

Afternoon Meltdowns

Often times students with intellectual or development disabilities exhibiting meltdowns. These meltdowns are intense and seemingly uncontrollable fits of frustration displayed by the child.

Breakdowns usually occur in the afternoon due to prolonged exposure to stimuli for the child throughout the day.



How to stop an Afternoon Meltdown

When a child begins to have a breakdown, it is important for parents and caregivers to interact with the child as little as possible. Attempting to plead, argue, or discipline the child will typically make matters worse.

Safety of the child and others around them is the #1 priority!!!



The first step to stopping or soothing a meltdown is to isolate the child and get them into a safe environment.

- This can be done by removing other children
- Taking the child to a different location
- Redirecting focus in any way
- Reduce stimuli in the child's environment
- Inform the child of what actions you are going to be performing before attempting to help the child

After the Meltdown

Children will be more sensitive after a meltdown calling which requires a low stimulation environment to avoid continuation of the meltdown

To prevent these breakdowns in the future, the parent must help the child become aware of what triggers their meltdowns. It is also important to teach and encourage the use of coping mechanisms

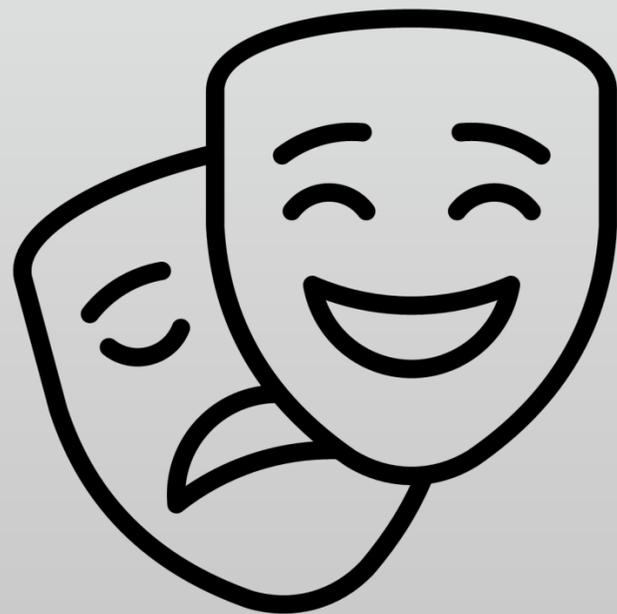


Some of the coping mechanisms that work best to stop meltdowns are:

- Breathing techniques
- Leaving the overstimulating environment
- Expressing emotions through creative outlets (Drawing, painting, etc.)
- Listening to soft music

Masking & Meltdowns

A common trigger for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities is the need to unmask or act like themselves.



Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will often try to hide their differences as a result of wanting to fit in or be seen as “normal”. In doing so, these individuals can become very frustrated, provoking a meltdown.

Children should be encouraged to display their true personalities and refrain from holding in emotions!