

60 Seconds!

Immediately After a Lockdown: 4 Super-Quick Steps to Help Kids

Especially
For Teachers!

Lockdowns (even just practice drills) can be scary & stressful—for kids and adults

1st Step: Know This

Lockdowns are scary experiences that our bodies respond to with a flood of stress hormones. To process these hormones, our bodies need to move, but in a lockdown, you have to stay still and silent. It can be traumatic to experience something scary when you can't move. Immediately afterwards, movement & connection help the body process, re-regulate, and avoid trauma.

3rd Step: Move & Express

Even if you only have 60 seconds, you can still help kids process some of their stress hormones.

- If you have a class chant or a cheer, do it a few times. Rhythm & repetition can be regulating.
- Have kids stand up, stretch high, stretch left, stretch right, touch their toes, twist, and shake it off/out.
- Blow raspberries and make exaggerated faces.
- Make noise! Give them permission to be loud, laugh or exclaim things. Stomp those feet. Release energy.
- Exclaim “That was scary, huh!” and later “It’s over now, I’m right here, and we are safe.”

2nd Step: Self-Care

Remember to put the oxygen mask on yourself first!

- This is awful for you, too.
- Take a couple of deep breaths, roll your shoulders, stretch and move.
- Plan to take extra care of yourself tonight.
- Keep an eye on your ongoing stress levels. Seek help, support, love.

4th Step: Connect & Calm

After the kids have expressed a little of their energy, if you have more time, you can help them re-center and calm.

- Try some breathing techniques: “Smell the hot chocolate then blow on it to cool.”
- Ask them to look around the room and see 3 blue things, hear 2 background noises, and touch 1 soft thing. Connecting w/ sensory experiences is calming.
- If it’s permissible and safe, get outside and connect to nature. Extra recess time, or visit the class/school pet or garden. Nature is calming and regulating.
- Some kids will appreciate eye contact, connection, or big strong hugs. Or, have them wrap their arms around themselves, squeeze, and rock gently.



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