



Additional Activities - Unit 10: Stress & Relaxation

In this lesson, children will learn how to identify stress and understand that drugs and alcohol are not a good way to make it better. Children will learn ways to relieve stress like stretching and breathing exercises. Here are some activities you can do with your little one to strengthen the HALO at Home lesson!

Deep Breathing

Materials:

- No special materials needed

Directions:

Tell your child you are going to practice what it feels like to be tense and to relax. Ask your child to tighten up their fists. Ask them to slowly tighten their arms, their chest and their neck. Ask them to try and take a deep breath. Ask them to relax and make their whole body soft again. Ask them what happened when they were all tight and tried to take a deep breath. Explain to your child that, "when we get tense our muscles get tight or hard, we can't breathe as well. You have to relax to breathe deeply. Breathing slowly and deeply is a good way to relax." Ask your child to place their hands on their tummies and breathe in slow while you count out loud to three. Repeat 3 times. Remind your child that deep breathing can help them to feel calmer when they are feeling scared or angry.

Stress Bag

This activity is designed to help children relieve stress in a healthy way.

Materials:

- Balloons
- Scoop
- Funnel
- Flour, salt, sand, sugar, or cornstarch

Directions: Using the funnel, help your child fill a balloon with approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of flour, salt, sand, and sugar or cornstarch. Allow your child to feel the different texture of each ingredient when placed in the balloon. Tie the balloon in a knot. Let your child experience squeezing the balloon and discuss how squeezing the object is a healthy way to relieve stress.

Bath Crystals

This activity provides a fun way to discuss relaxing activities and make a gift for someone or themselves.

Materials:

- Epsom salt
- Fragrance oils
- Food coloring
- Large bowl for mixing
- Small bottles or jars

Directions: There are many ways we can relax, like taking a bath. Bath salts help us to relax in a bath. Assist your child in mixing the Epsom salt, fragrance oils, and a few drops of food coloring. Discuss the terrific smells, smooth texture and color they are creating. Allow your child to pour a portion of the mixture into a small bottle or jar for their own personal use. You may encourage your child to decorate the container or give as a gift! 2-3 tablespoons are to be used in the bath.

Teddy Bear Tea Party

This is a relaxing activity that allows children to enjoy some soothing moments of tea with a warm, fuzzy friend.

Materials:

- Teddy bears or other stuff animal
- Tea set or flavored tea
- Small cookies or biscuits
- Sugar and milk
- Soothing music

Directions: Set up an area with the tea set and a table. Serve tea and “crumpets” while enjoying quiet conversation and soft music with your child. Talk about how the relaxing experience makes them feel.

Go To Sleep Toes

This activity uses a relaxation technique that may help children who have difficulty at naptime or bedtime.

Materials:

- No special materials needed

Directions: Explain to your child that pretending can help them relax or fall asleep. Have your child lie comfortably and close their eyes. Instruct your child, “pretend you are looking at your toes. Pretend your toes are wiggling. Tell them, “toes go to sleep.” Now, tell your child to pretend they are looking up their body slowly, part by part. Have them repeat after you. “Feet go to sleep. Ankles go to sleep. Legs go to sleep.” Continue slowly naming all of your child’s major body parts. You can include heart, lungs, liver etc. Let your voice slowly get softer as you continue, finally whispering. “Hair, go to sleep.” Allow your child to continue relaxing as long as you wish. As they remain relaxed, have them take notice of how their body feels loose and sleepy. Remind your child that the brain is the “boss” of the whole body and it does our pretending and thinking. The brain is very powerful. Discuss how we can use our thinking and pretending to help us in many ways,

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