

Five-Finger Relaxation

Tracing is a great technique for clearing your mind and relaxing. Help your child learn how to calm themselves down and clear their minds by tracing their hands.

What You Need:

- Just your hand and five fingers

What You Do:

1. Talk to your child about different strong emotions, such as anger, stress, and sadness, and how their body responds to them.
2. Tell your child that there are strategies for when they feel a strong emotion, and have them take a few deep breaths to see how breathing can calm them down.
3. Share that their breath is always with them and can be a tool in helping them relax.
4. Guiding their hands, show them how to trace around each finger with their opposite index finger.
5. As they inhale, trace up the finger. As they exhale, trace down the finger.
6. Practice on both sides for 10 deep breaths.
7. This technique helps keep the mind from wandering, and going slow corresponds with deep breathing.
8. Have your child practice breathing deeply using five finger relaxation, and join in whenever you need a reminder to stop and breathe as well.



About the author: Meena Srinivasan, MA, National Board Certified Teacher, is a leader in the fields of Mindful Awareness Practices (MAP) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). She is the author of *Teach, Breathe, Learn: Mindfulness In and Out of the Classroom* (Parallax Press, 2014) and *SEL Everyday: Integrating Social and Emotional Learning With Instruction in Secondary Classrooms* (Norton, 2019).

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