Helping Young Children Relax with the Belly Breathing Game

Hold your breath for a minute and you will know how important breathing is. Breath gives us energy and helps clean out our body and mind. By breathing deeply, we can be calm and relax and help any anxiety go away.

Kids and parents can practice **Bellying Breathing** together. When adults learn it first, it is easier to teach to kids. It is best when the whole family can practice together daily.

The Belly Breathing Game (3-15 minutes)

- Turn off the TV, computer, phone, and make everything quiet and peaceful.

- Turn on some nice, soft, relaxing music.

- Sit down or lay down in a comfortable place.

- Best to close your eyes as long as it is safe.

- You can place your hands on your belly or just relax your hands at your side.

    o If sitting and staying still does not work, try lying down and placing a small, soft toy on your belly to feel it go up and down.

- Take in three deep breaths counting, "one…two…three" then breath out counting, "one…two…three."

- Now let your breathing become normal and calm.

- Focus your attention near your belly button.

- Notice how your belly rises and falls as you breathe.

o Notice how you can feel your clothes move.

    o Notice how you can feel your breath go in and out of your nose or mouth.

- ***Breathing, you can be still, quiet and calm.***

Parents:

- **Feel free to ask:** "What was the best part of your day?" "What's one thing that made you feel mad, sad glad or afraid?"

- **Feel free to add:** Stuffed animal(s) "breathing buddy" and relaxing sounds. Sometimes for younger children, blowing pinwheels or bubbles when they breathe.

- **Glitter Jar:** Fill a jar with water and glitter, shake it and put it where everyone can belly breathe until the glitter settles.

Watch **Elmo belly breathe** with Seseme Street: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mZbzDOpyIA**