

# Sybil Elgar School | Our Transdisciplinary Team Newsletter

## Summer Sensory Fun!

Summer time with its lovely weather is a great time to explore different sensory activities

Here we have provided some suggestions which you may want to try over the summer holidays

### Climbing, swinging and sliding

Many local parks have now re-opened which provides some great opportunities to move.

Try out different pieces of equipment and observe how your child responds- some may calm and some may be more exciting!

Climbing is a type of “heavy muscle work” (proprioception) which is a great way to build strength and expend excess energy

The gentle back-and-forth motion of a swing or hammock is calming for many people

Many parks now have outdoor gyms which may be more suitable for older young people



### The benefits of natural spaces

Time outdoors in natural spaces has been shown to provide a range of benefits for both physical and mental health

Interestingly, even looking at digital images of a natural spaces has been shown to have a relaxing effect on people

There are lots of lovely videos on YouTube that show natural spaces whilst calming music plays in the background. We find lots of children and young people find this very relaxing during 'choosing time' at school- try these out at home and see if your child enjoys them

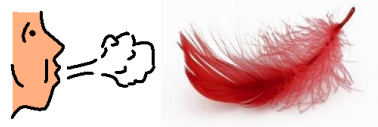


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xDyPcJrI0c&safe=active>

### Fun ways to encourage deep breathing

It can be tricky for some children and young people to learn how to do controlled breathing techniques.

Your child may engage with this more when they have some engaging sensory “props” to use – like blowing on a feather to watch it fall from your hand



'Bubble Snakes' are another fun way to teach them this skill – learning that the more they breathe out the bigger the bubble snake becomes can be very motivating for little and big kids alike! (This activity was even demonstrated on an episode of 'This Morning'!)



Here is a YouTube video which shows how to make your own:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNqPZNFEjuM&safe=active>

## Supporting well-being : Making choices

The ability to make a choice promotes:

Feelings of empowerment

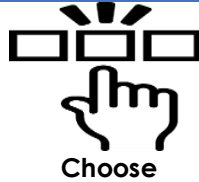
Self-esteem

Independence

Problem solving skills

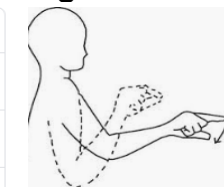
Flexibility of thought/action

The right to express yourself



- Provide opportunities for making choices in a wide variety of situations and activities for example - Which pen? Which bubble bath? What food? Who to play with?
- Structure choices: Support flexibility by structuring the choice for example the computer is only an option on certain days of the week.
- Provide visual information about available options: written lists, objects, photos, symbols board, pictures.
- Be clear about whether an activity is a choice or a necessary part of the timetable!
- Choice-making may sometimes be stressful and confusing. At times people may prefer clear structure and being told what to do/ what's happening rather than having to choose.
- Only offer choices that are possible.
- The more information you have the more chance you have of making your preferred choice.
- Increasing your experiences develops your range of available choices and flexibility.

### Makaton signs



choose



YES



NO

### Useful websites for communication:

[www.makaton.org](http://www.makaton.org)  
[www.thecommunicationtrust.com](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.com)  
[www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk](http://www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk)

Download: All About Me  
 Range of Downloads  
 Download books

Fun Activities Symbols/Signs  
 Communication Information  
 Support through pictures

## How to better manage anxiety due to changes in routines

The summer holidays can be a big change for our CYP in their daily routine and this would potentially reflect in their level of anxiety or frustration.

As detailed below, some suggestions, which can positively support and potentially reduce experienced level of anxiety.

### Sleep patterns

- Try to stick to normal wake and sleep times every day.



- Try to avoid naps during the day (maximum 20 minutes).



- Turn off screens for one hour before bedtime if you can.



### Tension release and breathing exercises

- Try to do tension-release exercises 3 times once a day

-Clench your fists | -Tighten your wrists

-Push against your elbow joints



- Try to do breathing exercises 3 times once a day



### Physical exercises

- Go to the park for a walk or be engaged in outdoor activities (football, basketball, etc).



- Try to do meditation or Yoga once a week.



- Do some stretching exercises whenever possible.



**Website:**

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/nas-schools/sybil-elgar>



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