

## Two-minute relaxation tips for parent-carers

- This is a two-minute exercise that can really be broken into two x one-minute exercises depending on how much time you can give yourself
- When we are running around working and looking after everyone else you will always find the next thing to do. It can be really difficult to stop and take time out for yourself.
- Research suggests that even little pauses in your day can make a big difference.
- Print out this script and set your alarm to ping and remind you through the day.
- When your alarm pings –stop what you are doing, take a moment to yourself and follow either the whole script or just part 1 –“breathing” or part 2 –“5-4-3-2-1”

### Part 1 – breathing

- 10 deep breathes – simple as it sounds but research suggests that the small act of taking 10 deep breathes (down into your belly) – drawing it in slowly and letting it out slowly – can be enough to activate your parasympathetic nervous symptom – in ordinary terms, this means releasing your relaxation hormones that allow your body a break from stress/arousal hormones that become active when you are running around the place.
- Put one hand on your belly, as you breath in and out slowly notice your hand rise and fall
- So breath in (count to 3), hold (count to 3), and out (count to 3), and keeping going slowly and gently. If you forget your number or your mind drifts, its ok just come back to breathing.

### Part 2 - 5-4-3-2-1

- **5:** Acknowledge **FIVE** things you see around you. It could be a pen, a spot on the ceiling, anything in your surroundings.
- **4:** Acknowledge **FOUR** things you can touch around you. It could be your hair, a pillow, or the ground under your feet.
- **3:** Acknowledge **THREE** things you hear. This could be any external sound. If you can hear your belly rumbling that counts! Focus on things you can hear outside of your body.
- **2:** Acknowledge **TWO** things you can smell. Maybe you are in your office and smell pencil, or maybe you are in your bedroom and smell a pillow. If you need to take a brief walk to find a scent you could smell soap in your bathroom, or nature outside.
- **1:** Acknowledge **ONE** thing you can taste. What does the inside of your mouth taste like—gum, coffee, or the sandwich from lunch?