

BEING CALM

Focusing on Well-Being and Belonging



Learning how to calm oneself and manage stress and anxiety helps children increase self-control and sustain attention. Self-regulation techniques enable us to feel our best in the most stressful of times.

*Feeling nature with our senses
to feel calm and secure
(heartmindonline.org)*



When we direct our attention and focus, we create a state of calmness where the feeling of well-being occurs. A feeling of secure and calm arises and each child self-regulates using breathing and focusing strategies that work for them. <https://heartmindonline.org/resources/feeling-nature-with-our-senses>

ACTIVITIES

Deer Ears and Owl Eyes

(Scott Sampson's [The Whirpool of Life](#) for Heart-Mind Online)

-“Invite your child into a space outdoors. It could be on your front lawn, a community garden, or deep in the wilderness.

-Sit quietly for a moment, and let your awareness settle on your surroundings.

-Invite your child to choose a sense - sound, sight, smell, and touch work best, unless you are in an environment with safe edible plants nearby (such as a food garden)

-Help your child explore the sense inspired by a chosen animal. Use one of the following examples or choose your own: **deer ears** (deer have excellent hearing); **owl eyes** (owls can see far and wide); **bear nose**

(bears have a fantastic sense of smell); **spider legs** (spiders have a particularly sensitive sense of touch)



-Next time you are in nature, remind your child to use their amazing animal senses!” (Heart-Mind Online 2014)



“Regular exposure to nature can help relieve stress, depression, and attention deficits. It can reduce bullying, combat obesity, and boost academic scores. Most critical of all, abundant time in natural settings seems to yield long-term benefits in kids’ cognitive, emotional, and social development”

Scott Sampson, PhD, in *How to Raise a Wild Child: The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature*

Shark Fin

Shark Fin will help to calm your child when their minds and bodies may be fighting against them.

-“Place the side of your hand on your forehead, with your palm facing out to the side

-Close your eyes

-Slide your hand down your face, in front of your nose

-Say “shhh” as you slide your hand down your face

-If you are sitting down, you do the **5 Ss** while you move your hand: **Sit up straight, sit still, sit silently, soft breathing, and shut eyes.**

If you are standing, do the same but you are standing straight, still, silently, using soft breathing and shut eyes while you move your hand down your face.”

“Master of Mindfulness” (Grossman & Alvarez, 2016)



BOOKS AND VIDEO

Mindfulness Moments for Kids

by Kira Willey



3 Minutes Mindfulness

by Fablefy - The Whole Child

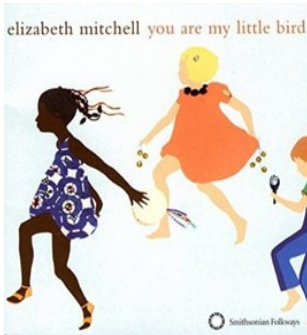
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ap6S-Yc4ans>



SONGS

Playing the same songs each day creates a soothing routine and has a Pavlovian effect to cue children to wind down and calm their bodies. Here are a few calming songs:

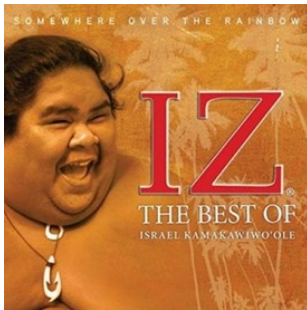
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Little Bird, Little Bird

by Elizabeth Mitchell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tz6WRiNwujQ>



Somewhere Over the Rainbow

sung by Kamakawiwo'ole

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1bFr2SWP1I>

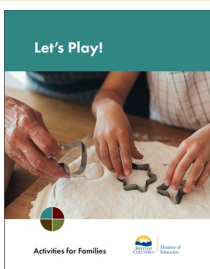


You Are My Sunshine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dh7LJDHFaqA>



REFERENCES



BC Ministry of Education (2019), *Let's Play! Activities for Families*

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/early-learning/teach/earlylearning/lets-play-activities-for-families.pdf>

Heart-Mind Online (2014), *Feeling Nature With Our Senses*

<https://heartmindonline.org/resources/feeling-nature-with-our-senses#resource-sources>

Heart-Mind Online (2014), *Secure and Calm*

<https://heartmindonline.org/qualities/secure-and-calm>



We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the unceded, traditional, and ancestral territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwəta?/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

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