



FREE FOR EDUCATORS

The Calm Corner Setup Guide

Set up a calm-down corner that actually works, in about ten minutes.

Childcare · Preschool · Kindy · Prep

WHAT'S INSIDE

- ★ The four things that make a calm corner work
- ★ The ten-minute setup
- ★ Six calm-down cards to print & cut
- ★ A gentle "how big is my feeling?" reference

Make it a place they choose

The how, not just the what, four things that make the difference.

Most calm corners don't fail for lack of stuff. They fail in how they're introduced. Here's what turns a corner into a place children choose, not a place they're sent.

1 Keep it sparse.

One soft thing, a feelings chart at child height, a few picture-led cards. An over-stuffed corner just becomes a toy box.

2 Practise it when everyone's calm.

If the only time a child meets the corner is mid-meltdown, it feels like a punishment. Visit it together at a happy moment first.

3 Never send a child there as a consequence.

Offer, don't order: "Would the cosy corner help right now?" Use it yourself, too, if the grown-ups use it, it isn't a punishment.

4 Let them own it.

Name it together and let them help set it up. Ownership makes it theirs, not a sin-bin.

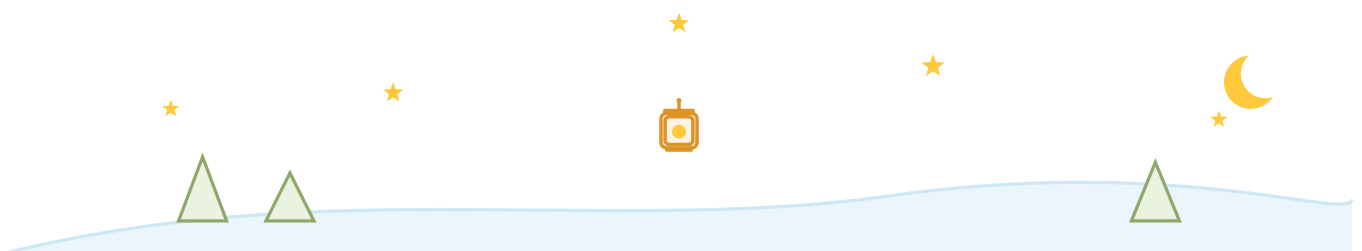
Grounded in current thinking on co-regulation: children learn to settle big feelings with a calm grown-up first, and on their own in time.

The ten-minute setup

1. Pick the spot, a quiet, low-traffic corner.
2. Add one soft thing, a cushion or beanbag and a soft toy.
3. Put the feelings chart (page 4) at child height.
4. Cut out the calm-down cards (page 3) into a little basket.
5. Name it together and practise one calm move while everyone's settled.

To introduce it: "This is our cosy corner. Anyone can come here when a feeling feels big. Let's try a breath together."

Every child and every room is different, keep what suits yours. These are gentle, screen-free calm ideas to use together, not medical, therapeutic, or behaviour advice.



Six calm-down cards

Print, cut, and pop them in your calm corner.

Picture-led ideas a child can reach for, read them together until they're familiar. Print on card and laminate for repeat use.



Belly Breaths

Hand on your tummy. Breathe in slowly... and out, even slower. Three times.



Count to Ten

Count slowly to ten. Whisper it, or count on your fingers.



A Sip of Water

Take one slow sip of water. Notice how cool it feels.



Look Out the Window

Find three things you can see outside. Tell me about one.



Squeeze & Soften

Squeeze your hands tight... then let them go soft. Like a slow hug.



Five Senses

Find 5 things you can see, 4 you can hear, 3 you can touch.

How big is my feeling?

A gentle way to notice a feeling, not a behaviour chart.

Every feeling is okay to have. This helps a child notice how big a feeling is, and what might gently help, point to it together.



A little feeling

a small wave, a bit cross, a bit wobbly

What might help: **a breath, or a sip of water**



A medium feeling

a bigger wave, harder to settle on your own

What might help: **the calm corner, count to ten**



A big feeling

a huge wave, that's okay, it always passes

What might help: **find a grown-up, breathe together**

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