

# Activities to Regulate Emotions

No matter your age, everyone experiences strong emotions sometimes. Learning foundational skills early in life helps us apply these strategies to regulate emotions and feel more balanced each day. Parents play an important role in modeling what self-regulation and coping look like in the face of life's challenges. Try some of the activities below together!

## 4 Ways to Cope With Big Emotions

### 1. Deep Breathing

Teaching children to use deep breathing exercises is one of the most simple and effective coping skills. It helps the body get into an increased state of relaxation, which can also improve focus and mood. Try this quick exercise together.

#### Dandelion Deep Breathing:

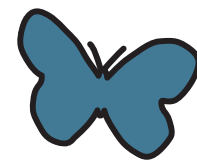
- Imagine holding up a yellow dandelion bloom to your nose.
- Smell the flower, taking a deep breath in through your nose for a few seconds.
- Think of the flower turning into a white, wispy puff of seeds.
- Make a wish and blow the breath out to send the seeds into the air.
- Repeat this process 5 times.



### 2. Imagery

Creating art can be an excellent activity to regulate emotions. Creativity can be calming and lead to a sense of accomplishment, which may also result in positive emotions.

Another way to use visual activities to balance emotion is through guided imagery or mindfulness meditation. This practice involves listening and visualizing calm and beautiful settings, such as a beach, and using the imagined sights and sounds to feel calmer. These scripts can be read to your child or played from an online platform/phone app. For example, this [GoNoodle video](#) is a guided mindfulness activity that helps children practice how to allow their negative feelings to melt away.



### 3. Physical Activity

Movement and exercise can help children balance their emotions. Physical activities allow kids to release tension and energy, and often increase calmness afterwards. Try taking a nature walk, riding a bike, swimming or following a short yoga/stretching video.



### 4. Music

Listening to and creating music can have a positive impact on our emotions. Try creating a playlist together based on your child's favorite music or singing a song together. Many find these activities therapeutic, and depending on the style of music, it can either energize or relax your child.



**If you need immediate support, call the Wolfson Children's 24/7 Kids & Teens Helpline at 904.202.7900 or text LIFE to 741741.**  
**If there is an immediate safety concern, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.**

*Information developed in collaboration with the On Our Sleeves experts at Nationwide Children's Hospital.*

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The Movement for Children's Mental Health

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