

Belly Breathing

Ages 2+

5 min

No supplies

THE WHY

When we take slow breaths like this, it tells our body it's okay to relax. It's like a reset button you can use anytime you have a big feeling: mad, scared, excited, anything.

Ask them why they think it matters too. Their answer might surprise you, and it's worth jotting down below in The Notice.

THE PLAY

Have your kid put both hands on their belly. Ask them to breathe in slowly through the nose until their belly pushes their hands out like a balloon filling up, then breathe out slowly until it flattens again. Do 5 to 6 rounds together, out loud, so they can copy your pace. If they get distracted or giggly, that's fine. Turn it into a game of "whose balloon can get biggest."

THE CONVERSATION

- What did that feel like in your belly?
- Did it feel different than your normal breathing?
- Can you think of a time you could use this? Before a big feeling, before bed, before something scary.

THE NOTICE

Jot down anything you noticed. Funny moments, good insights, or something worth telling the parent or nanny who wasn't there. If you're the nanny, this is the line the parents will want to read when they get home.

Why it works: breathwork is one of the most direct ways to teach self-regulation. It gives a kid something physical to do with a big feeling, instead of just being told to "calm down." Practiced enough in calm moments, it becomes a tool they can reach for in hard ones.

Paulette

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