

# Calming Activities to Decrease Energy Levels

When young people are entering the Club or Youth Center after school or early in the morning during summer, they can be full of energy. Also, when youth are in the gym or gamesroom before transitioning to lower-energy activities – such as homework time, arts or the computer lab – it can be challenging to calm down. Here are five quick and easy activities to decrease energy levels.

## Dim the Lights

1. Before youth enter the activity area, dim the lights or turn them off.
2. Speak to youth in a quiet, peaceful voice.
3. Entering a dark space will help children to relax, calm down and lower their energy levels.

## Musical Mindfulness

1. Before youth enter the activity area, play slow, relaxing music.
2. Instrumental music without lyrics and music with slow beats is best for calming young people and lowering energy levels.

## Yoga and Stretching

1. Simple yoga moves and stretching exercises lower energy levels.
2. It also increases mindfulness and helps youth relax as they enter an activity area.

## Deep Breathing

Follow this script for a mindful-awareness deep-breathing exercise:

1. “To begin, I want you to lie down on the floor. Rest your hands by your side, palms down. Lie very still and close your eyes.”
2. “I will count to help you know when to breathe in and out. When breathing in, fill your lungs completely – imagine filling a big balloon full of air. When breathing out, empty your lungs completely.”
3. “Inhale 1 – 2 – 3 and hold. Exhale 3 – 2 – 1 and hold.” (Repeat this multiple times.) “Relax, and notice only your breath. Let’s take one more deep breath, 1 – 2 – 3, hold it and now slowly exhale, 3 – 2 – 1. Now open your eyes and sit up slowly.”
4. “How do you feel? Are you relaxed and calm? If you are ever in a situation where you start to feel frustrated, tense or upset, you can use this breathing exercise to help you become calm.”

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### **Body Scan**

- 1.** Prompt youth to sit comfortably in their chairs.
- 2.** Tell them to think about how each body part feels, starting with their toes and moving slowly toward their heads. Tell them to think how heavy it feels, how it pulses or moves, and how warm or cold it is.
- 3.** Prompt youth to take deep, rhythmic breaths and do their best to clear their minds – they can close their eyes if they wish.
- 4.** Once a few minutes have passed and everyone has had time to go through each body part, end the exercise by saying: “Notice the feeling of being connected to your body. Take comfort in this moment. A body scan can help manage stress and bring awareness to your body. This is something you can easily do at your desk at school without drawing attention to yourself if you ever need a moment to relax.”

DO

