

Make Deep Breathing Fun

Countless studies show the benefits of deep breathing, but getting kiddos to actually do it can be difficult. Here are a few activities to try that unknowingly sneak in those beneficial belly breaths.

Benefits of Deep Breathing

- Makes you feel better, increasing serotonin
- Feel calmer, decreasing cortisol
- Releases Toxins
- Decreases Muscle Tension
- Increases Oxygen
- Lowers heart rate & blood pressure
- Improves digestion and sleep

1.

Inhale through your nose for 5 seconds, watch your belly expand.

2.

Hold your breath for 3 seconds.

3.

Exhale through pursed lips, like breathing out through a straw.

1) Watercolor Blow Art

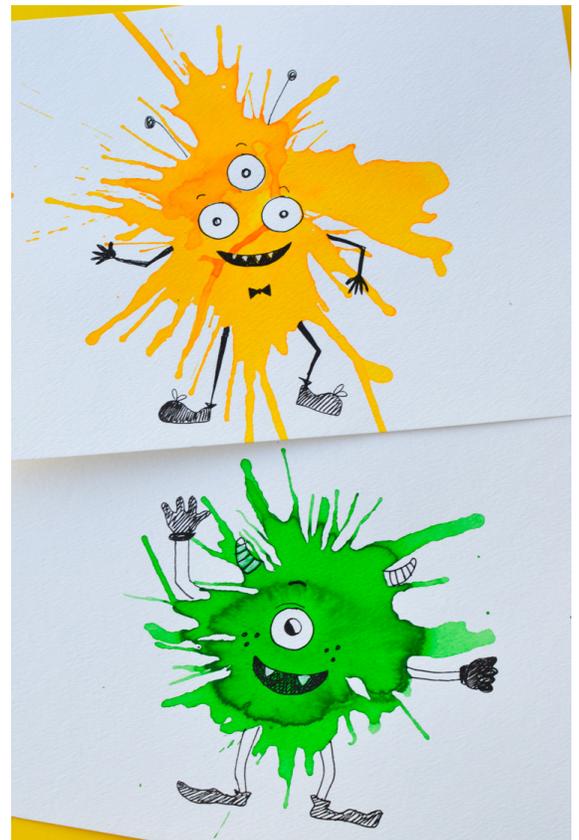
Materials:

- Liquid Watercolors (or dilute any water based paint with water)
- Straw
- Watercolor Paper if you have it
- Circle Stickers

Instructions:

1. Place a few stickers in the middle of the sheet (this will later be the eyes).
2. Put a few drops of paint around eyes.
3. Blow! Experiment with different straws/ lengths.
4. Allow to dry, peel off stickers, and decorate.

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2) Magical Floating Ball

Materials:

- Bendy Straw
- Piece of Paper
- Ball of Foil or Ping Pong Ball
- Tape

Instructions:

1. Trace a circle onto piece of paper (around 4-6" diameter).
2. Cut a slit into the circle stopping at the center.
3. Make a funnel shape with the circle and tape.
4. Cut a small hole in the bottom of the funnel and insert straw.
5. Place ball in center and blow to keep up in the air.

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3) Cotton Ball Races

Materials:

- Cotton Balls (or PomPoms)
- Piece of Paper
- Straw
- Colored Tape or Markers

Instructions:

1. Tape paper to a board or the floor.
2. Create different tracks out of markers or tape.
3. Place cotton ball or pom pom at the start.
4. Have the child use a straw to blow and move the pompom down the track to the finish line!

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Other Deep Breathing Activities:

- Bubbles
- Pinwheels
- Blowing Dandelions (Make a wish!)
- Whistles, Recorders, and Other Musical Instruments

Additional Benefit:

All of these exercises not only improve our mental state but also strengthen oral motor skills that are essential for eating, drinking, and speaking/articulation. Your therapists will be so proud!