



## Activity: “Calm and Focus Time” – Emergency Soothing Routine

**Goal:** To help children regulate emotions, stay calm, and feel safe during emergency situations.

### Age Group:

Preschool to early elementary (ages 3–8)

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### Purpose:

During an emergency, children may feel scared or anxious. This structured, simple activity uses breathing, grounding, and gentle focus to reduce stress and keep the group calm and quiet while maintaining safety.

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### Materials Needed:

- Soft or calm background music (optional, if safe and appropriate)
  - Small soft toys or “calm items” (stuffed animals, sensory balls, or blankets)
  - Visual cue cards (deep breathing, counting fingers, or cloud imagery)
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### Steps:

#### 1. Establish Calm Leadership (30 seconds)

- Caregiver uses a calm, steady voice:

“Let’s take a deep breath together. We are safe, and we’re going to stay calm.”



- Make gentle eye contact and smile reassuringly.
2. Breathing Together (2 minutes)
- Teach children to take “Smell the flower, blow the candle” breaths:
    - Inhale through the nose (as if smelling a flower)
    - Exhale through the mouth (as if blowing out a candle)
  - Repeat 3–5 times, using soft voice counting: “In...2...3... Out...2...3.”
3. Grounding Through Counting or Touch (2–3 minutes)
- Quietly encourage children to find **five things they can see, four things they can touch, three things they can hear**, etc.
  - This helps redirect focus and reduces anxiety through mindfulness.
4. Quiet Story or Visualization (3–5 minutes)
- Caregiver softly narrates a short, peaceful story (e.g., “Imagine we’re lying under a big tree, feeling the cool breeze...”)
  - If possible, show calm visuals like clouds, stars, or animals.
5. Comfort Items & Whisper Talk (as needed)
- Allow children to hold a soft toy or calm item.
  - Encourage quiet talking in whispers if they need reassurance.
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## Safety & Behavior Reminders:

- Caregiver maintains calm body language at all times.
- Keep instructions clear and simple.
- Praise calm behavior ("You're doing a wonderful job staying quiet and brave.")
- After the emergency, debrief with the children using positive reflection:

"You all did so well staying calm. That helps everyone stay safe."

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## Adaptations:

- **Toddlers:** Use rhythmic patting or lullabies instead of verbal mindfulness.
  - **Older children:** Incorporate simple journaling or drawing about "What helps me feel safe."
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## Learning Outcomes:

- Children practice **self-regulation** and **coping skills**.
- Builds trust between caregivers and children.
- Reinforces a sense of safety and predictability during stressful situations.

