



Calming Down Area

A calm-down corner can not only diffuse tantrums in the making, but a soothing spot designed just for your children can also help them learn valuable skills for regulating his or her emotions.

Before things escalate.

A calming corner should be a soothing and inviting space that is left open for the child to enter whenever they are feeling dysregulated. It's important for parents to help children identify the signs their body gives them to let them know they're becoming out of control. Things like a clenched jaw, tight fists, shouting, furrowed brows, and throwing things are all signs your child can come to recognise.

Setting up your calming down area.

If you choose to set up a calm-down corner in your home, there are a few things you'll want to keep in mind before you get started. Finkel shares the following tips for success if you're wondering how to set up a calm-down corner:

- **Have your child help with the planning.** Listen to their calm-down corner ideas. This is a great way to ensure the space works for your child's individual needs.
- **Teach your child how to use everything you've included.** Don't set expectations based on assumptions; instead, set your child up for success in her new space.
- **Be consistent.** It'll take some getting used to for both of you, but with consistency and firm but gentle guidance on when it's time to use the calm-down corner, your little one will eventually catch on and begin to use it properly.
- **Work together to create a set of rules for the space.** Allowing your child to take part in setting the rules will provide them with a much-needed sense of control.

What to Include in a Calm-Down Area.

Your calm-down corner should consist of a comfortable place to sit or lay down, and several calming activities for your child to engage in. These can be sensory in nature, but that's not a requirement. The following items if you're looking for calm-down corner ideas.

- Glitter jar
- Bubble wrap
- Stress ball
- Fidget spinners
- Pinwheel or visual image for breathing
- A list of "mindful minute" activities
- A journal (for older children)
- Slinky
- Art materials
- Bean bag chair
- Blankets and pillows

Once the calm-down corner has worked its magic, it's important to check in with your child about the feelings that led them to the cosy corner, how they are feeling now and how their behaviour made you feel, this helps your little one to understand what happened, sort through their emotions they experienced, and most importantly, learn how to handle similar situations in the future.

Within school we also have this and the children know it as the Zen Zone, it really does help your children to self-regulate.