

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET



A guide to the 6 Mind-Body Comfort Activities

FOR CHILDREN

Hospitals · Disaster Response · Refugee & Displacement · Community Care

small toys, big comfort

GETTING STARTED

A Note From Us

We've put together this pamphlet to help caregivers and providers show children how to use evidence-informed mind-body activities and toys to cope with the aftermath of traumatic experiences.

Inside, you'll find simple, guided practices you can use anytime, anywhere — no training required. Each activity is designed to help a child feel a little steadier, one small comfort at a time.

MIND-BODY COMFORT ACTIVITY 1

Calm Breathing for Comfort = Your Superpower for Relaxation

What it helps:

Worries, trouble sleeping, feeling uncomfortable or in pain.

What is Calm Breathing for Comfort?

When you control your breathing, you control how your body feels! So, changing your breath helps your whole body feel better. Athletes, singers, and even superheroes do this — you can too!

What you'll need:

Your kit includes soap bubbles, two animal finger puppets, and other fun tools to help. But really, all you need is you!

How to do it:

- Get comfy, adjust, and imagine a balloon in your belly. I wonder what color balloon you'll pick.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose and feel the cool air go inside your body.
- Breathe out even more slowly through your mouth (make the out breath longer than the in breath!).
- Shape your lips like you are breathing out through a straw or make the “hiss” sound like a snake.
- Notice how your belly gets big and fills like a balloon when you breathe in. It gets smaller when you breathe out.
- Next, lay down and put your hand or a finger puppet on your belly and watch it go up and down as you belly breathe — pretend you're giving it a ride up to the sky!
- When you breathe out and your belly gets flat, also imagine blowing away worries or uncomfortable feelings — a bit like blowing away dandelion seeds or soap bubbles!
- You can use the soap bubbles from the kit, too! When you slowly blow the bubbles, imagine you're blowing away worries and discomfort. Watch the worries and discomfort float away with the bubbles!

When to use it:

- Every day! Try it 2–3 times daily
- Before, during, and after something hard or uncomfortable
- When you notice some discomfort in your body
- Anytime you feel nervous, stressed, or upset
- While waiting around, going somewhere new, or getting ready for bed
- Getting ready for bed when worries pop into your mind and keep you awake

MIND-BODY COMFORT ACTIVITY 2

Tense & Sense = Comfort is Like a Wave of Relaxation

What it helps:

Worry, trouble sleeping, feeling uncomfortable or in pain.

What is it?

A cool way to help your whole body feel loose and relaxed, like melting ice cream!

What you'll need:

Just yourself and a comfy spot! You can hold the squishy stress ball from the kit and squeeze it as you tighten parts of your body. Fun to put on the mood ring or color-changing sticker and watch the colors change as your body melts into relaxation.

How to do it (5–10 minutes — you decide how long!):

- Start with 5–10 slow, deep breaths.
- Notice your shoulders dropping with each breath out — ahhhh!
- With each breath out, imagine relaxation and perhaps warmth flowing down your body like a gentle, safe wave.
- Out loud or in your mind, tell each muscle to relax, from the neck, shoulders, arms, fingers, chest, belly, back, hips, legs, ankles, feet, to the toes. Great!
- Now let's do the opposite! Make your feet and toes super tight — hold for 10 seconds — then let go and feel them melt.
- Move up your body doing the same thing. Tense each part:
 - Legs, thighs, knees, ankles
 - Back, chest, stomach
 - Arms, elbows, fists
 - Shoulders (pull them up to your ears, then drop!)
 - Face, forehead, eyes, nose, cheeks, jaw

Use the stress ball from the kit. Squeeze when you tighten your muscle, then soften your grip as you relax. When you squeeze the stress ball tight, imagine you're squeezing all your worries and discomfort into it. When you release, imagine letting go of worried thoughts and pain. Feel your body relax and get comfortable. When you're done, you should feel like a floppy teddy bear!

When to use it:

- Practice 2–3 times a day
- Anytime you feel nervous, stressed, or upset
- Before doctor visits or getting shots

MIND-BODY COMFORT ACTIVITY 3

Repeat & Treat = These Phrases Let You Treat Yourself To Calm

What it helps:

Trouble sleeping and worries.

What is it?

A way to use your own voice (inside your head) to help your body and mind feel calmer.

What you'll need:

Just you and a comfy place to sit or lie down.

How to do it:

- Get comfy — sitting or lying down works great.
- Take a couple of slow, deep belly breaths.
- Say these phrases in your mind, and when you repeat them really imagine them happening in your body. Say each one 3–6 times:
 - My arms are heavy and warm (this helps me feel safe and relaxed)
 - My legs are heavy and warm
 - My heartbeat is calm and strong (I am brave and capable)
 - My breathing is calm and relaxed
 - My tummy is soft and warm
 - My forehead is smooth and relaxed (I am safe and calm)
- Notice how comfortable, calm, and balanced you feel! You've created comfort phrases to repeat and treated yourself. This often grows stronger over time!
- Continue enjoying this treat as long as you want, then slowly move your arms and legs when you're done.

When to use it:

- Anytime you feel worried, stressed, or upset
- At bedtime to help you sleep better

MIND-BODY COMFORT ACTIVITY 4

Mind Journey = Explore Your Mind & Find Comfort

What it helps:

Worry, feeling tired, pain, trouble sleeping.

What is it?

You have an incredible brain that listens to what you are thinking! This means you can change how you feel, by changing what you think! When you think worried thoughts and “what if” questions, you get nervous. Thinking sad thoughts makes you feel sad. But thinking happy, peaceful, positive thoughts makes you feel much better!

