

# Child Development Team



This booklet aims to provide a brief understanding of tics and advice to support children and young people. Inside this booklet are ideas that are intended to be used as part of a 'toolkit'. Many suggestions within this booklet can be adapted to meet your child's needs.

# Contents page

2. Contents page
3. Everybody's brains are different and work in different ways...
4. Tic information.
5. What is a tic?
6. Tics.
7. What may cause and increase tics?
8. What can I do to help my tics?
9. What can I do to help my tics?
10. Suggestions to help support your child/ young person with their tics.
11. Tic attacks.
12. