

ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES TO PROMOTE HEALTHY COPING SKILLS



Healthy Coping Activities

- Exercise
- Meditate
- Make a craft
- Write in journal, poetry, stories, etc.
- Draw, color, doodle, paint
- Connect with positive friends, mentors, and trusted adults
- Eat healthy
- Stay hydrated
- Sing and/or dance
- Play with a pet
- Play with fidgets, modeling clay or play-doh
- Make your favorite healthy snack
- Take a nap
- Take a hot shower or relaxing bath
- Engage in your favorite outdoor activity
- Play a game with friends
- Make a favorite songs playlist
- Get together with friends and do a fun activity
- Go to or watch a movie
- Text or call a friend
- Cook and/or eat a meal with a friend or family member
- Read a book to yourself or read to others



Let's Make Your Own Calm Jar!

Materials Needed:

- Glass or plastic jars with lids, 16-ounce
- 1/2 cup glitter glue or clear glue
- Distilled water
- High-temperature hot glue gun, optional
- 1–2 teaspoons glitter



KEEP CALM



Instructions:

1. Pour 1/2 cup of distilled water into the jar.
2. Pour 1/2 cup of glitter glue or clear glue into the jar.
3. Add 1–2 teaspoons of extra glitter to the jar.
4. Fill up the remainder of the jar with distilled water.
5. If desired, use a hot glue gun to squeeze a ring of glue around the lid of the jar. Press the lid onto the jar and secure with the metal ring.
6. Shake the jar well to distribute the glitter.
7. Your DIY glitter jar is complete!

What Does the Calm Jar Do?

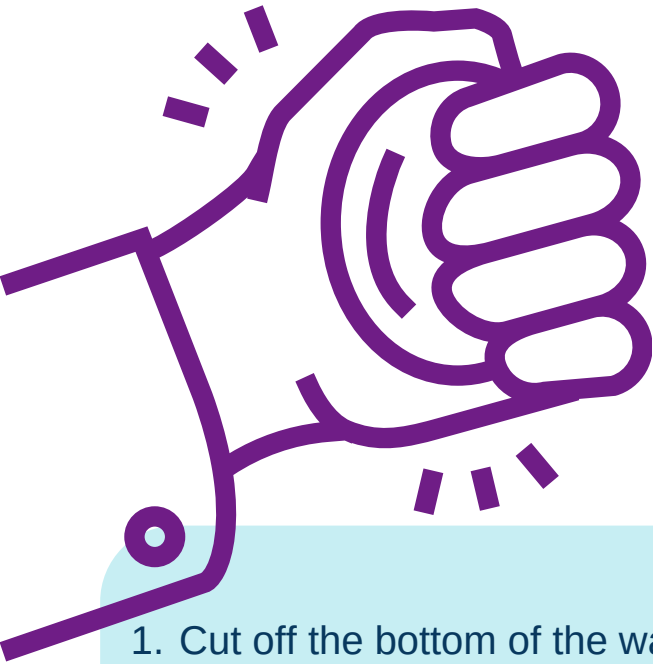
When kids are stressed, sad, or angry, they naturally have a fight-or-flight or freeze response. This makes it difficult for them to make rational decisions. Encouraging mindfulness through activities like the calm jar can help reduce stress and increase mental wellness and self-control. Have fun making a glitter calm jar together at home or school.

- Invite the child to sit down comfortably.
- Encourage them to shift their gaze to the swirling glitter, breathing deeply in and out as they watch it sink to the bottom of the jar.
- Next, invite them to notice the calm feeling moving through their body as they breathe.
- Perhaps their feet feel heavy and warm, and that feeling is moving up towards their shoulders.
- As they breathe, ask them to notice how their heartbeat feels steady, and their body temperature feels just right. All the while breathing in...and out.
- As the glitter settles and the water clears, so will their thoughts, feelings, and body.



