



Multi-disciplinary Training, Consultation and Therapy Services

General Calming Activities for use at Home

Our vestibular and proprioceptive systems work together to help regulate all of our other systems and inform us about ourselves and our bodies in space. If these systems are not functioning adequately it can impact on our body awareness and spatial awareness making us a little clumsy. It affects our sensory system to help us stay calm, focused and organised. We may be under aroused and switched off or seek input, being busy, on the go and disorganised.

Calming activities include deep pressure/Proprioceptive input provided every hour to hour 30 minutes to maintain a calmer sensory system to include muscle work and weight bearing, pulling or pushing against resistance.

Vestibular input that is movement that provide rhythmical input, slow and steady.

Chewing, sucking and blowing can be calming and organising.

*Vestibular system is found in the ears. Tubes with fluid in tell our brain if we are moving, how fast and what directions. What position our head is in e.g. upright or upside down and this helps us stay alert and help us focus eyes on objects etc. and ears on sounds and where they are coming from.

*proprioceptive system is information from muscles and joints that tell us what our body is doing, where our arms and feet are without looking, how hard to push, grip items but also tells us about our bodies so we can coordinate movement. The proprioceptive system is a calming system and helps us to focus.

Vestibular calming input

Work until you see the child relax and calm. Input needs to be controlled to be calming.

- Bouncing on the trampoline if it is controlled. Slow bounces with counting and stop and go to command. (if It is not controlled it can increase arousal)
- Holding hands to control the bounce to make it slow and rhythmical.
- Rocking over a gym ball on tummy. Slow and rhythmical movements forward and back and side to side.
- Sitting on the gym ball, held at the hips. Bounce your child up and down rhythmically, pushing them down into the ball on the down motion. Keep it controlled and count to engage the child.
- Sit and support at knees or feet depending on balance skills and move the hips side to side and back and forth for the child to use their core to remain upright on the ball.
- Superman- lie the child over the ball on their tummy and move them forward and back holding their knees. Get them to hold their body in a line for a count of 3 like superman flying.
- Fill a single quilt cover with ball pool ball and fasten the top to allow some movement of balls. This can be used as a weighted blanket for calming or to lie your child on and roll them over the balls pushing their feet. Lie on tummy or back. Or simply use it as a beanbag to sit on or lie in the balls in the quilt. (it will need to be fastened off to keep the balls together but allow movement.

Proprioceptive calming input

- Lie over a gym ball or space hopper to be pushed forward and back to walk on their hands. Encourage them to reach for items and pick up and put in box.
- Fill a pillow case with ball pool balls to use a squeeze cushion or weighted cushion to provide calming input.
- Lie your child on the floor preferably on their tummy and roll a gym ball or pace hopper over them from feet to head with firm downward pressure. If on their back avoid the tummy area. 10-20 times You can also use a smaller ball or massage ball.
- Lying on their back bend the knees to chest and push knees to chest to provide pressure through the knees/legs. 10-20 times. You may like to take legs in for 5 and back out and repeat.
- Use of a scarf or lycra band to put around their back and pull forward to extend arms out in front.
- OR wrap the scarf/lycra around the child when sitting and cross over the front for you to pull and squeeze the child. Release and repeat.
- Play tug of war with scarf or rope. Place the scarf around yourself for the child to pull against
- Wheel barrow walks holding their knees to walk on their hands

- Use of a swing, seesaw, rocking chair or rocker toy.
- Lying upside down off the sofa or over a gym ball.
- Resistive movement: walking with a scarf around the waist for you to pull back gently while they move. Kneel on all fours for them to rock forward or crawl against your pull.
- Through leg bowling
- kneeling on all fours, roll a gym ball/ball to be headed back.
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- Pushing activities such a pushing a gym ball away, pushing a wobble toy.



Tasks to provide calming input

- Clean table with a cloth using large arm movements to wipe.
- Brush the floor
- Fill a squeezey bottle (washing up liquid) with water and replace the top. Encourage the child to squeeze all the water out of the bottle and repeat.
- Squeeze out large sponges of water into the sink using both hands.
- Play shops, placing tins of food from the floor into a box and repeat. Lifting and moving the tins provides

Outdoor Garden activities

- Kick a gym ball/space hopper around the garden. This provides more input than a football but a football will do if you do not have a bigger ball.
- Throw a gym ball as far as they can.
- Fill small milk cartons with sand or pebbles. Carry from one side of the garden to the other or shake to make noise. Ensure it is a sensible weight to carry.
- Stacking stones/pebbles
- Running, jumping, rolling activities.

muscle work.

- Sweeping up leaves.
- Water spray bottle to spray plant or paths to mark make
- Running against resistance e.g. horse racing adult as a jockey to pull against the child as they run. Use a rope or scarf around their hips.
- Using a spare pair of tights/thera-band or lycra strip place them around the waist for the child to move away from to stretch as far as possible.

Oral Motor Calming

- Blow pens
- Colouring in activities using blow pens
- Blowing Windmills
- Straw and ping pong balls or pompoms to blow to a goal
- Sports bottle with straw for drinking to suck up water
- Bubble blowing pipe/straw and bubble liquid bowl
- Bottle with end cut off/tights or flannel over the end held with elastic band to dip and blow snakes
- Party blowers
- Small funnel with a polystyrene ball in to blow it out of the funnel
- Straw and pom pom's to suck up and sort pompoms into colour pots
- trigger spray bottle to spray water
- Blow up a balloon place the end over a straw and blow.
- Place a rubber glove over a paper plastic cup, fasten with a band. Put a hole in the bottom of the cup and fix a straw in. Blow to lift up the glove to wave.



- Blow pen work to mark make, splat make.
- Blow lines, follow lines, trace over letters, numbers shapes.
- Colour in shapes, blow on requested numbers or letters. Play blow pen bingo finding a letter or number to blow paint a mark on.
- Or use a straw and paint to blow lines to mark make, draw from letter to letter or shape to shape, dot to dot etc.



- Chewing is calming. Use crunching ice cubes, chewy tube, beef jerky.



