

Healthy Body, Happy Me 2024

Relax with me (home learning)





Relax with me

Children are naturally curious about the world around them and have an abundance of energy for exploring.

Children's growing bodies need a range of physically active experiences as well as opportunities for calm and relaxing periods to provide a natural balance to their day, giving them time to recharge their energy levels and reduce stress and anxiety.



Take time out to relax

Taking part in quiet time benefits children's well-being, improves sleep quality, helps them to regulate their emotions, improves memory and cognitive development. Today's busy world offers lots of background noise through televisions, online platforms, smartphones and internet connected toys; this means that children don't often have time to sit in a completely quiet space to play, which can affect their focus, attention and concentration. Reflect on the background noise in your own environment to help you to think about the balance of busy and quiet times your child has access to. Add time to daily tasks so children are unhurried and make calm activities part of your daily routine.

Calm, relaxing activities do not mean children have to stop playing and having fun or to sit still in one place, it just means a change to the pace, focus and external stimuli, whilst continuing to provide fun experiences for children to be involved in. Be a great role model by taking time to find space in your day for some calm, quiet time with your child.

Activity 1 Nature walk

This calm activity can be introduced into your daily routine. Fresh air and access to nature have a positive impact on children's overall well-being, can support good physical fitness, help children connect to nature and support emotional well-being.

Activity outline

Introduce the idea of a new game (this game should be done outdoors whenever possible). Think about your location and what you might see as you go for a walk. Choose five items for your child to find, e.g. a green tree, a bird, a brown leaf, a red bus and a traffic light. You can link your walk to any themes, such as colours in the environment, e.g. "Let's see how many red things we can find. What red things might we see?"

Walk together discussing what you can see, the sounds you can hear, the smells in the air. Talk about the places you know and visit, e.g. "Do you recognise this shop? Can you remember what we buy from here?"

Once you are back at home, recall the things you found. If you have access to a camera, then encourage your child to take photos of the things that you find so you can look at them together back at home.

When your child is familiar with the game, encourage them to create their own list of things to look for.



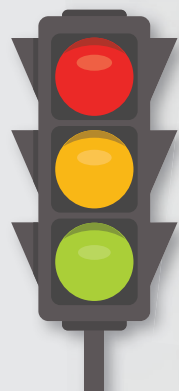
I spy with my little eye...



Stop, look and listen

Top tip

Use your walk to practice road safety rules with your child.



Activity 2 Tell teddy

Opportunities for children to reflect on their day can help them to think about their choices, identify their feelings, talk about and problem solve any issues they may have faced, helping to build their self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

Activity outline

Sit in a quiet space with your child and their favourite teddy/toy.

Ask your child to tell Teddy about the things they have done that day. Model the activity by going first, holding onto Teddy and describing your day, starting with getting up in the morning. Discuss how events made you feel, any problems you faced and what you did to resolve them.

Encourage your child to go next, adding reminders if they forget, e.g. "Don't forget to tell Teddy about our visit to the shops. Can you remember what we bought?"

Talk about emotions and feelings to explore how your child felt at different times, e.g. "What made you feel happy or excited?", "Was there anything that made you feel sad or unhappy?" If there are elements that made your child sad or unhappy, talk about things you may be able to do differently next time.

At home



Top tip

Babies and toddlers can sometimes feel overwhelmed by strong emotions (excitement, anxiety, fear, frustration). Help them to recognise and identify their emotions by acknowledging and naming them whenever possible.

Play 'emotions charades' by acting out the emotions that the children can recognise and name. Encourage children to have a go, whilst you guess the emotion they are displaying.



Discuss our emotions



Chat with teddy

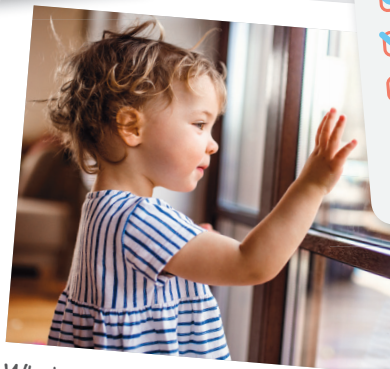




Activity 3 Developing independence

Daily activities and routines can be used to develop your child's independence, language and problem-solving skills. Use any outing or trip to talk about planning and preparation.

