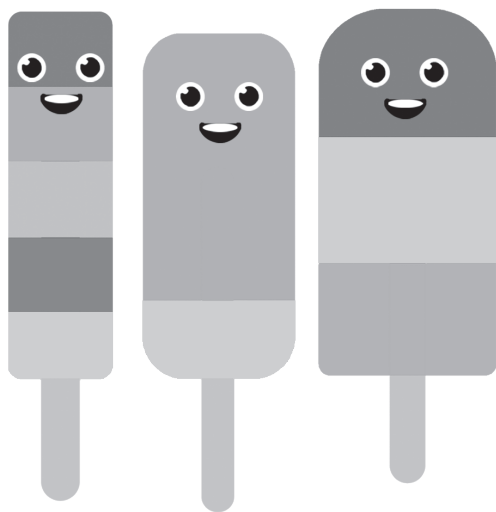


Stress Less

Tips and Tools to Help You CHILL



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Set Reasonable Limits

There are so many fun things to do — skating practice, learning to juggle, reading — and so many obligations too — homework, household chores, babysitting. It's easy to take on too much.

Know what your limits are. Do you need nine hours of sleep to feel rested? Then make sure you get it. Do you need at least an hour of chill time every day after school? Then keep that precious time free.

It might mean occasionally saying no to something you want to do, but you'll feel happier and more able to enjoy the activities you say yes to in the end.

Say Thank You

There are so many people who do things for you every day — teachers, caregivers, friends, even strangers who hold open the door or give you a seat on the bus.

Make sure to say “thank you” to all of them! They'll get a lift and so will you.



It's Not Personal

You were hanging out with your best pal when all of a sudden, *SNAP!* He lashed out at you. You have no idea what you did to set him off. Maybe you did nothing at all.

Sometimes other people have the same issues you do. They're short of sleep or hungry. They can't find the right words for a feeling. They've had enough.

Give your pal some space.

You'll find out soon enough if this outburst was a one-time thing or something bigger.

Under Pressure

Pressing down on specific points on your feet or wrists is said to help with stress relief. Press on the points described below for two to three minutes each. Make sure to pay attention to your breathing, keeping it slow and steady, to get the best results.

Wrists: Hold your hand, palm up. Press on the pinky side of your wrist just below where your wrist bends.

Feet: Press on the sole of your foot about a quarter of the way down from the third toe.

Ear This

You know how much dogs love to have their ears rubbed? It's a great stress reliever for humans too!

Gently grip each of your earlobes between a thumb and forefinger. Rub them this way and that for as long as three minutes.

Don't be surprised if you feel ready for a follow-up belly rub.

Shake It!

Qigong is an ancient health and relaxation practice that includes elements from Chinese medicine and martial arts.

To help relax, qigong practitioners shake their bodies for two to three minutes. It's easy, it's fun and it works.

Give this qigong exercise a try:

1. Stand in a relaxed posture with your arms by your sides.
2. Bend your knees a bit and start bouncing up and down.
3. With your arms relaxed, start to shake them. Shake, shake, shake!
4. When you've finished, your entire body will feel warm and loose.



Touch the Sky

Can you touch the sky? Try it and see.

1. Raise your hands over your head, as high as you can.
2. Stretch even higher.
3. Raise up on your tippytoes to take you even higher.
4. STRETCH!
5. Doesn't that feel . . . *aaah?*



Stargaze

On a clear night, head outdoors and look up at the sky. Can you see stars?

Think about how far away they are — millions of kilometres. Think about how huge they are and how tiny you are by comparison. As you consider these other suns and galaxies, let the grandeur of the universe wash over you. Your own problems may suddenly seem much smaller.

Ragdoll

After a stretch or a hard day, it's great to let it all go.

From a standing position, bend at the waist, letting your head and arms hang down. Feel gravity take over — let your head and arms go heavy and limp. Sway gently from side to side. Let your knees soften.

When you've finished, stand up slowly, rolling up one vertebra at a time, and bringing your head up last.

Cuddle

Curl up with Fluffy. Grab a teddy bear. Lean your head on your dad's shoulder.

Giving and getting a cuddle from someone special is a surefire way to warm your heart and sweeten your day.



Have a Ball!

Dribble it. Kick it. Spike it.

Bunt it. Shoot it into the corner pocket. Pass it.
Put a spin on it.

Roll it, bowl it, bump it, dump it, whack it,
smack it.

Getting active is a top way to blow off steam
and reduce stress. It's also a ton of fun.

So grab a ball and you're guaranteed to have
one.

Check Out a Map

Feeling lost or like you've gotten off track?
Consider that there's more than one route to
success.

Pick up a map, any map. Take a look at all the
roadways on it.

There are many ways to get from *here* to *there*.
Some are crowded. Some wind through pretty
but tough terrain. Some go to nearby familiar
places. Some take you to faraway lands. Some
can only be travelled single file. Some are
straight and fast with few exits. Some have tolls.

All of them are there waiting for you to decide
your own unique itinerary.