



THE MINDFULNESS CLUB

BACK TO SCHOOL

SIMPLE GUIDE TO HELP YOU AND YOUR
FAMILY TRANSITION BACK TO SCHOOL
AFTER LOCKDOWN 3





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The end of another lockdown and the hardest home schooling chapter is fast approaching, with that in mind we've put together a few tips and ideas for you to help ease your way back into school routine again.

With all change come so many mixed emotions and all children will have had different experiences throughout lockdown and will continue to with the transition back to school. Some children are excited to see friends and teachers however some will have uncertainties. This week try to contact the schools and get all information about what the school will be implementing and expecting from the children so you can prepare them properly.



It's also really important to remember that everyone is going through this experience and that all feelings are ok and allowed. We really need to let our children know this and allow them to experience these emotions, empathise with them and normalise any worries or anxieties they may be feeling. Examples would be 'I can see you are worried and nervous about going back to school, it'll be a big change from what we have been doing for a while, remember that everyone will be feeling the same as you, I feel nervous too' instead of 'don't worry, it will be fine'. Have some conversations over this week around their feelings and allow them to express their concerns or excitement in a safe space.

This booklet will offer you various tips and activities that you can print off and use and we really hope that it can bring you some benefit prior to the transition next week.

The major adjustment will be re-establishing the routine, we suggest a trial run as traffic will be different on the first day back than what we have been used to. The increased pace and shift from slower mornings to school timetables will be difficult at first so try to adapt your days this week where you have a bit more room to go through the steps with a calm and positive attitude. As parents/carers it's our role to help children follow by example so if you show your optimism and support they will feel this positive energy and feel more at ease come Monday 8th March, 2021.



MORNING ROUTINE

Set your alarm this week ready for a school day with enough time to get ready and have breakfast, set an extra 5 minutes to establish some new practises.

- Introduce 2 mins of relaxation prior to waking up, this will help them start the day relaxed.
- Say 3 positive affirmations such as 'I am brave' 'I am calm' or 'I am as cool as a cat' this will give them a little boost of confidence prior to tackling any struggles they may face.
- Touch - take the time to give your child a hug, remind them of the safety that surrounds them.
- On your drive or walk to school instead of playing music or news try a few grounding exercise asking these questions:
 - What can you see, tell me 5 things
 - What can you feel, tell me 4 things
 - What can you hear, tell me 3 things
 - What can you smell, tell me 2 things
 - What can you taste, tell me 1 thing



BEDTIME ROUTINE

Re-establish bedtime routine at least 5 days before the first day of school. If your child has been going to bed later than normal start to push bedtime earlier over the few days, it will be tricky that's why a gradual change is the best approach.

- Remove all screens for 1 hour before bedtime.
- If you stopped reading, start this again at bedtime.
- Include a short meditation or guided visualisation to help them settle and feel a sense of calm before drifting to sleep.



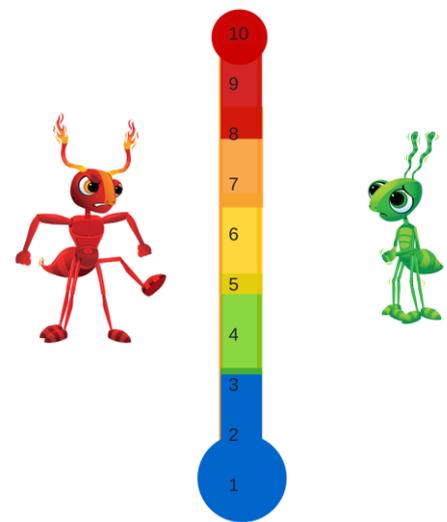


AFTER SCHOOL

Keep the conversation light straight after school, try to play relaxing music in the car on the way home and even do some simple stretches with a health snack and glass of water. Time out after school is really essential to give their brains a break.

