

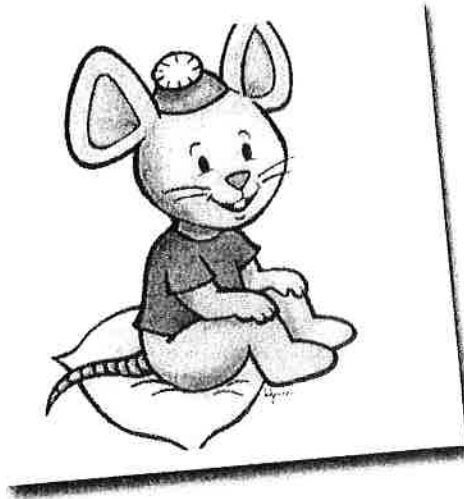
Messages to parents

WORKSHOP ||

Stopping to calm down

Today I played “Samuel’s boat” with *Minipally*. I was an animal that moved around a lot and got very excited by the rain. But I was able to calm down so that I could go on Samuel’s boat. I had to walk slowly, talk softly, and stay seated.

Minipally gave me this picture of himself because he was happy to see that I was able to calm down.



It’s not always easy for me to be CALM. Sometimes, I don’t even know that I am excited, when my little heart is beating fast and my little motor is accelerating. I need you to show me what I have to do to calm down. Should I sit down or walk or talk quietly or stop completely? I have to practise these ways of being calm so that it becomes easier and easier for me. I like it when we play “fast and slow” in the park (run – stop – walk – stop).

I notice that I am able to move less to calm down, but I still have trouble stopping my shouting. Congratulate me for these efforts: with your help, I will learn how to calm down.



Minipally

Suggestions for parents

Workshop 11: Stopping to calm down

My child is learning to recognize when he is excited or calm. He recognizes that it's hard to switch from being excited to being calm. He is discovering how he can stop himself and slow down.

- At mealtime, I place candles on the table and tell my child it's like we're at a restaurant. We speak "secretly," softly. I congratulate my child for talking in a low voice.*
- When watching a movie at home, I pretend we're at the cinema, with popcorn and the lights off. My child speaks softly like at the cinema, and stays seated calmly. I draw attention to his efforts: "Very good, you're able to stay calm until the Lion King"*
- When I cradle my child or take him gently in my arms, I mention how nice it feels to stay like that, quietly together. I invite him to breathe slowly or to sing softly with me. I congratulate my child.*
- When visiting the library, I encourage my child to practise his self-control (quiet voice, walking, etc.).*
- If my child likes music or dancing, I point out slow and fast rhythms and how he is able to slow down his movements when the music has a slower beat.
- The parent helps the child become aware that stopping when it is dangerous shows that he is getting big and more able to do things on his own.
- After a period of intense activity, the parent sits down in the living-room and tells his child that it's nice to stop and have a bit of quiet time, that it feels good.

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Minipally

Suggestions for parents

Workshop 11: Stopping to calm down (cont'd)

- I point out to my child that when he is running and then falls or bumps into something or someone, it means it's time to slow his "little motor" down. He is the one driving the "car" and who controls how fast or slow it goes.
- Help your children discover that they are in control of their body and that they are able to stop when they decide. When they run, show them that their heart is beating fast, that their legs are running, that their voice is shouting, that their breathing is fast: "You're excited." Back at home, congratulate them: "You were able to slow your little motor down. You are walking slowly and talking softly. Bravo, I see that you are able to calm down." Propose activities that alternate movement and calmness: the car game where they have to go on green, slow down on yellow, and stop on red; or the statue game, where the children move or dance and then turn into statues when you give the signal. Don't forget to congratulate them: "Well done, you were able to stop."**

* Translated from Sylvie Bourcier, *L'agressivité chez l'enfant de 0 à 5 ans*. Montreal: Éditions du CHU Sainte-Justine, 2008.

** Translated from Sylvie Bourcier, *Comprendre et guider le jeune enfant à la maison, à la garderie*. Montreal: Éditions du CHU Sainte-Justine, 2004.