What you'll need:

Your amazing mind! You can also use favorite photos (if you have them), pictures that you make in your journal, or the two finger puppets from the kit to tell yourself a story.

How to do it:

- Start by taking 3–5 slow, deep belly breaths and close your eyes.
- Soon your imagination adventure or mind journey will begin! Where do you want to go in your imagination?
- Pick a place where you feel happy and safe. Maybe:
 - Your special place with family or friends
 - Playing your favorite sport or game
 - Listening to a story or some music you love
 - Playing with your pet
 - At the beach, in the mountains, or somewhere magical — your wonderful imagination vacation
 - In the future, feeling healthy and having fun
- It's way more interesting to pretend you're there! So, tap into all your senses:
 - What do you hear while you are there?
 - What does it look like? See the colors, shapes, objects?
 - What do you smell? Any scents, odors, aromas?
 - What could you taste, if appropriate?
 - What does it feel like when you touch things? Smooth, rough, bumpy, soft, cool, warm?
- You're creating your own mind journey. Next notice the comfort in your body that comes with using your imagination to visit your special happy place.

Pro tip: The mind journey works best with your eyes closed at first. But after a few times, you'll see you can do it with your eyes open too. You steer your imagination!

When to use it:

- Anytime you're uncomfortable or in pain
- When you can't sleep
- When you feel nervous, stressed, or worried

MIND-BODY COMFORT ACTIVITY 5

Art from the Heart = Create Comfort

What it helps:

Everything!

What is it?

Writing or drawing about your life and experiences.

What you'll need (check out the Comfort Kit):

- Pencil and crayons
- Your notebook
- The pre-folded box and loads of stickers to decorate and keep your creations safe in your new treasure box

How to do it:

- Write or draw about your day, your feelings, your dreams
- Express yourself — the good stuff and the tough stuff
- Draw pictures, colors, and shapes (whatever you see in your imagination) — they can add comfort
- Write a letter to yourself
- Write about or draw a person who helps you feel safe and comfortable
- Decorate your box with stickers and keep your important thoughts and artwork safe inside, so you can return to the comfort you've created with art from the heart

When to use it:

- Anytime, day or night!
- When you have things on your mind you want to remember
- When you want to tell someone how you're feeling
- When you want to write your own story
- When you're bored
- When you're nervous or excited about something
- When something BIG is happening or just happened

MIND-BODY COMFORT ACTIVITY 6

Motion Is the Lotion for Comfort & Good Energy

What it helps:

Movement is one of the BEST ways to handle big feelings. It improves your mood, helps you sleep better, reduces discomfort, and can give you more energy. These activities remind you that your body is amazing and capable of so much!

What is it?

Fun fitness and relaxation activities that most kids love doing!

What you'll need:

Nothing special! Take a walk, dance, do chores, or try animal poses on the floor or a mat.

Animal Moves (add sounds for extra fun!):

Explore ways to look like a bear crawling, a crab walking, a gorilla puffed up & walking, a bunny hopping, a frog jumping, a caterpillar crawling in the grass, a seal hobbling on the beach, a duck walking, or a flamingo posing very still. These positions usually feel good, create silly fun, and remind you that you are in charge of your body.

Cobra Pose (for energy):

Getting into this pose helps when worry makes you feel tired or powerless. It releases tension, wakes up your body, and is fun!

- Lie on your belly
- Put your hands flat on the ground under your shoulders
- Use your back muscles to lift your upper body
- Hold and take a few breaths
- Lower down and breathe out
- Do it again and this time make a “hissing sound” like a snake!

Tortoise Pose / Child Pose (for calm):

- Start on your hands and knees
- Press your hips back toward your heels
- Stretch your arms out in front with palms together
- Breathe deeply for about 30 seconds
- Release and repeat

When to use it:

This is good because it helps when you want to calm down and recharge! Some people say it feels as good as taking a nap! It's a great reset!

IN CONCLUSION, REMEMBER...

You've Got This

Doing Mind-Body Comfort Activities works better and gets easier the more you do them. You've got everything you need right here in your kit and inside yourself (check out our [YouTube channel](#) for free videos too). Thoughts and feelings can be hard sometimes, but doing these activities can help you feel comfortable, calm, and confident.

We are proud of you for learning life-long ways to create comfort.

www.comfortkitsforchildren.org

QUICK REFERENCE

The 6 Mind-Body Comfort Activities

1

Calm Breathing

Worries · Sleep · Pain

"Breathing is your superpower for comfort"

2

Tense & Sense

Worry · Sleep · Pain

"Comfort can feel like a wave of relaxation"

3

Repeat & Treat

Sleep · Worries

"Words to repeat for a comfort treat"

4

Mind Journey

Worry · Fatigue · Pain · Sleep

"Imagine your very own special comfort place"

5

Art from the Heart

Thoughts · Feelings · Sleep

"Make art from your heart & feel good"

6

Motion Is the Lotion

Mood · Sleep · Energy

"Move your body to feel comfort energy"

*With gratitude for the work you do,
Lisa Lombard, PhD & Bob Deutsch, PhD, Co-Founders*

small toys, big comfort

COMFORT KITS FOR CHILDREN®



SCAN TO LEARN MORE

www.comfortkitsforchildren.org

Comfort Kits for Children® is a non-profit helping children heal emotionally and mentally. Our guidance helps caregivers and providers show children how to use evidence-informed mind-body activities and toys to cope with the aftermath of traumatic experiences. Our website connects those we serve with behavioral health resources in 6 languages.

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