Shopping List



Whats the weather like today?

Activity outline

Talk to your child about an upcoming trip e.g. to the shops. Ask your child what you need to take with you such as coats and shoes, a shopping list, a purse or wallet, a change of clothes. Ask your child to look out of the window to see what the weather is like and talk about the types of clothes you will need to wear, for example, something to keep them warm on a cold day.

Encourage your child to help you gather everything you need. Model how to put on items of clothes and offer encouragement as your child follows your lead.

Once at the shops, look at your shopping list and task your child with finding some of the items on the list to add to the basket.

Once home, ask your child to help you pack your shopping and items in cupboards they can reach. Talk about the success of your trip, whether anything was forgotten or if there is anything you would do differently next time.

Ideas for babies/toddlers

Offer babies spoons during mealtimes, so they can feed themselves independently, and provide tummy time so babies can make choices by reaching for toys they are interested in.

Encourage toddlers to help tidy toys away, find their own shoes and help with your daily chores.



Yummy!



Tidy-up time

Activity 4 Story time, bed time

Having predictable routines can help children to feel safe and secure, such as repeating the same process before bed each evening, so they are comfortable with the preparations for sleep. It is important that you think about how your predictable routine will work in your daily life, so you can provide the consistency children need.

Activity outline

Talk to your child about getting prepared for sleep and the steps involved. This could include tidying away toys, bath time, a drink or snack, brushing teeth and reading a story. We are going to focus on reading a bedtime story.

Ask your child to choose a favourite story - this could be a book, a story using puppets or a made up story linked to a recent event they enjoyed. If your child chooses a very long story book, agree the number of pages you can read each evening. Ensure your child is comfortable as you begin the story (remove background noise, keep lights low and ensure your focus is on the story).

Make sure your child can see the pages of the book as you read, encourage interaction by asking them to predict what might happen next, or how they might feel if this was happening to them. Try to change your voice for different characters and draw attention to images on the pages. Recap the story and share your favourite parts, inviting your child to talk about their favourite events or characters too.



Once upon a time



Family story time



What will happen next?



Further resources, links and stories:

SEND: Working with Parents - NDNA training

www.ndna.org.uk/SENDWWP

Home Learning Environment - NDNA training

www.ndna.org.uk/HLE

Parent Guide to Home Learning - NDNA factsheet

www.ndna.org.uk/HLP

Parent Guide to Weaning and Toilet Training - NDNA factsheet

www.ndna.org.uk/Weaning

Parent - Supporting Schemas in Your Home - NDNA factsheet

www.ndna.org.uk/SchemasAtHome

Parents - Supporting Your Child's Learning Journey - NDNA factsheet

www.ndna.org.uk/LearningJourney

Parents - A Guide to Promoting Positive Behaviour - NDNA factsheet

www.ndna.org.uk/PositiveParents

Parents - Preparing for Nursery - NDNA factsheet

www.ndna.org.uk/Prepare

Supporting the Home Learning Environment - NDNA publication

www.ndna.org.uk/HLEPub

Everything your setting needs

www.hope-education.co.uk



Getting ourselves dressed



Teddy talks

National Day Nurseries Association

At NDNA, we don't just provide nursery membership, lobby government and offer training, we are dedicated to making a difference. We are a charity that believes in quality and sustainability so we put our members' businesses at the very heart of ours. We enhance, support, nurture, cherish and challenge.

Every year we run an annual Healthy Body, Happy Me campaign to encourage better health and happiness by giving nurseries FREE resources for play, learning and fun.

Get involved with our 2024 campaign and help keep your children happy and healthy.

Important: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.



National Day Nurseries Association

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#HealthyBodyHappyMe

www.ndna.org.uk

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