



Dear Parent/Carer,

Many of our children are feeling worried and anxious about the current situation regarding Coronavirus and the effect it is having upon the way we live our day to day lives.

I thought it may be useful to put together some tips and techniques for you to try with your child at home as a way of helping them to feel calmer and less stressed and anxious.

Relax Kids have also created a free CALM PACK full of lovely exercises to help you all feel more relaxed and calm during this unsettling time.

In my experience, even very young children are able to understand the basics about our brain and its affect on how we feel in our bodies.

Firstly, reassure your child that it is perfectly normal to feel fear. Our brain is an amazing place - in particular the amygdala (the brains 'alarm system') is always on 'high alert' and ready to pick up on any drama or tension around us. That's our brains way of trying to keep us safe. If your child has been in any of my sessions, they will know this part of their brain as the 'Meerkat'. When this part of our brain is active it sends signals down into our body - things like rapid heart rate, butterflies in our tummy, a dry mouth, emotional outbursts like anger and rage, challenging behaviours, crying and feeling very emotional.

We all feel these big emotions and it is perfectly normal to feel this way in challenging times. How we deal with these big emotions is where change can be made, and calm can be restored.

### **Ways to help your child feel calm**

**Breathing:** Encourage your child to be still and to sit upright. Take in a deep breath in through the nose and slowly exhale out through the mouth. This will help calm their nervous system down.

**Grounding Techniques:** Encourage your child to tell you: 5 things they can see 4 things they can feel with their hands 3 things they can hear 2 things they can smell 1 thing they can taste either in their mouth (e.g. toothpaste, a taste lingering from a meal or imagine their favourite taste and describing it to you).

These simple tasks take away the 'spotlight' from the Amygdala (or Meerkat part of our brain as we refer to it in Relax Kids) and ask us to use different parts of our brain instead:

- Mindful Moving: Reach, stretch, bend, circle and twist to help release tension in the body.
- Try to get outside: Notice the things around you. Ask your child to notice sights, sounds and smells as you walk.
- Encourage creativity: Draw, colour, play, craft.

Try and limit the amount of time your child is exposed to current news coverage, try and limit your own exposure too if you are struggling. The tips above also work for us adults too.

Here is the link to the free Relax Kids CALM PACK. We hope you find it useful.

[www.relaxkids.com/calm-pack](http://www.relaxkids.com/calm-pack)

Wishing you a magical day and a peaceful evening,