<http://www.firefliesandmudpies.com/glitter-timers/>

Dried Bean Stress Balls



Materials Needed:

3-4 latex balloons

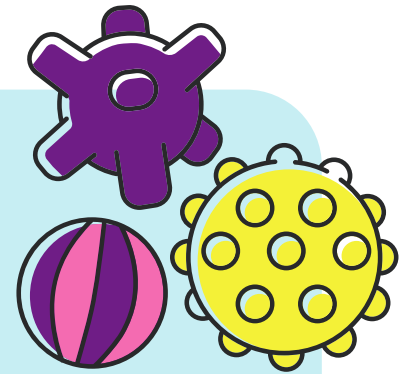
Water bottle

Scissors

Any type of dried bean or rice

Instructions:

1. Cut off the bottom of the water bottle to make a funnel.
2. Blow up ONE balloon to stretch it out.
3. Place the balloon around the neck of the bottle.
4. Use the bottle as a funnel to pour beans inside. Then, stuff the balloon full, smashing them in with your finger or a wooden spoon handle.
5. Snip the balloon OFF the bottle.
6. Cut the neck off 2 or 3 more balloons.
7. Place a balloon over the bean ball, making sure the opening of the first balloon is centered in the BOTTOM of the balloon.
8. Layer one or two more balloons, ensuring the openings do not overlap.



Note: Three layers of balloons should be good enough, but four are sturdier.

Homemade Playdough

Materials Needed:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup water
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1/3 cup salt
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Food coloring (optional)

Instructions:

1. Mix together all of the ingredients in a 2-quart saucepan.
2. Cook over low/medium heat, stirring.
3. Continue stirring until the mixture is thickened and begins to gather around the spoon.
4. Remove the dough onto wax paper or a plate to cool.

Note: Cool completely before storing in a ziplock bag or sealed container.



Once you're done, have your child pick something to create and work together to make it! Have fun!



5 Minute Rainstick

Materials Needed:

- A tall plastic bottle
- 15 colored straws
- 1/4 cup of colored garbanzo beans and/or 1/4 cup of rice (can color rice if desired).



Instructions:

1. Empty the water from the bottle and let it dry.
2. Add 1/4 cup of colored garbanzo beans.
3. Cut up the straws in different sizes.
4. Add the straws to the bottle – one color at a time.
5. Layer as many colors as you want your rain stick to have.
6. Add 1/4 cup of colored rice, leaving space for the rice to move around.
7. Glue the lid with super glue to avoid your little one trying to open it and spilling it all.
8. Shake to distribute the rice and then gently move the bottle upside down to hear the rain fall down.



Let's Make Oobleck

Materials Needed:

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 3/4 cup water
- Food coloring (optional)
- Plastic bowl or bin



Instructions:

1. Help your child measure 3/4 cup of water in a plastic measuring cup.
2. If you have food coloring, have your child add a few drops to the water.
3. Help your child measure 1 cup of cornstarch and pour it into a plastic bowl or bin. Ask your child, "What do you think will happen when the liquids are added to the corn starch?"
4. Slowly add the water and food coloring.
5. Let your child mix the mixture. It will take about 10 minutes to mix evenly, so you may need to help. Ask your child to describe the mixture. Ask, "What color is it now?" You may need more water and/or cornstarch to get the consistency right.
6. Once the mixture is ready, have your child gently feel the top of the mixture. Ask your child, how does the oobleck feel? Then, let your child sink his hands into the oobleck. Ask, "What does the oobleck feel like now?" "Is it bumpy or smooth? Hard or soft?" You can also ask if the oobleck feels warm or cold. Try shaping the oobleck into a ball. Can you do that with other liquids?

Note: Be sure to throw the oobleck in the trash. Do not pour it down the drain. It may separate and become a hard clump of cornstarch!



Extra Activity: Oobleck comes from the book "Bartholomew and the Oobleck" by Dr. Seuss here is a link for the read aloud with music that you can listen to while you make Oobleck.

Teen Activities to Promote Healthy Coping



Building with Legos or Blocks

This is a great activity to complete together, spending time building a specific project or free building time.

Nail Art

Painting fingernails with others. Try playing with new colors and painting patterns.



Color

The act of coloring can serve also as meditation. There are digital coloring books online offering free printable coloring pages

The act of making and crafting with your hands can improve your mood and engage your brain. Try some creative play every day to reduce daily anxiety levels.

Paint on Canvas or Rocks

Rocks can often be found in the yard; use paint markers, acrylic pain and permanent markers.



Journal

Find a notebook and create a personal journal, encourage teens to write thoughts, feelings and anything else in their journal. Parents can model this healthy coping activity also.



Make Bracelets

Make bracelets or make a friendship bracelet and give it to someone as a "thinking of you" gift.



Teen Activities to Promote Healthy Coping



Listening to Music

Pick relaxing and calming music and share with family. Add the music playlist to other activities as well such as a craft or while cooking together.

