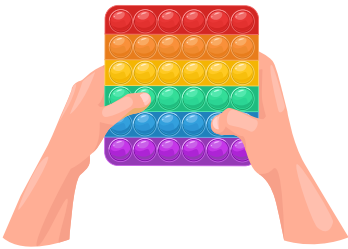


# Managing sensory overload

Sometimes I am in places that are very loud, bright, or crowded. This might happen at a busy store, a noisy playground, or during a family gathering. When there are too many sounds, lights, or people, I might feel upset, worried, or like I need to get away. These feelings are okay.



When I start to feel overwhelmed, I can try some things that help me feel calmer. Maybe I can cover my ears or wear headphones if it's too loud. If it's too bright, I can close my eyes for a moment or wear sunglasses. If I can, I can ask an adult if we can find a quieter spot, like a hallway or a corner away from noise.



I can also use my breath to help calm down: I can take a slow, deep breath in through my nose, and slowly blow it out through my mouth. I might count to 5 as I breathe in and out. Doing this a few times can help my body feel calmer.

If possible, I can bring along something comforting, like a soft toy, a fidget, or headphones that play gentle music. Having these tools can make me feel safer and more in control.

It's okay to ask for a break if I need one. It's okay to tell a trusted adult, "It's too loud. Can I go somewhere quieter?" Taking care of myself when I feel too much noise, light, or movement around me is a good thing. Over time, I'll know more and more ways to feel calm and comfortable.