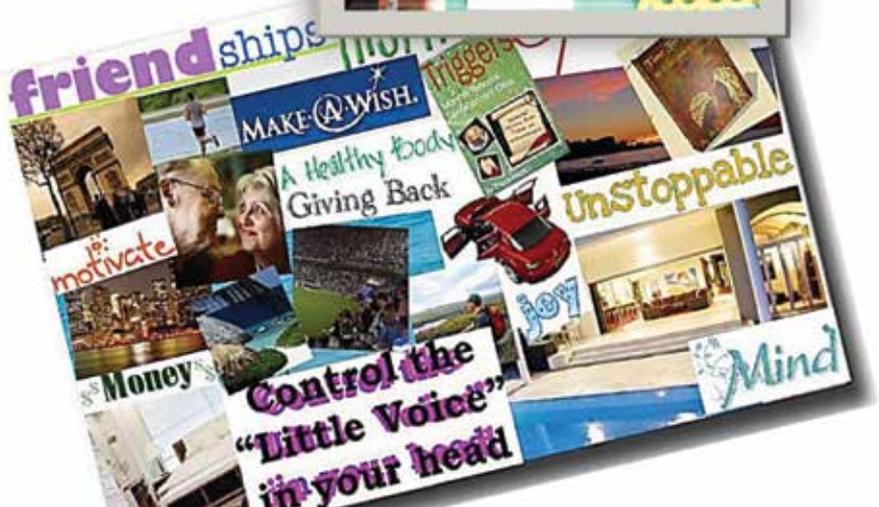
“I am a fierce shark!”

Breathe, arch, lift and lengthen your body.

Use this pose to develop your strength, focus, and determination.

Vision Boards

Success starts with intention. Visualization is one of the most powerful tools to achieve success. Vision boards are one way to create that intention. When we look at the pictures of the things we want, we imagine the achievements, the enjoyment and the fulfillment that comes from **making our dreams a reality**.



Self-Care Toolkit for Caregivers

This list of resources may help caregivers manage stress and frustration; most can be completed in a minute or two. See what works for you, or tweak them to your specific circumstances.

1. Do something for others. Giving to others makes you feel better about yourself.
2. Arrange for privacy. You need to be able to be alone and relax without the demands of others.
3. Get enough sleep. Develop a nighttime routine without electronics nearby.
4. Don't judge yourself too sternly. Hold yourself to high standards, but don't expect more from yourself than you would from others.
5. Be healthy. Get regular check-ups, eat well, and exercise.
6. You can only do one thing at a time, so select the most important and tackle that.
7. Talk to a friend. Just getting something off your chest can help you feel better.
8. Choose to be around positive people.
9. Listen to upbeat music that makes you feel good.
10. Garden, go for a walk, or a bike ride.
11. Seek humor. Laughter can be a great tension reducer.
12. If you are overwhelmed, seeking the professional help of a counselor may be needed. If you or a family member are employed, check to see if you have an employee assistance program where you can receive a certain number of sessions without charge.



Let it “RAIN”

“RAIN took only a few minutes, but it made a big difference. My anxiety isn’t gone, but something fundamental has changed. The anxiety no longer takes over. When I pause and move my attention to my body and heart, there’s a shift to increased presence and kindness” ~ Tara Brach

Author’s note: If your focus moves to what’s going on, keep bringing your attention back to your body, being fully present.

R - Recognize What Is Happening

As you reflect on the situation, ask yourself, *“What is happening (sensations/ emotions) inside me right now?”*

A - Allow Life to Be Just as It Is

Send a message to your heart to *“let be what will be.”* Find the willingness to pause and accept in these moments, *“what IS.”*

I - Investigate with a Gentle, Curious Attention

Bring an open mind to your experience. Ask:

- *What is the hardest part of your current anxiety state?*
- *What emotions does this bring up (fear, anger, grief)?*
- *If the hurting part of me could communicate, what would it express (words, feelings, images)?*

N - Nurture with Loving Presence

- As you sense what is needed, what is your natural response?
- Offer yourself a loving message or a tender embrace *“inward.”*
- Gently place your hand on your heart.
- Visualize someone you trust—a parent or a pet, a teacher or mentor—**holding you with love.**

Gratitude Scavenger Hunt

1. Find something outside you enjoy looking at.
2. Find something that is your favorite color.
3. Find something that makes you happy.
4. Discover something new.
5. Find something that makes you laugh.
6. Find your favorite spot to spend alone time.
7. Draw a picture or write a note of gratitude for someone.
8. Complete a random act of kindness for someone.



Gratitude
is the best
Attitude!

Global Literacy

What is Global Literacy?

Global literacy is an understanding of how the world - and texts - are organized and interconnected while focusing on the challenges and possibilities facing its people.

-Boise State University, 2016

What is a text?

