



# THE Calming Corner:

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR  
SELF REGULATION

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Presented by:

HARMONY MENTAL HEALTH, INC.

You can see many smiles every day



But you can never know whose  
world is actually upside down

# A CALMING CORNER IS...

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- A PREVENTION TOOL
- A SAFE AND SOOTHING AREA OF A ROOM
- USED BY CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY COPING WITH STRONG EMOTIONS
- AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN TO SELF-REGULATE



CALMING CORNER IS NOT...

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A FORM OF DISCIPLINE OR  
PUNISHMENT



"Children need  
models rather than  
critics."

– Joseph Joubert, French moralist



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# WHO NEEDS THE CALMING CORNER?

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- The Trauma Exposed Child
- The Anxious Child
- The Depressed Child
- The Angry Child
- The ADHD Child
- Any Child- Anytime!



# ASSUMPTIVE WORLDVIEW

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- People generally believe that the world is a reasonably safe, predictable, benevolent, and meaningful place
- *This set of beliefs is at the **CORE** of our fundamental assumptions about who we are*



# THE TRAUMA EXPOSED CHILD

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- A traumatic experience can affect a child's basic beliefs about the world as a predictable and safe place.
- One of the cornerstones in recovery from trauma is reestablishment of safety, connectedness, and the shattered schema of a worldview



# THE TRAUMA EXPOSED CHILD

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- Human-induced victimization is particularly harmful for maintaining the healthy worldview
- Injury makes vulnerable children motivated to withdraw from the source of the hurt
- We generally assume negative relations between victim of a traumatic experience and the party responsible for the injury
- What does that look like when the hurt is at home?



# Anxiety

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The inability  
to regulate  
fear



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# THE ANXIOUS CHILD

- Worldview of the anxious child:
  - Views the world as UNSAFE
  - People are untrustworthy
  - Child feels inadequate
- Anxious children scan their environment for evidence that supports this view
- Anxiety is the most common mental health problem in children
- Less than one third of children with anxiety disorders seek treatment



# Depression

The inability  
to regulate  
mood



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# THE DEPRESSED CHILD

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- Worldview of the depressed child:
  - Views the world as pessimistic
  - Acutely sensitive to negative comments or events
  - Expectation: nothing good will happen
  - Lack joy
- Note: Can start as early as age 3



# THE ANGRY CHILD

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- Worldview of the angry child:
  - Justice view of the world
  - Views the WORLD as UNFAIR
  - People are untrustworthy
  - Fight to restore the balance
  - Even the score/regain a sense of control



# THE AUTISM SPECTRUM CHILD

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- Worldview of ASD Children:
  - organize their worldview around their *sensory-seeking* routines and their *sensory sensitivities*
- Use of sensory toys helps child quickly associate the Teacher with comfort instead of stress
- Use of sensory toys helps child to show you their capacity for communication and connection
- Take time to find the passion of the ASC child and use that passion to reach and teach (numbers, computers, etc.)



Preparation for  
Learning:

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Getting to know  
your kids



Let them know you...

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Share your struggles  
and your overcoming  
of them. If you can  
do it, so can they...



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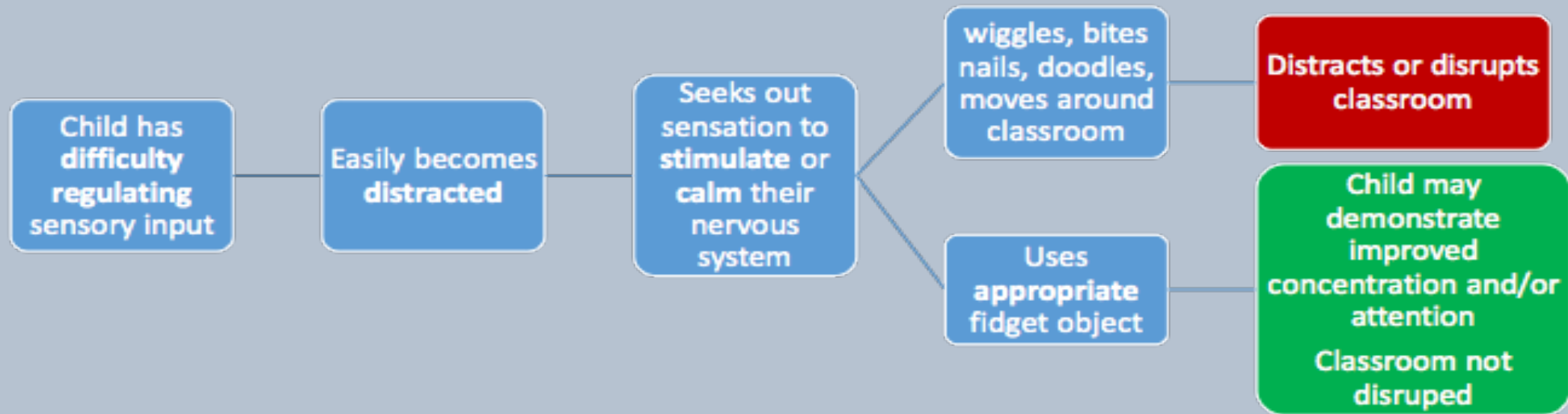
**"TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO  
CONTROL THEMSELVES IS MORE  
EFFECTIVE THAN TRYING TO  
CONTROL OUR CHILDREN"—**UNKNOWN