Knitting or Crochet

Find a local knitting or crochet class to learn with a teen. Or find an online video to learn.



Game/Video Game Night

Have teens choose their favorite board game or video game and play as a family together.

The act of making and crafting with your hands can improve your mood and engage your brain. Try some creative play every day to reduce daily anxiety levels.

Outdoor Activities

Participate in the activity as a family allowing teens to lead or teach other family members.



Scavenger Hunt

Allow teens to create fun family scavenger hunt for everyone.



Family Trivia Night

Create trivia questions and incorporate into to dinner table time or family fun game night, again letting teens take the lead.

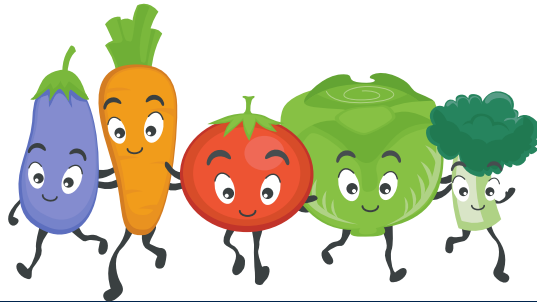


Salad in a Jar



Make it fun! Your kid/teen can choose whatever they want for their salad in a jar as long as they pick at least four veggies. Any type of jar with a lid will work, but pint mason jars work well for kids. Below you will find ingredient Ideas for your “Salad in a Jar.” Remember to have fun with this meal. Ingredients that are not on the list can be added as well. Enjoy!

- Romaine lettuce
- baby spinach
- kale mix
- broccoli slaw
- chopped or shredded carrots
- chopped cucumbers
- cherry or grape tomatoes, cut in slices or tomato chopped
- chopped green onions
- green or black olives
- artichoke hearts
- hearts of palm cut in slices (just discovered these!)
- chopped ham or turkey
- shredded or cubed cheese
- feta cheese
- bell peppers, chopped
- garbanzo or other beans you like, drained and washed
- corn
- broccoli, chopped



- cauliflower, chopped
- grilled chicken chopped
- tuna or salmon
- raisins or Craisins
- fresh mushrooms
- chopped celery
- snow peas
- boiled eggs, sliced

Topping Ideas:

- roasted chickpeas
- sesame sticks
- chopped nuts
- bacon bits
- sunflower seeds
- pumpkin seeds
- salad dressing of any kind



Instructions:

- Assist your child with chopping the veggies they have selected for their salad.
- Put the chunkier veggies on the bottom.
- If eating immediately add salad dressing to the top of the jar or store in a small container for later.
- Once you have assembled your salad, add the top to the jar and shake then open the lid and enjoy!

Hedgehog Rolls Recipe



Ingredients

- 500g pack brown bread mix
- 25g butter
- plain flour, for dusting
- 12 raisins
- 6 flaked almonds
(for kids with nut allergies, consider using a bit of raisin or a chocolate chip or come up with your own ideas to make the hedgehog nose)

STEP 1: Make the bread mixture with the butter following pack instructions. It's easiest to use a stand mixer but not difficult to do by hand. Leave the dough to rest for 5 mins, then knead for 5 mins.

STEP 2: Cut the dough into six pieces. Dust the surface with a little flour and shape each piece into a ball by rolling it between your hand. Now make it hedgehog-shaped by pulling one side out a little and squeezing it gently into a snout. Be quite firm or it will bounce back.

STEP 3: Put the hedgehogs on a baking sheet, cover with a damp small towel and leave to rise for 1 hr.

STEP 4: Heat oven to 350 degrees. Using kitchen scissors (supervise younger children), carefully snip into the dough to make the spikes on the backs of the hedgehogs. Press raisins in for the eyes and push a flaked almond into the end of each snout.

STEP 5: Bake for 15 mins or until the rolls are risen and golden. Rolls will keep for two days in an airtight container.



Did You Know?

Fun Facts About Hedgehogs

Share these fun facts with your child while they wait for their hedgehog treats to be ready to eat:

Hedgehogs are nocturnal
which means they sleep during the day and only come out at night.

A group of hedgehogs is called an array.



A baby hedgehog is called a hoglet.

Hedgehogs have over 5000 spines on their back
which can be raised and lowered in response to threatening situations.



