



Belly Button Breathing

Children Aged 3-5

What is Belly Button Breathing?

Belly button breathing (BBB) is an exercise used to help children slow down their breathing and focus their attention. Your breath is like a remote control to your brain and body. So, when you feel worried, belly button breathing can signal to your brain that it's safe and okay to relax.

When Can I Do BBB?

Belly button breathing can be done anywhere and at any time. The key is to repeat this practice daily so that it becomes a habit. Try taking some breaths with your child to encourage this practice or have them teach their teddy bear how to bear breathe. Use belly button breathing in the following situations:

- At or before a doctor's visit or vaccination, try taking some breaths to feel less worried.
- Before bedtime or naptime, belly button breathing can help us calm down. Watch your belly move up and down as you breathe.
- In the car, take some breaths on the way to or from school.
- Take some breaths as you open the door to go outside to play. What do you smell, see, and hear? What do you feel?

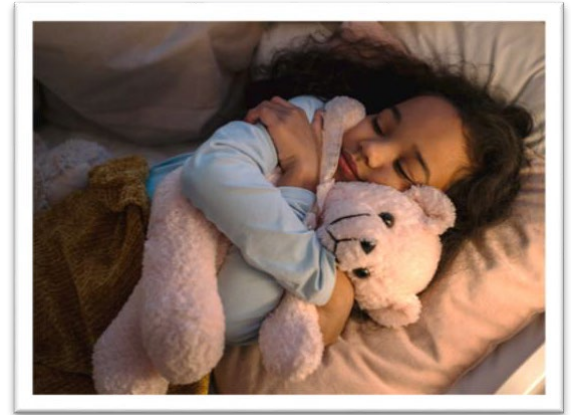
Benefits of Regular Practice

Regular practice of breathing exercises, like belly button breathing, has been shown to have the following effects in children:

- Improves attention
- Reduces feelings of anxiety
- Enhances learning ability
- Lowers the effect of stress on the brain and body

Developed in collaboration with the UBC Medicine FLEX Program by Anisha Bains, MD 2023. Created Spring 2021.

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Check out [this](#) video to see how it's done!

How Can I Do BBB?

Belly button breathing can be done sitting, standing, or lying down with a teddy bear in your arms, or resting on your stomach. If you can't find a teddy bear, place a hand on your belly instead. Encourage your child to watch the teddy bear move up and down on his or her belly while he or she breathes. Alongside your child, practice the following steps:

1. Find a comfortable position for you and your child.
2. Start by breathing out for three seconds – one, two, three.
3. Next, breathe in for three seconds – one, two, three.
4. Repeat this process five times, or until you and your child feel calmer.

Resources

- [Breathe Like a Bear: Mindfulness Moments for Kids](#)
- [Pizza & Hot Chocolate Breathing](#)
- [PBS Kids Belly Breathing](#)
- [Teddy Bear Belly Breathing](#)
- [Stop, Breathe & Think Kids](#)

