



Foothills Pregnancy Resource Center

A State-Licensed Medical Clinic

“She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue ... Her children arise and call her blessed.” Proverbs 31:26-28



Welcome Parents & Families & Happy New Year! *Reading & Music! Everyone participates ~*



Emotional Intelligence - balancing our intellect & emotions

<https://connectedfamilies.org/3-principles-to-help-your-child-calm-and-regulate>

- How do I help my child know that mom is on their side? Slow down, step back and grow with our kids. Only 15% of the pre-schoolers frontal lobe is developed.
- Confidence & creativity can grow if mom lets go and guides; introduce board/card games that help with rule following & becoming a gracious winner and loser.
- Leading, modeling & encouraging ... learning to control ourselves rather than our kids.

Model letting your child know how you feel & calming yourself so your child can calm down. Use deep breathing: 5 finger breathing technique ... tracing up a finger when you breathe at the top of each finger ... if child doesn't want to do it say 'that's ok, you can watch me'. Remember you're responsible for your behavior, not your child's. '*Breathing in God's peace, breathing out God's grace*'. Role playing (rehearsing positive behavior) can also work well.

Encourage (tools to teach with) Get your ego out of it! If your child doesn't like an activity then try something else. Mom/Dad modeled using a 'paper tool box' to handle their emotions; kids look forward to making their own 'tool box' and helps them regulate their emotions.

Leading with humility and grace (invite kids into the journey) ... i.e., "I'm feeling overwhelmed. Can you think of some ideas that might help me?" Don't forget to affirm kids in all areas: "Way to go! That must feel good [that YOU made a wise choice]!" Helps kids to control themselves, to build a sense of identity as a confident problem solver instead of depending on parent.

<https://celebratekids.com/podcasts> - "Facing the Dark" podcasts & articles digging deeper into topics such as building healthy friendships, lasting character, navigating AI & technology, and much more through a biblical lens! Know who is influencing your child - friends, youth groups, etc.



Potty Training!

<https://www.whattoexpect.com/toddler/potty-training/potty-training-twins.aspx>



The toddler who succeeds in potty training is the one who is developmentally ready and wants to be trained. Here are a few signs that can help you decide if your child is mature enough to begin:

- He demonstrates some awareness that elimination (especially of stool) is going on.
- Predictable bowel movements. Regularity can help you figure out the times of day when training attempts are most likely to succeed.
- He tries to imitate some of the things you do every day.
- Does he want to wear “big boy” underwear? This symbol of independence can be a tremendous asset. Underwear can actually be used to reward a child for his or her interest in toilet training.
- Do some potty prep. About a week before P-day (the day the potties appear), start talking to your twins about what’s going to happen. Try potty training activities, like reading books about potty training, and make a big deal out of heading to the store to pick out big-boy or big-girl underwear.
- Go naked (or bottomless). Two kids wetting their pants all day makes for a lot of laundry. Cut yourself a break and let your potty training twins go bare sometimes, though do be prepped and ready for pop-up puddles – and avoid prolonged playtimes on carpeted areas.
- Use rewards but **avoid sticker charts** when you potty train twins. Make a big deal (“You did it!”) whenever one of your kids poops or pees – even a drop – in the toilet.
- What’s the best type of reward when you potty train twins? A silly, celebratory dance! Even if one child is showing more signs of readiness than the other, you can still train both your twins at the same time. All kids are different - - personality is a stronger indicator of potty readiness than anything else.
- If one of your children has started to regress – throwing tantrums, having accidents, wanting to go back to diapers – then it’s perfectly fine to take a break from potty training and pick up the process after a few days or weeks.



50 Calming Activities Using Each of the Senses

Many of the activities on this list involve motion. A favorite phrase to use that kids can remember is “Motion changes emotion”. Feeling sluggish? Get your body moving! Feeling anxious and fidgety? Try some slow, deep stretches. How your child uses motion to change emotion can help them learn to self-regulate in a healthy way.