The term "text" is often associated with a book(s); however, texts in the 21st Century are *anything* we can read:

- Music
- Art
- Environmental print
- Multi-media formats
- People

The Six Traits of Literacy

-Oglan, 2003

1. **READ** - discover or understand, by mental interpretation
2. **WRITE** - compose or communicate for written production
3. **SPEAK** - express thoughts or feelings to convey information
4. **LISTEN** - hear with thoughtful attention
5. **VIEW** - considering something in a particular way
6. **PRESENT** - show or offer for others to reflect

Viewing/Presenting

Viewing enhances active listening abilities.

Presenting builds communication and leadership skills. Start early; practice regularly.

Children: Puppets are a delightful way to encourage children to exercise their language and self-regulation skills. Puppets can be made from paper bags, cardboard tubes, tissue paper, popsicle sticks, gloves/mittens and socks.



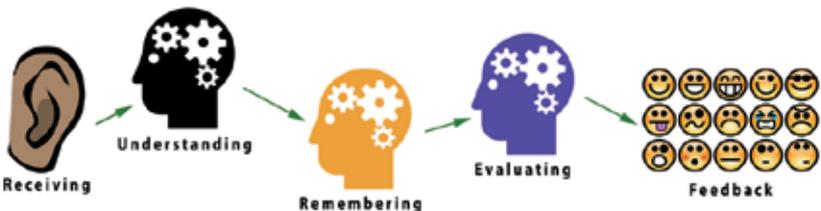
Youth: As they transition to adulthood and the workforce, these skills are needed to get their message across. Examples include providing educational presentations, performing a skit, recording a radio PSA, or participating in debates.



Teens: Personal presentation is a communication skill. This occurs in the way you present yourself in everyday situations, more stressful ones like job interviews, and when you make decisions based on information shared.



Adults: Good listening skills can help you become a better presenter – socially and professionally. ‘Listening’ to your body will increase awareness of what message your body language – and that of others – is conveying.



Resources for Families

The ARC
1500 E Capitol Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58501
(701) 222-1854
www.thearcofbismarck.org

Designer Genes
1500 E Capitol Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58505
(701) 391-7421
www.designergenesnd.com

Family Voices of ND
PO Box 163
Edgeley, ND 58433
(888) 522-9654
www.fvnd.org/site

ND Federation of Families for Children's
Mental Health
523 N 4th St.
Bismarck, ND 58501
(701) 222-3310
www.ndffcmh.org

Pathfinders
1015 S Broadway, Suite 16
Minot, ND 58701
(701) 837-7500
www.pathfinder-nd.org

Links

ND Dept. of Public Instruction - nd.gov/dpi
ND Dept. of Human Service/Behavioral Health - [nddhs.gov/behavioral health](http://nddhs.gov/behavioral_health)
ND Regional Education Cooperatives - ndrea.org
Self-Regulation Assessment - [nd.gov/dpi/special education](http://nd.gov/dpi/special_education)
ADDitude - additudemagazine.org
And Next Comes L (Learning) - andnextcomesl.com
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) - casel.org
Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) - csefel.org
Child Mind Institute - childmindinstitute.com
Child Trauma Academy - childtraumaacademy.com
Council for Exceptional Children - cec.org
Intervention Central - interventioncentral.org
Iris Center - iriscenter.org
Learning Disabilities Association of America - learningdisabilitiesassociationofamerica.org
OT Toolbox - theottoolbox.com
Understood - understood.org

Additional Activity Resources

Mazes - www.thesprucecrafts.com/free-online-mazes-1357461
I Spy (online) - www.scholastic.com/ispy/games/index.html
I Spy (printable) - www.papertraildesign.com/i-spy-game-printables/
Lego Building - www.lego.com/en-us/themes/classic/building-instructions
Kids' Yoga - www.youtube.com/c/CosmicKidsYoga/featured

Disclaimer: To provide a wide variety of resources to assist families and educators, this site links to external websites. All external links operate independently from the NDDPI. The department has established a regular review process in an attempt to keep this information up-to-date and accurate. However, neither the State of North Dakota nor any agency, officer, or employee of the State of North Dakota warrants the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of any information published by this system, nor endorses any content, viewpoints, products, or services linked from this system, and shall not be held responsible for any losses caused by reliance on the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of such information.

NDSRCL Grant Awards: In September 2017, North Dakota was notified it had been selected for an award of funds from the U.S. Department of Education for the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (NDSRCL) Grant. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is excited to announce 15 sites across the state received grant awards to support disadvantaged children in literacy skill improvement. A site is comprised of a school district and community partners.

www.nd.gov/dpi/education-programs/literacy/north-dakota-striving-readers-comprehensive-literacy-ndsrl



For more information, please contact:

NDDPI - Special Education
600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 201
Bismarck, ND 50505-0440
(701) 328-2277
www.nd.gov/dpi



**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

