



CREATING A CALM AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT - CALMING SPACES

Calming spaces where there is limited sensory sensations allowing sensory systems to reset and children to become regulated.

What to consider and include in a calming space:

- Reduced or dimmed lighting, natural light is good this helps those with a light sensitivity.
- Make sure the noise levels are low. Provide noise-cancelling headphones or ear plugs, use white noise or a child's favourite sounds to help muffle environmental noise. Breaks away from noising environments can support someone who finds general everyday noise overwhelming.
- Provide weighted equipment these could be everyday items such as heavier cushions (you can easily make your own weighted cushion by inserting a pack of rice inside the cushion filling) , or specific weighted equipment such as blankets, pads or animals. Weight provides calming deep pressure input to support regulation. **Ensure that the weight being used is less than 5 % of the child's body weight and do not leave a child alone with a full weighted blanket.**
- Include comfortable seating bean bags, or rocking chairs for example helps children to feel comfortable and grounded so they are able to relax.
- Provide fidget tools, stress balls, spinners etc. This will refocus a child's energy and help them refocus.
- Create a soothing visual environment by including lava lamps or coloured lights, use natural tones or soft colours on the walls.
- Use aromatherapy i.e. lavender which is calming or ensure the space is scent free if the child has is sensitive to smells.
- If the space is within a shared space use partitions so it is private and the external sensory sensations are reduced.