



## Activities for children to support their mental well-being

### Sleep tips

**Infants:** do something relaxing before bed (e.g drink a hot chocolate, have a bath, read/listen to a story.)

Try not to do anything exciting like playing on a computer or tablet.

Keep the bed tidy- making sure all books and toys aren't stopping you being comfy, though a soft toy is a something nice to cuddle.

**Juniors:** do something relaxing before bed (e.g drink a hot chocolate, have a bath, read/listen to a story.)

Try not to do anything exciting like playing on a computer or tablet.

Keep the bed tidy- making sure all books and toys aren't stopping you being comfy, though a soft toy is a something nice to cuddle.

Try some meditation or listening to relaxing music.

### Distraction activities

If your child is feeling bored, lonely, sad or scared in lockdown, doing a fun activity to distract them from their difficult feelings can really help. Here are a few to try. There are many more ideas online, such as craft activities and games.

**Family portrait:** Draw a picture of everyone in your home with you.

**Build a den:** Make your own private place using a couple of chairs and an old sheet or towel.

**My favourite song:** Make up a dance to your favourite song. If you want you can perform it to the rest of the family!

**Same colour or letter:** Make a list or draw a picture of all the things in your home which start with the same letter or are the same colour.

**Beat your own record:** Run up and down your stairs or living room. Start with 10 times, and then do more each day so you beat your record each time.

**Three things:** Stop and keep very still. Listen – what are three things you can hear? Look – what are three things you can see? Feel – what are three things you can touch?

**Pebble art:** On your next walk, look for a nice smooth pebble. Decorate it when you get home using paints, paper, glue and felt-tips.

**Drive-in movie:** Take a big cardboard box and decorate it to look like a car. Put a cushion inside, sit in front of your screen and enjoy your favourite film, TV show or game.

### Relaxation activities

Being in lockdown can be stressful, and lots of us are feeling anxious and on edge right now. These activities can help you and your child to relax – try doing them together.

**Stress toys:** This exercise releases muscle tension and massages your hands.

Make your own stress balls by filling balloons with dry rice or pulses. Take the balls in one or both hands and squeeze and release.

Experiment with squeezing the ball. Find a way that is right for you, adjusting the speed, pressure, and timing of your squeezes to whatever way you like.

**Bubble breaths:** Imagine you are blowing the biggest bubble ever! Take in a breath and imagine you have a pot of bubble liquid.

Slowly and gently bow bubbles into the room.

Do you feel better? (Remember to encourage the children not to get excited by popping the bubbles!)

**Push against a wall:** This is perfect for getting rid of stress without having to go outside or even leave the room.

Push against the wall for 10 seconds. Imagine you can push the wall over if you try hard enough! Repeat three times.

When you do this your muscles contract and then relax, releasing feel-good hormones into the body.