MOUTH / ORAL ACTIVITIES:

1. Deep breathing, aka dragon breaths
2. Cold water in a bottle with a long, curly straw
3. Gum (or a popsicle) can be a powerful brain calmer
4. Offer frozen or dried mango slices
5. Fruit smoothie through a straw (suck is calming)
6. Blow on a pinwheel or blow bubbles with a bubble wand (mimics deep breathing)
7. Put a few drops of soap in a bowl and blow bubbles through a straw, or herd “sheep” (cotton balls) with a straw
8. Blow on a party blower or kazoo (the vibration is calming)
9. Pretend your finger is a candle and practice blowing it out
10. For older kids - “Let’s grab some chips and salsa, and we’ll talk this through.”

SKIN / TOUCH ACTIVITIES:

(Many of these activities are demonstrated in our free mini-online course - 7 Practical Calming Strategies.)

11. Offer a hug
12. “Squish sandwich” - put pillows or couch cushions under and on top of your child as they lay face down on the floor and apply pressure. You can even start to talk about whatever is troubling them while they are in this position.
13. Try a weighted blanket
14. Some kids love it when you lay on top of them (of course, be careful to regulate your pressure).
15. Rub lotion on each other’s hands/skin (or use coconut oil if child dislikes lotions)
16. Make a “calming basket” with fidgets, squishy toys, or calming stuffed animals, and let your child choose things from it. Search the internet for “weighted/warmable stuffed animals” specifically for self-regulation.
17. Play with the family pet or take a cat/dog cuddle break
18. Back scratches or back rubs before bed
19. Paint each other’s nails
20. Finger painting
21. Braiding or playing with each other’s hair
22. Playdough
23. A tub or shower
24. Roll child up in a blanket, then pull gently to unroll

MOVEMENT-BASED (VESTIBULAR / PROPRIOCEPTIVE) ACTIVITIES:

25. Do push-ups and relays together by doing a bear walk (on hands and feet, face down), or crab walk (on hands and feet, belly up)
26. Jump on a trampoline
27. Ride a bike around the block
28. Shoot some hoops/play catch/nerf frisbee
29. Play balloon "volleyball"
30. Swing on a swing set
31. Work out on a treadmill/elliptical, etc, if you have one, and talk about how you feel better. Then invite your child to try it. (Please follow safety guidelines if your child is on a piece of your fitness equipment.)
32. Go to the park and do some climbing
33. Turn on kids' favorite music and have a dance party
34. Run up and down the stairs (how fast can kids find the object you hid downstairs?)
35. Make an obstacle course including a collapsible tunnel
36. Bounce on an inflatable exercise ball (or kids' hop ball)
37. Bungee "pogo" jumper
38. Make a big pile of pillows and have kids jump onto them from a step stool or couch

VISUAL ACTIVITIES:

39. Calm down jar
40. Color independently or together with your child. This may help less-verbal kids identify feelings and wants in their picture.
41. Art, art, and more art
42. Look at books with beautiful pictures/illustrations. Each of the OuiSi sets has hundreds of engaging photos for different games or making up stories that could fit the pictures.
43. Build a fort as a safe space that also limits visual stimuli
44. Bubbler toy or a lava lamp in a dark room

AUDITORY ACTIVITIES:

45. Listen to favorite music (use earbuds or headphones if it helps)
46. Sit outside to listen to the birds and the breeze
47. Hum or sing
48. Use a couple of kazoos (for both humor and vibration to the inner ear) and pretend to "talk out your conflict" through the kazoo with lots of expressions and gestures.
49. Use a white noise machine (on a calming sound) while looking at books
50. Musical instrument box - kids feel in control of their auditory environment when they make music

Parenting isn't easy, but when you've got an extra INTENSE or SENSITIVE child with big feelings... it's even harder. If you'd like to learn more about parenting a sensitive and intense child, the Sensitive & Intense Kids online course will equip you to parent well. You can learn more and REGISTER HERE or go to <https://connectedfamilies.org/courses/sensitive-intense-kids/>