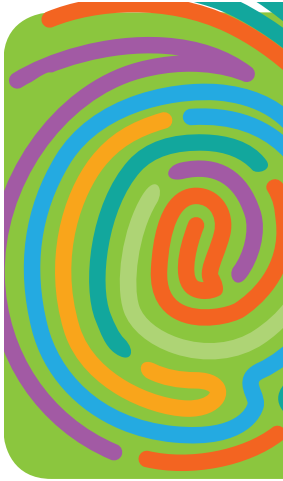


# Home Relaxation Station/ Soothing Space



Many of us have experienced the blessings of being a parent. We know that our “angels, our babies, our kids” come with HUGE emotions. Meltdowns known as let-downs come when the child doesn’t know what to do with that HUGE emotion. The child doesn’t know how to express the feelings or emotions that he or she is having and as parents we identify it. We call it a TANTRUM! When those TANTRUMS start, they can become epic and your child can make sure you will remember it. It can become legend! If the truth is told, many of us parents are just learning how to use breathing techniques ourselves to self-regulate and calm down. So, saying to your child “take a deep breath” may not be part of their toolkit or vocabulary yet. It must be introduced with intentionality.

To help your child understand his or her emotions, the idea of a Relaxation Station in your home may help.

**A Relaxation Station** is a method of helping your child process his or her emotions that has been proven to be as effective as “time-outs” you may have received before we had electricity or running water! You remember the time out chair?! How many times did you get up to be taken back to the same chair in the same spot until you got the concept that this was a way to teach you to sit still for inappropriate behavior.

Well, creating a Relaxation Station in your home/apartment for your child to chill is a great way to manage emotions. I’m calling it a Relaxation Station because it offers your child a place of safety and comfort that belongs to him/her

when the emotions become too much for them to handle on their own and they start tumbling out of control.

- **The Relaxation Station** is not a space to put your child into time out. It is not to be used for disobedience. It’s a space to help your child gain self-control and calm down when the emotions start tumbling out of control. It’s an area in your home your child goes when he or she is experiencing high levels of emotion that helps them gain control in a safe and self-restrained manner. It’s an area to give attention to what’s going on in the mind, to calm the body and let go of strong feelings of agitation. Being consistent with its purpose, your child will begin to learn when he or she needs to go to their Relaxation Station for emotional control.

- **The Relaxation Station** should be used before things increase in intensity with your child. It will help your child(ren) recognize the signs their body gives to let them know they are becoming out of control, like throwing things, yelling, clenching fists, etc.

- **The Relaxation Station** can be as simple as you want it to be with a small mat, a favorite blanket or item that has value to the child, along with a basket of books, Lego blocks in a bucket to build – be creative.

It can also be as sophisticated as you want it. Be intentional in its purpose to create a safe place to calm your child and provide comfort. Find a space in your home that your child will know is his or hers. Put art with warm pictures on the wall (Appreciation of Beauty), baskets with sensory activities (Curiosity), books (Love of Learning), a favorite stuffed animal (Love), bubbles for controlling breaths, or Lego blocks to be creative.

- Have your child help with the planning of the space, the setting of rules for the space without assuming the child knows. Whatever you put in the space, teach your child how to use it and what it is for. **Reminder: Set your child up for success in their new space.**

# Relaxation Station Action Steps

