

Date:



## Communicating for learning

The way we communicate with children can really make a difference to their learning. Try some of these things:

- Give your child clear guidelines and rules about your expectations for his behavior.
- Use hints and cues to prompt him to figure things out for himself. For example, ask "What do you think we need to do?"
- Make sure you give him feedback about what he did well in addition to what he could improve
- Avoid telling him what to do whenever possible. Prompt him to think for himself by asking him, "What do you need to do?"

## Dear Parents:

We've moved on to work on breath control. Your child is learning to breath in and out quickly and slowly and do normal breathing. We're doing this as part of Behavioral Self-Regulation but it is just a start.

Over the next weeks, we will use what we call "turtle breathing" (slow breathing) to help your child calm himself. Breathing in and out calmly can really help anyone take that moment to relax. It can help you calm yourself and focus your attention better. This is what your child is learning.

### Practicing breathing

Practice doing some breathing with your child. Use the attached pictures to help him use different speeds. Let him choose the speed some of the time. It's best to do breathing practice when you can find a calm, quiet few minutes.

After your child does some breathing practice with you, ask him how he did. We want him to learn how to judge for himself. Ask, "Did you do the breathing okay?" Give him your honest feedback. For example, you could say "It was pretty good but I think your breathing could be better." or "you are right, your breathing was really great!"

### Using turtle breathing in everyday life

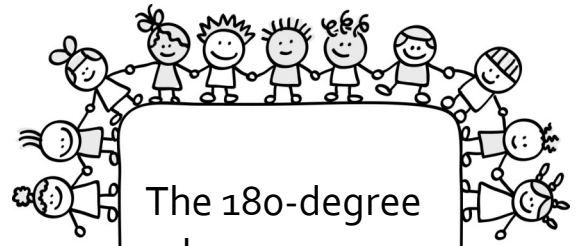
It's time for your child to learn when and where to use his breathing control skills. When should use his turtle breathing? Think of some times and places where your child could be calmer and more focused.

We need to help him know when turtle breathing is appropriate. That way, he can figure out when he needs to calm and center himself and use his turtle breathing. In order to begin working on this, we need to know what is important for your child and your family.

Think about situations **at home**. When should your child calm himself? For example, you may want your child to stay calm while waiting for something to happen. Now think about when your child is out **in the community**. Add as many ideas as you want to the form below. Once you have written in at least a few ideas in each column, please send it back to us so we can start working on these things.

**How I want my child to control his breathing in these places so he can be calmer and more focused:** (carefully describe the situation and what you would like to see your child do)

At home	In the community



## The 180-degree rule

There are times when you feel angry or frustrated with your child. One way to help yourself stay calm is to use the 180-degree rule. This means that you have to turn your feelings and thoughts around to the opposite direction. You turn your negatives into positives and your "stop that" into "you can do this". For example, you want your child to stop running around. Instead of saying, "Stop running", you calm yourself and say, "We walk in the house". Instead of saying, "Don't grab your sister's toy.", try "We use gentle hands with our toys."

Using the 180-degree rule is not easy. You'll notice, though, it makes you think differently. This can help you feel calmer and less worked up about his behavior.