- At an appropriate time as children how their day went.
- Use feeling thermometer to see how they feel.
- Talk about any worries or anxieties that may come up.
- Remind children that feelings are just visitors and that they come and go.
- Introduce a gratitude list at dinner time, where everyone has to tell each other 3 things they are grateful for that day. Being thankful is a really positive emotion and helps children focus on the good around their lives at the moment.

Feelings Thermometer



M.A.S.T.E.R 2013

MEAL TIMES

Try to adjust all your meals and snack times to match the school day. Breakfast is the most important followed by healthier snacks. A good breakfast will give children the best energy for their brains, concentration and moods.

- Wholemeal cereal (Weetabix, porridge, branflakes with milk or yoghurt) plus a piece of fruit or 2 slices whole meal toast with peanut butter, small banana and small glass of milk



SNACKS

- Savoury muffins, crudites and dips (hommous), sultanas, fruit in yoghurt, cheese cubes and crackers, rice cakes, fruit



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GUIDED MEDITATIONS FOR CHILDREN THIS CAN BE USED AT BEDTIME OR JUST BEFORE SCHOOL

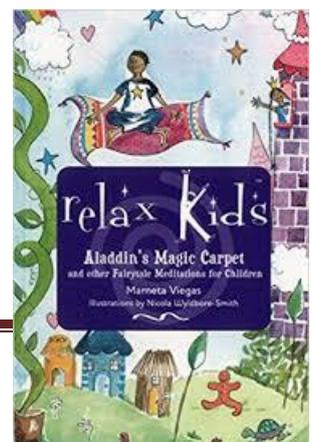
Close your eyes be very still, and imagine that you have Aladdin's magic carpet. Take a closer look: it is the most spectacular carpet in the world, made with very special golden thread. The carpet is colourful and has an exquisite design on it. Spend a few moments looking at the beautiful patterns and vibrant colours. Sit in the middle of the magic carpet and cross your legs. Now say the magic word Abracadabra and feel the carpet start to float very gently above the ground. When you decide you are ready to climb higher, the carpet will drift upwards. You will feel yourself getting lighter and lighter, as relaxed and happy as can be. The air is your home. If you would like to travel through soft downy clouds, you may do so, or you may ask the carpet to pick up a little speed and move forward. You know you are in control, and can choose to swoop and soar, zip and zoom, dip and dive, flit and flutter on this magic carpet. The tassels of the carpet are blowing in the wind. Feel the air rushing through your hair and the clouds brushing your face. You feel fresh and invigorated as the magic carpet takes you around the world. Whenever you like, you may ask the carpet to slow down or float, as you stop to look at the beautiful landscapes below. You may wish to hover over the desert or the snowcapped mountains or the green blue sea. The choice is yours. Be free to go on your own special adventure and explore new and exciting lands and possibilities. When you are ready, ask the magic carpet to float back down to earth.

And now when you are ready, wiggle your fingers and toes have a big stretch and open your eyes.

relax Kids

Taken from **Aladdin's Magic Carpet** by **Marneta Viegas**,
52 guided fairy tale meditations for children

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available to buy for £9.99 on our website
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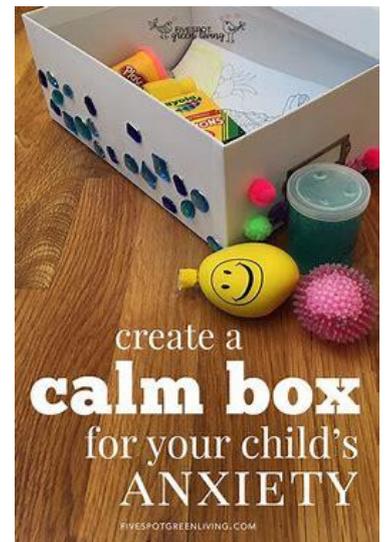
CALMING ACTIVITIES

The idea behind creating a calm box and calm corner is that when a child is feeling anger, frustration, worry or any big emotion they can then be encouraged to use these tools either within the box or use the safe space created in the calm corner to self-regulate and calm down effectively.

The other great element is that you can encourage the children to make these independently and can be done inexpensively at home, if you base a conversation around them and work together as a family to create these safe spaces they can prove to be very effective tools.

