

# Breathing Buddies

**Short description of activity:** Each child has a stuffed animal on their tummy for this breathing exercise.

**Type of activity:** Mindfulness and Self-regulation

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** K through 6th

**Subject Area:** NA

**Materials:**

- Floor space
- Favorite stuffed animals (hands can work as well)

**Set up:**

1. Find a spot on the floor for each child.
2. Have each child place a stuffed animal (or hands) on their belly

**Play:**

1. Ask children to lie comfortably and place their hands or their animal on their bellies.
2. Teacher counts to three and children inhale deeply through their noses.
  - a. Tell the children to fill their bellies with air as they inhale; their belly should get bigger and bigger as you count to three. If you are using stuffed animals, they may see it rise as their belly fills with air.
3. Tell students to exhale slowly as you count to four.
  - a. Tell the children that they might notice their belly shrinking as they let their breath out slowly.
4. Do five to ten rounds of belly-breathing to get started.
5. It can be helpful to ask children how they feel.
  - a. Is there a difference in how you feel?
  - b. What did you notice about the stuffed animal or your hands and you inhaled and exhaled?
  - c. How did it feel to let your breath out?

**Variations:**

- Soothing music can help keep children calm during this exercise
- Younger children may benefit from being told that their stuffed animal needs to be rocked to sleep.
- For children who struggle to focus, you can tell them to silently say “up/in” each time they breath in and “down/out” each time they breathe out.

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, K, Kindergarten