

Notes From The Webinar:

## BRAINCALM™ SENSORY BREAKS FOR SNAS & CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS.

The Braincalm™ Ladder:

Blues & Reds at the 'Top' of the ladder

Black Cloud (sad) & Yellows at the bottom of the ladder

Half way down the ladder: **GREEN LINE= 'Calm, focused, attentive, able to learn'**

1. **Red behaviours (Seeking/hugger/chronic fidgeter) - settle these DOWN to the GREEN LINE**
  2. **Blue HYPER/OVER SENSITIVE behaviours – 'calm down' to the green line**
  3. **Yellow 'sloth like' behaviours: bring UP to the green line (need to awaken/alert)**
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The angry child/ class clown..... what you SEE in the classroom.....poor behaviour.....



How the child REALLY feels inside.....scared, low self esteem, 'I don't want to look stupid in front of my friends.....'I don't feel good in myself' .....



**PLEASE BE A CHAMPION FOR THE CHILD WITH 'SGO' SOMETHING GOING ON!  
YOU MAY BE THE SAVIOUR OF THAT CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH IN THE  
FUTURE!**

**If a child gains SELF ESTEEM first....everything else WILL follow.**

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**Q: What's the difference between a sensory break & a movement break?**

**A: Movement break- needed by all adults & children every 45 mins!  
Otherwise brain is 'overloaded' & cannot pay attention!**

**A 'sensory break'- a TARGETED break for a child (or adult) with sensory  
issues- the activities or exercises will help regulate the senses.**

**\*\* You MUST give the CORRECT SENSORY BREAK to the child otherwise  
he/she will go back into the classroom without gaining the relief they need!**

- 1) Red activities/exercises- will 'settle' red seeking/chronic fidgeting  
behaviours      FEED THE CRAVING to settle the child**
  
  - 2) Blue activities/exercises- will 'calm' blue hyper/over sensitive  
behaviours      REMOVE THE CHILD FROM OVERWHELMING  
SENSATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM & CALM DOWN ALL OF THE SENSES**
  
  - 3) Yellow activities/exercises- will 'lift' or awaken' low arousal 'sloth like'  
behaviours      GIVE A 'WHOO WHOO' BRAIN AWAKENING LIFT to  
boost attention for learning**
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## How many sensory breaks will an SGO child need?

### Rule of thumb:

1. Mildly dysregulated.....a little 'quirky' & a little 'out of synch'  
This child will POSSIBLY get their RELIEF from play before school starts, little break & big break.
2. Moderately dysregulated- occasionally disruptive (or opposite- often quiet, anxious, maybe 'low' arousal)  
Struggles to learn, pay attention at times.....this child will need 3 or 4 sensory breaks to 'bring him/her' BACK TO THE GREEN LINE for better learning.  
*\*\* Please note: little breaktime & lunchtime DO NOT count as sensory breaks! For a blue or red child- breaktimes may actually make the child's sensory systems worse!*
3. Severely dysregulated-
  - constantly talking out of turn,
  - constantly fidgeting/moving/squirming,
  - very disruptive (\*\* please remember- not the child's fault!)
  - really struggles to keep attention on a task,
  - may be in a mainstream classroom or may be in a small ASD/special education classroom.

**\*\*\* This child may need a Braincalm™ Sensory Break- EVERY 20 TO 30 MINUTES.** If you THINK you are losing the attention/concentration battle with a child- then you are. Take him/her out for a sensory break instead, reset the 'brain button'.



**\*\*\* Make him/her a little 'green- I'm ok' & red 'I need a break' disc & tape it to the top of the child's desk so they can quietly point to let you know how they are.**

**\*\*\* Please don't forget to **ASK THE CHILD...**'what do you feel will help you?'**

**Think about SCHEDULING sensory breaks through the day for the very dysregulated child- to catch them BEFORE THEY GO 'OFF THE CLIFF EDGE'.**

**Example: Take a known 'red' behaviour dominant child for a red exercise**

1. Before lessons start to 'settle him down'
2. At 9.45am
3. Just before or just after little break (to reset his brain button)- do it before break if the child has a tendency to get into trouble or tends to 'bang crash' in the yard.
4. Just after lunch break (or before.....see above reason!)
5. 30 to 40 mins into class after lunch break.

**Consider taking more than one child out for a break..... give a 'sloth like child awakening activities- while the red child does wall press ups & a wall sit!**

**Or....take a 'blue anxious hypersensitive' child for a 'shutting down the senses' break while setting up the red exercises for the red behaviour child.**

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**How LONG should a sensory break be?**

**Generally 5 minutes to 10 minutes. But ask the child 'how do you feel now?'**

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## **Does a child need to have a diagnosis?**

No. Many of our SGO children don't – they may never have one. But they still need breaks! Just like you or I do when WE are tired or overwhelmed.

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## **What is the difference between BRAINCALM™ INTENSIVE & the 'Braincalm™ Sensory Breaks'?**

### **Braincalm™ Intensive (some of you know the original Braincalm™ Program) where children are taken**

- In groups of 3 to a separate room
- Taken through a series of A, B & C Braincalm™ exercises
- 5 days a week for 15 mins
- The exercises target specific areas of the brain
- Braincalm™ Intensive- 4 terms- 1 year program- 'rewires the brain'
- Goes "3 levels" deep into the brain
- Teaches the child HOW TO SELF REGULATE HIM/HERSELF
- Boosts attention, happiness, writing, sitting, decreases fidgeting

### **Braincalm™ Sensory Breaks:**

- Can be done in the hallway- just outside the classroom door- usually done 1 to 1 with the child
  - Possibly at the back of the classroom if enough room
  - Only go "1 level" deep into the brain & relief is only TEMPORARY
  - The child will need 3, 4 or more sensory breaks throughout the day to keep him 'in the learning zone'.
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## What equipment do I need to do Braincalm™ Sensory Breaks?

1. Yoga mat
2. Yoga/large therapy ball
3. Round wobble cushion (put one down at the back of every classroom along with a ball to 'throw & catch' to create a "Braincalm™" corner!
4. Selection of balls (soccer ball or beach ball for younger/tennis ball for older children)

Also really useful.....

Stretchy rubber therapy band (can buy in Argos, sports shops, Mr. Price)- older (red) children LOVE this

Buckets & big paint brushes- for outdoor 'red' activities

Chunky chalk- younger children love these

Tent/makeshift tent using sheets & a bookcase.....child's own pillow/eye mask/fleece blanket/old soft earphones (over the ear ones) for 'blue' sad/anxious/overloaded/hyper sensitive children.....

A huge nylon 'crash pad' (\*\* See Irish company 'Elephant')

**I will be offering further courses for SNAs & other school staff in the future...**

- 1) How to create a low cost sensory room/space
- 2) Helpers in the classroom for the sensory child (including how to create your own low cost sensory box)