Ideas to put inside a calm box:

- Puzzle
- Cuddly toy
- Pay-day
- Lego
- Colouring book with pencils
- Printed yoga poses
- Printed affirmations
- Skipping rope
- Book to read
- Snacks
- Breathing ball
- Stones or anything collected on a walk



You could take your calm box to your calm corner and use both tools to regain emotional control. The corner may just simply be a chair or a safe spot in the house where



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they can be alone and feel safe. You could use a rug, blanket, fairy lights, pillows or a bean bag chair for sitting or lying down.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES

These two techniques are very easy examples of ways to teach your child to take a moment and focus on breathing. They are simple so they can memorise them easily and do them at home alone or at school.

When our breath is shallow and rapid, it can trigger the release of stress hormones (that fight, flight or freeze that we're all familiar with). When our breath is slow, deep and measured, it signals our body to release hormones that are associated with feelings of calm and centred well-being.

When we teach children how to control their breathing, we give them the ability to focus, and control their reactions to any situation.

Deep breathing using your hand.



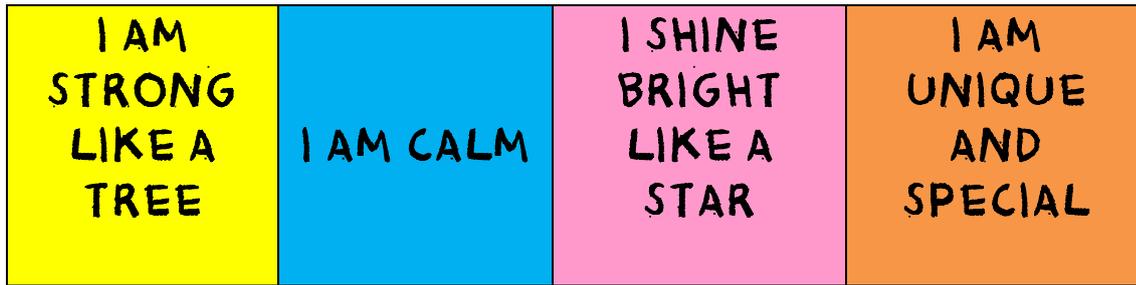


AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are just a few positive spoken words that we can say to ourselves each day, they create an inner confidence which in turn affects our ability to learn and participate at school, socially, creatively, our relationships, achieving our goals and dreams, and most importantly our standards. Repeating these daily will make a huge difference to your child's mind, body and heart.

Use them at home, on sticky notes around the house or put one in your Childs school bag or lunch box to give them a little boost throughout their day.

TODAY WILL BE A GREAT DAY	I WILL MAKE NEW FRIENDS TODAY	I WILL LISTEN WITH INTENTION TODAY	I ALWAYS DO MY BEST
I AM SMART	I AM A GOOD FRIEND	I AM A GOOD LISTENER	I AM AS BRAVE AS A LION
TODAY WILL BE A GREAT DAY	I AM KIND AND I AM HELPFUL	I AM EXCITED TO LEARN	I AM CONFIDENT LIKE A CAT



The first few weeks back at school will bring some home lots of different reactions, even if they were responding really well to home-schooling their day structures will be different they will be mentally, physically and socially exhausted so take it easy on them and yourselves.



A reaction that looks like anger may be a world of other emotions that they just can't express fuelled with the expectations they are trying to manage. So when you are questioning them and any different behaviours, give it some time to adjust. The top 3 most important thing children are looking for from their homes and parent/carer

is a sense of calm, safety and connection.

TOP TIPS

- Try to set up a virtual play date with any friends they have not seen for a while to prepare them for social settings again.
- Don't over schedule after school and weekend activities for the first weeks back, easy them and yourselves back in to the routine without pushing expectations on them.



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If you do have any concerns about your child's return or would just like to have a conversation please drop me an e-mail at info@relaxkidscheshire.com and I'll be happy help.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and we wish you the best of luck on your return to school.