

Sensory safe spaces at home

Being in each other's company all the time is hard and your child may be having periods where they are feeling overwhelmed with everyone being at home or what's going in the world around them at the moment.

Having somewhere calming set up that they can go to help them may be useful.

Here are some ideas:

- Using a pop up tent or dark den is a great way of creating a space which they can shut themselves off from the world and everyone at this time. Tents such as these are available for home delivery from places such as Argos and Decathlon. Look for a black out option as these will help block out unnecessary light.
- If you can't get your hands on a tent then you can make a den or quiet space at home with sheets, bedding and chairs: • Set up the quiet space in your child's bedroom or a quieter part of the house where they are away from other people and household noises.
- Fill the den with blankets and cushions to make a sensory safe space where they can wrap themselves in the blankets if they want to.
- Turn the lights off or shut the curtains/blinds to reduce the amount of light stimulation in the tent/den.
- Your child may like some calming music to be played whilst they are using the den/tent. Consider things like classical music, white noise or other calming sounds. Remember though what may be calming to you may not be calming to them!
- Some children like fairy lights or light up toys and these can also be used if they are calming to your child.
- Having material in there with certain smells on can also be helpful for example parents perfume or aftershave, lavender. Experiment with different smells to see what works for your child.
- Spend time in the tent when your child is calm and not only when they are distressed or agitated. If they get used to using the tent or den when they are happy they are more likely to use it when they are distressed as a calming mechanism. Spend some time in there once/twice per day perhaps reading a story or listening to music.
- Your child may want to be in there alone or they may want you to join them so make the den big enough to accommodate an adult and child if needed!

