

Simple, science-backed ways to help your child reset, regulate, and refocus

10 Brain Breaks That Help Kids Refocus in Under 3 Minutes

From the team at Tricky Brains

Introduction

When children lose focus, it is not always about effort. Often, their brain is overloaded. After a full day of learning, sitting still, and following instructions, the brain can become tired. When this happens, children may:

- Avoid tasks
- Get frustrated quickly
- Become silly or restless
- Struggle to concentrate

The solution is not always more pressure. **Sometimes, the brain just needs a reset.** These short brain breaks help children regulate, refocus, and return to learning with more ease.

Each activity takes less than three minutes and requires no equipment.

1. Cross Body Taps

Tap your right hand to your left knee. Then switch sides.

Continue slowly for one minute.

Why it works

This helps both sides of the brain communicate and improves coordination and focus.

2. Wall Push

Place both hands on a wall and push firmly for ten seconds. Rest, then repeat.

Why it works

Activates large muscles and helps calm the nervous system.

3. Star Jumps Reset

Do 10 to 20 star jumps at a steady pace.

Why it works

Increases blood flow and wakes up the brain.

4. Balloon Breathing

Breathe in slowly through the nose. Pretend to blow up a balloon as you breathe out slowly through the mouth.

Repeat five times.

Why it works

Slows the body down and reduces stress.

5. Shake and Freeze

Shake your whole body like a jelly for ten seconds. Then freeze like a statue.

Repeat 3 to 5 times.

Why it works

Releases tension and improves body awareness.

6. Animal Walks

Choose an animal and move like it.

Bear walk, crab walk, or frog jumps.

Do this for one minute.

Why it works

Builds strength and engages the brain through movement.

7. Five Senses Grounding

Ask your child to name:

- 5 things they can see
- 4 things they can feel
- 3 things they can hear
- 2 things they can smell
- 1 thing they can taste

Why it works

Helps bring attention back to the present moment and calm overwhelm.

8. Balance Challenge

Stand on one foot for ten seconds. Switch sides.

Make it harder by closing eyes or counting backwards.

Why it works

Improves focus and body control.

9. Memory Clap Game

Clap a simple pattern. Ask your child to copy it.

Make the pattern longer each round.

Why it works

Builds memory and listening skills.

10. Quiet Body Reset

Sit still. Close eyes. Take five slow breaths.

Focus only on breathing.

Why it works

Helps the brain reset and prepare for focus.

How to Use These Brain Breaks

Use these when your child:

- Is losing focus
- Feels frustrated
- Is avoiding work
- Needs a reset between tasks

You don't even need to use all ten.

Even one short break can make a big difference.

Final Thought

Children learn best when their brain feels safe, calm, and ready.

Small changes can have a big impact.

Try one brain break today and notice what shifts.

From the team at Tricky Brains

Helping children build confident, calm and curious minds.