- Model, don't manipulate
- Lead, don't intimidate
- Support, don't shame
- Encourage, don't threaten
- Guide, don't punish
- Listen, don't lecture

-L.R.Knost



# TIPS ON FIDGETS



## Who needs them?

Most children can be fidgety at one time or another, but kids with ADHD, autism and sensory integration disorder are particularly prone to be distracted in this way.

## What makes a good fidget toy?

A good fidget toy is one that is both effective at helping the student to concentrate and can easily fit into a classroom environment. That means that it needs to be:

- Safe
- Small
- Quiet
- Inexpensive
- Able to be used without distracting others

## Tips for Using Fidget Toys

- **Use them intermittently** to avoid desensitization to the sensory benefit of the object.
- **Try toys with a variety of surfaces.** Lumpy, squishy, different materials, moving parts...
- **If they're likely to lose it...** attach the toy to a ribbon and let them wear it as a bracelet or necklace. You could also attach a retractable cord and clip it to their belt, so they can easily access it when they need to.

**Teach children that fidgets are a privilege, and if they are used as new devices to disrupts and distract classroom the privilege can be revoked.**

# Exercise: Create a Safe Space

**1) Begin class discussion:** *"Let's talk about places where we feel safe and happy?"* (Ex: beach, lake, playground, garden, mountains, farm, etc..)

**2) Give children a large index card**

*"Now let's create a drawing (or any other form of art) of that place. It can be a real place or an imaginary place."*

**3) Collect cards and explain:**

*"You can get your safe space card whenever you need it and you can take it with you to the calming corner."*



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# In my own little corner...

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- Encourage use, don't demand or command!

DO:

"James remember the calming corner is there if you need it"

DON'T:

"James you need to calm down, go to the corner?"



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# How to Create A Calming Corner

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- Safe – Within teacher's view
- Separate from rest of class
- Soothing (Do Not Overstimulate)
- Positive messages
- Positive images
- Child specific interventions



# Each corner should have:

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- Some type of privacy screen from other students but visible to teachers (Screen, Shower curtain, bookcase or file cabinet, teepee with flap open to teacher, etc.)
- Sound Machine with Soothing sounds, headphones
- Bean bag chair, pillow, or Sensory Mat
- Child specific interventions: fidgets, weighted blanket, safe space drawing, etc.

