

Supporting Positive Behaviour – Safe Spaces

What is a safe space?

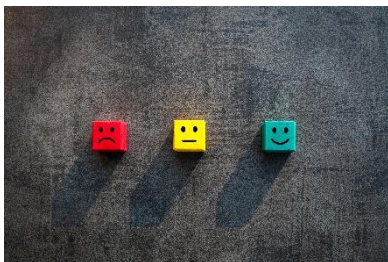
Safe spaces can support children when they are having a difficult time managing their emotions and behaviour. Examples of this may include tantrums, lashing out, screaming, and shouting. A safe and calming space can provide a child with the appropriate environment to regulate their emotions – free from distraction, with or without the support of an adult.

How can I create a safe space/ calm area?

A safe space does not need to be anything fancy – a simple blanket placed over a table, which a child can climb underneath may be all it takes to provide a low stimulation and distraction free area for a child in your care.

Other ways to provide this space could include:

- Pop-up tents.
- Large cardboard boxes
- A quiet corner of a room with a blanket and soft furnishings
- Under cabin bed space
- Converting a pantry or under stairs space or behind a sofa.



What could I include in a safe space?

- ✓ Blankets
- ✓ Cushions
- ✓ Soft Toys
- ✓ Fidget Toys
- ✓ Beanbags
- ✓ Fairy Lights
- ✓ Chewelry
- ✓ Armchair
- ✓ Stories about emotions such as the Colour Monster, The Lion Inside, Ruby's Worry.

How can I utilise a safe space?

A safe space is not a place for “time out” and children should not be instructed to go to their safe space. Instead, a child should choose to go to the area to calm when upset or distressed. It may take time for a child to develop understanding of this so an adult could demonstrate, invite, or guide the child to the space.

When using the safe space this is a good opportunity to discuss feelings and emotions. The adult in the situation may wish to identify the child's emotion and talk about reasons for this emotion - this is known as emotion coaching. An example of this may be, “I can see that you are angry, and I think that is because you did not want to share your toy”. This then opens up a time for discussion with the child.

Examples of safe spaces shared by other parents:

