

SE29

All Interest Areas

Objective 1

Regulates own emotions and behaviors

a. Manages feelings

Related Objectives: 2a, 8a, 9a, 11a, 11c, 29

Take a Breath

What You Do

Materials: none

Background: It is important to give children options for which strategy to use to help them manage their feelings. Taking a breath will be effective in helping some children relax their bodies during times when they are feeling frustrated, upset, or angry, while other children may prefer to use another strategy, such as having some alone time or counting to five. Encourage children to try different strategies and find out what works best for them.

1. **During group time, lead a discussion with the children about times when they may experience strong emotions, such as when another child takes a toy they were playing with or when they drop their molding dough sculpture on the floor and it gets damaged. Talk with children about how taking a few deep breaths can help their bodies relax and feel calmer.**

"Sometimes you may feel sad, frustrated, or angry. Can you think of a time that something happened that made you feel very upset? It can be scary to feel that way. When that happens, it's good to know how to help yourself feel calm. One way that you can do that is to take a few deep breaths. When you breathe slowly, your body relaxes, and that

helps you to feel more calm."

2. **Practice taking a few deep breaths together, giving the directives "breathe in" and "breathe out." Ask the children to notice and share if they feel more relaxed and calm after taking a few breaths.**

"Let's try it a few times together. Breathe in and out with me. Ready? Breathe in... and breathe out. One more time, breathe in... and breathe out. Do you notice how your body feels more relaxed?"

3. **When children experience strong emotions, observe what strategies they use to calm down and offer comfort, reminders, and assistance as needed.**

"Roman, I see that you chose to leave the Block area and play in the cozy corner. It is nice and calm over here. Sometimes the Block area can get too busy and you need to take a break."

4. **Wait until the children are calm before discussing why they were feeling upset. Encourage them to share and express their emotions throughout the day and use strategies such as taking a breath as needed.**

"Thank you for taking a few deep breaths with me. Do you feel better now? Can you tell me about what was making you feel frustrated?"

Multilingual Learners

- Create visual cue cards to prompt children to use calming strategies.
- Ask children to repeat the phrases "breathe in" and "breathe out" with you as you model the actions.
- Make eye contact and ask the child questions she can respond to with yes or no.

Including All Children

- Work with specialists to identify calming strategies.

Questions to Guide Your Observations

- How was the child able to calm down using a suggested strategy? (1a)
- What words did the child use to discuss his feelings? (9a)
- After calming, how did the child identify and offer solutions to the problem? (11c)

Teaching Sequence

YELLOW	<p>Notice when the child is experiencing strong emotions. Sit with her and offer comfort and reassurance until she is calmer.</p> <p>"I'm sorry you're sad. You worked very hard on that painting, and it fell in the puddle. Would you like to sit with me for a few minutes?"</p>
GREEN	<p>Use the cues "breathe in" and "breathe out" to encourage her to take calming breaths.</p> <p>"Try to relax your body. Take a deep breath in, and now breathe out. Nice and slow; breathe in and breathe out."</p>
GREEN	<p>Talk with the child about what strategies he likes to use to help him calm down.</p> <p>"What do you like to do when you are feeling very frustrated or upset? Closing your eyes for a few moments can help you calm down. Sometimes that means that there is just too much going on around you. If you feel like that, you can always go to the beanbag chairs and have some quiet time by yourself."</p>
BLUE	<p>When he is experiencing strong emotions, remind him of these strategies.</p> <p>"Hunter, you are angry that your car is not staying on the ramp like you would like it to. You are really, really angry. Can you take a few breaths with me? It might help you feel better."</p>
PURPLE	<p>Once he is calm, reflect on the situation with him and discuss how taking a breath or another strategy helped him calm down.</p>