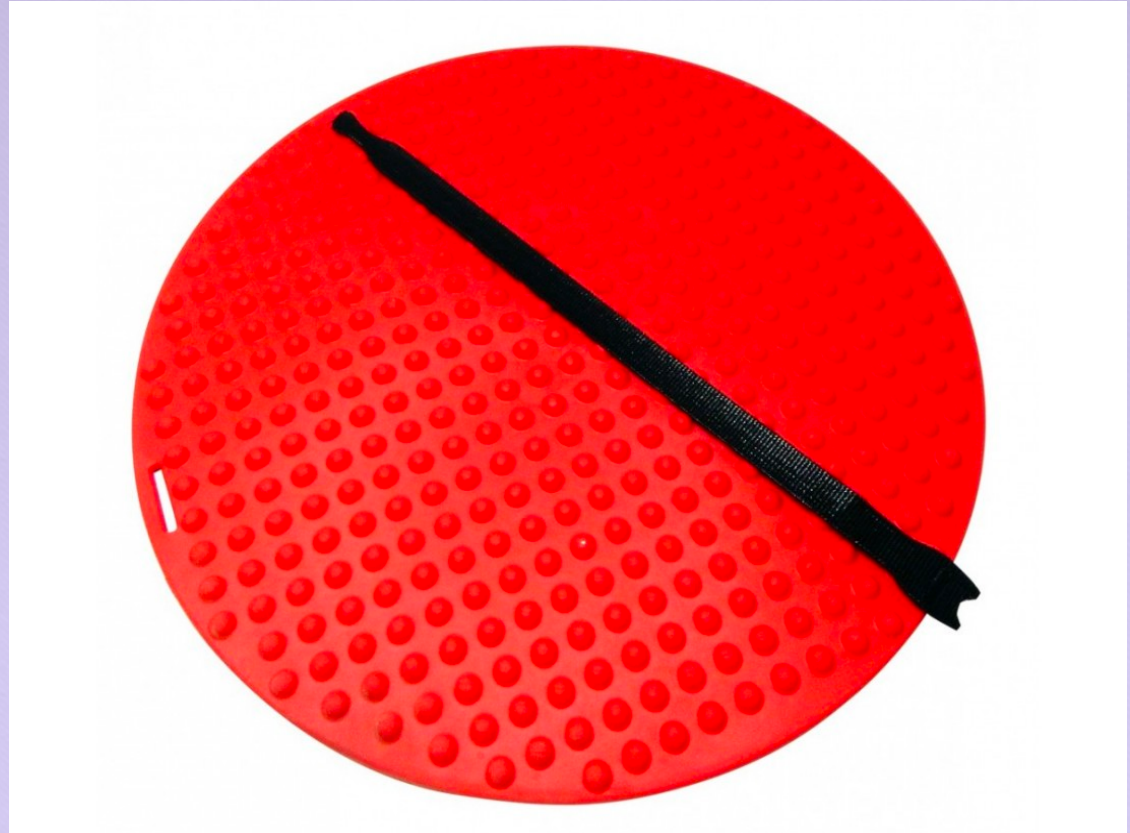


# Sensory Mats

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Helps with spatial awareness.

Red mat covered in small raised knobs for increasing concentration



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# Relax and Focus Sound Machine

## Soothing sounds:

- tropical forest
- rainfall
- Songbirds
- ocean waves
- rainforest
- white noise
- running stream
- summer night





# Sand Tray

Sand play therapy allows children to express their worldview via images and stories in the sand.



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# PERSONAL FIDGETS & SENSORY TOYS

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# Other aides available to you

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See your school nurse to access these aides



# Sound Oasis Therapy Pillow

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Sounds:

heartbeat, rainforest,  
falling rain, songbirds,  
ocean waves, thunderstorm,  
running stream, summer  
night, train and white noise



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# YOGA MATS

Yoga helps kids to:

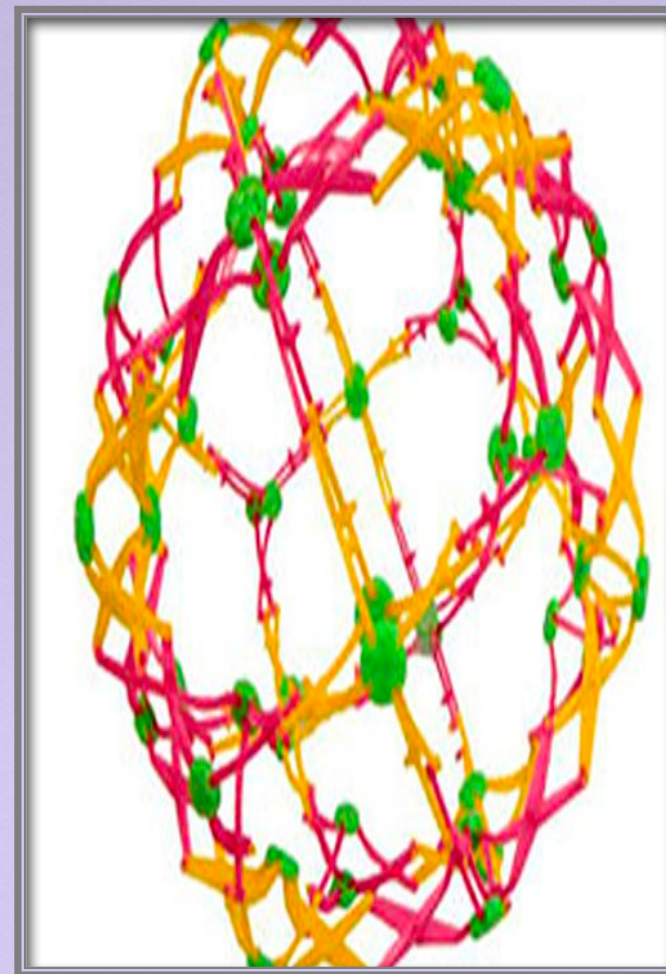
- ✓ Develop body awareness.
- ✓ Learn how to use their bodies in a healthy way.
- ✓ Manage stress through breathing, awareness, meditation and healthy movement.
- ✓ Build concentration.
- ✓ Increase their confidence and positive self-image.
- ✓ Feel part of a healthy, non-competitive group.





# Mini Sphere Starbright

provides stress relief



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# EXAMPLE: CALMING CORNER



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"Each day of our lives we  
make deposits in the  
memory banks of our  
children."

— Charles R. Swindoll, Evangelical  
Christian pastor