



Psychology
for Flourishing

Resources

Progressive Muscle Relaxation for Children

This can be more helpful if the child can already do slow, deep breaths.

The idea is that anxiety, stress and anger lead to tight and tense muscles and as the mind and body are connected, learning to relax your body helps to relax and calm your mind too.

Progressive muscle relaxation helps the child to relax their body by purposefully tensing the muscles first, then releasing them which means they naturally relax.

So here's how:

Help your child to realise how his/her body feels like when they are worried or upset. Talk about what he/she notices in their body at these times (e.g. tight muscles, heart beating quickly, funny feelings in the tummy).



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Using a fun activity help the child to understand how tense and floppy muscles feel.

It can be helpful to practice these activities at a time when the child is not upset.

If the child is somewhere where they don't want to be noticed doing these exercises then he/she can choose just a couple of them such as feet or hands which can be done discreetly.



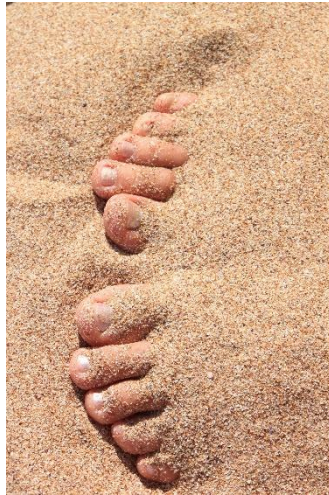
Progressive Muscle Relaxation for Children

1. Tense your feet by curling your toes...like you're digging your toes into the sand. Count to 4.....Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



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2. Tense your legs by pulling your toes up...like you are digging your feet out of the sand. Count to 4.....Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



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3. Tense your stomach...and imagine that a Hippo was going to step on you. Count to 4.....Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



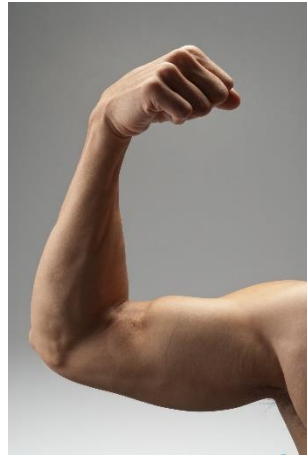
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4. Tense your hands by making fists...like you're trying to squeeze a tennis ball. Count to 4.....Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



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5. Tense your arms...like a body builder. Count to 4.....Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



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6. Tense your shoulders by pulling them up...and imagine that you're a snail hiding in its shell. Count to 4...Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



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7. Tense your face by scrunching it up....like you're pretending to be a bulldog. Count to 4....Relax and take a deep breath in and out.



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REPEAT AS NEEDED...





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