

Squeeze Your Stress Away

Feelings of stress can leave you feeling anxious and tense. Research shows that when encouraged and used correctly, the simple act of repeating the grip and relax motion of squeezing the stress ball can help release hyperactive energy and might even help with focus. This tells us that this release of energy and increase in focus may help reduce excess stress or hyperactivity that could lead to correction or negative responses from others. This activity will teach participants a fun way to make a stress ball and will introduce one way to use it.

Social Emotional Learning

Competency:

- Self-Management

Purpose:

- Learn to manage stress and anxiety with simple exercise

Materials

- Two 12-inch balloons per child
- Scissors
- Funnels
- Filler for stress ball: such as sand, flour, cornstarch, rice, soybeans.

Use group size to determine amount of materials needed.

Success Indicators

- Participants will learn to combine deep breathing with simple hand exercises to relieve stress

Recommended Group Size: 15-20

Est. Time: 15-30 minutes

Recommended age: 6-9

For more information and activity resources visit ohio4h.org

Preparation

Gather supplies for each participant - f using latex balloons, be sure to check for those who might be allergic.

Activity Description

1. Give each participant two 12" balloons. Blow up one balloon and deflate it to make it easier to fill.
2. Stretch the end of the balloon over the end of a funnel.
3. Carefully pour the filler into the funnel. If necessary, use a pencil to poke the filler through the bottom of the funnel. The filler should not be sharp as it will poke through the balloon.
4. Once you have the balloon filled to the desired size, tie a tight knot in the end of the balloon. Snip off the end of the balloon above the knot.
5. For extra protection, stretch the second balloon over the knotted end of the balloon. Tie the end in a knot.
6. Gently squeeze the stress ball and breathe normally to help reduce stress.

Resources

<https://inside.ewu.edu/managementtoolbox/fidget-spinners-and-stress-balls-used-correctly/#:~:text=They%20help%20children%20release%20pinned,to%20need%20the%20Corrective%20Phase.>

