

Progressive muscle relaxation is a technique that involves tensing specific muscle groups and then relaxing them to create awareness of tension and relaxation. Relaxation can also be used to develop self-control by learning to make a relaxation response in place of maladaptive behaviours during stressful situations.

This script has been adapted for the pupils at Endeavour Academy.

### **How long does it take?**

Relaxation for children with autism should last between 10-20 minutes, or for as long as the child can manage.

This can be adapted to suit the student, and it may be appropriate to build up time, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> session - 5 minutes, 4<sup>th</sup> session -10 minutes etc.

### **How many times should it be done?**

Relaxation sessions should be regular for maximum effectiveness, the recommended minimum would be twice weekly, and should be continued for as long it is beneficial to the student.

### **What do you need?**

You will need 2 sponge or squishes balls, one for the student and one for you to model.

Use an environment with minimal distractions, e.g. soft play room.

### **What to do**

You will work through 6 stages of relaxation to relax the whole body. You should instruct and model each stage and complete the exercise together.

Talking should be discouraged as to not overexcite or distract from the task.

Relaxing music is recommended during the sessions.

### **Script:**

To be used as guidance until the instructor is familiar with the stages, and can be used WITH the visual script for the child to look at. Adapt as necessary e.g. counting aloud if this benefits the child.

START WITH DEEP PRESSURE WITH GYM BALL

### Hands

Squeeze the ball in your right hand (instructor to count to 5) ..and relax (repeat X3)

Squeeze the ball in your left hand (instructor to count to 5) ..and relax (repeat X3)

### Shoulders

Squeeze the ball between your right cheek and shoulder (instructor to count to 5) and relax (repeat X3)

Squeeze the ball between your left cheek and shoulder (instructor to count to 5) and relax (repeat X3)

### Monster face

Make a face like a monster (instructor to count to 5) and relax (repeat X3)

### Knees

Squeeze the ball between your knees (instructor to count to 5) and relax (repeat X3)

### Deep breathing

Take a big slow breath in (hold for a second) and relax (repeat X3)

### Deep pressure to finish

Apply deep pressure to back using a peanut ball on a soft surface.

AND/OR

### Laying down to finish

Lay on your back and close your eyes (approx 3 minutes, use sand timer if needed)