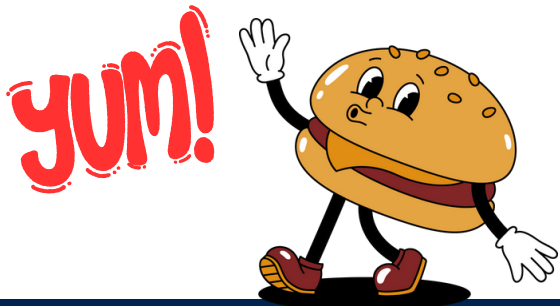
Hedgehogs can travel up to 2 miles when they are out to forage
which is a pretty long way for those little legs!

Hedgehogs are lactose intolerant
which means they can't drink milk, but water is perfectly fine for them.

Cheeseburger Cups

Ingredients Needed:

- Cooking spray
- 6 burger buns, split
- 1 tbsp.
- vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 slices cheddar, quartered
- Ketchup, for serving
- Yellow mustard, for serving
- 12
- Pickle chips



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350° and grease a muffin tin with cooking spray. Flatten the burger bun halves to 1/4 inch thick with a rolling pin and place one-half cut-side up in each prepared muffin cup.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook, stirring, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add ground beef and cook, breaking up meat with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Drain fat.
3. Return the beef mixture to the skillet and season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Divide the ground beef mixture among burger bun cups and top each with a cheddar cheese square. Bake until the cheese is melty, and the buns are golden about 10 minutes.
4. Drizzle cups with ketchup and mustard, top with a pickle, and sprinkle with sesame seeds.



Garlic Bread Pizza Sandwiches

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 package (11-1/4 ounces) frozen garlic Texas toast
- 1/4 cup pasta sauce
- Shredded mozzarella cheese
- 8 slices thinly sliced hard salami
- Additional pasta sauce, warmed, optional



Directions

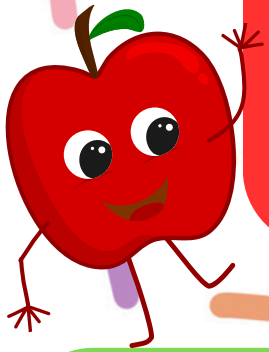
1. Preheat griddle over medium-low heat. Add garlic toast; cook until lightly browned, 3-4 minutes per side.
2. Spoon 1 tablespoon of sauce over each of 4 pieces of toast. Top with cheese, pepperoni, salami and remaining toast.
3. Cook until crisp and cheese is melted, 3-5 minutes, turning as necessary. If desired, serve with additional sauce.



Apple Slice Nachos

Ingredients:

- 2 cups thinly sliced apples
- 2 tablespoons caramel sauce
- 2 tablespoons chocolate sauce
- 1 tablespoon sprinkles
- 1 tablespoon miniature chocolate chips



INSTRUCTIONS

- Arrange the apples on a plate.
- Drizzle the apples with the caramel and chocolate sauces.
- Top with sprinkles and chocolate chips and serve immediately.



Did You Know?

Fun Facts About Apples

1. **Apples are a member of the rose family!** Yep, apples, along with pears, plums, cherries, and peaches, are all members of the rose family of plants.
2. **Apples have five seed pockets.** Have you ever cut an apple open and looked inside? Each one has five distinct seed pockets called carpels. The number of seeds in each apple depends on the variety and the health of the plant. A healthy plant will produce more seeds than one struggling to survive.
3. **Approximately 2,500 varieties of apples are grown in the United States, and over 7,500 varieties are grown worldwide.** While the grocery store and farmers' market may only have a half-dozen varieties available for sale, there are actually more than 2,500 different types of apples grown in the US. Many of them aren't good to eat (like the crab apple, which is the only native apple plant in the US), but the ones that are all have their own unique flavor and texture.
4. **Apples are healthy for you!** You may have already gathered that apples are good for you, but did you know they're free of cholesterol, fat, and sodium? With many American diets already high in those three things, apples are a delicious and healthy alternative to pre-packaged snacks. To get even more health benefits, don't peel your apple.
5. **The average American eats about 46 pounds of apples and apple products yearly.** Although about 60% of the United States' apple crops are eaten raw each year, the other 40% is used to make applesauce, apple pies, apple cider, apple juice, and other delicious apple goodness. In fact, Americans eat about 46 pounds of raw apples and apple products each year, making apples the most consumed deciduous fruit in the country.