

## Parent Information

Your child is currently taking part in Relax kids classes. Relax Kids is a unique method of introducing children to emotional self-regulation and relaxation. The following outlines the structure of the classes with some background information on each of the seven steps.

- Warm-up.

The warm up exercises increase adrenaline into the blood stream which increase heart rate, body temperature and blood flow to the muscles.

- Games

The Games increase production of 'feel good' brain chemicals such as serotonin, dopamine and oxytocin. These chemicals promote well-being and contentment as well as control sleep, attention, learning and emotions. Imaginative play is also known to be a vital tool for optimum brain development for learning social and self-regulation skills and creativity.

- Stretching

The aim of the stretching section is to increase concentration - by focusing the mind on the body releasing the 'feel good' hormones. With practise stretching creates and strengthens the pathways in the brain required for concentration and focus.

- Peer /Self-massage

Peer /Self-massage of the upper body enhances the effects from stretching, It also enables the children to show kindness to their friends.

- Diaphragmatic Breathing /Deep Belly Breathing.

This breathing increases oxygen uptake, slows the breath rate and stimulates the relaxation response. New studies show that focusing on the breath regularly can strengthen brain connections between 'thoughtful' prefrontal lobes to the 'fear- and anxiety-generating' amygdala. Children learn that by breathing deeply they can calm down, learning to control their emotional responses.

- Affirmations

Scientific studies show that affirmations practised regularly can lead to a surge of the dopamine which can increase motivation, commitment and attention. Increase brain connections 'neuroplasticity'- Children can literally rewire their brains to think more positively by focusing on positive thoughts. This combats the effect of negative emotions which we are believed to respond more strongly to.

- Visualisation and Relaxation

Scientific studies have shown that visualisation enhances children's performance in relaxing their own body and minds and managing emotions. Children's imaginations are stimulated as the mind is transported into a story visualisation. This enables children to share in an adventure which increases endorphin levels to create a 'feel good' feeling, increasing the relaxation response.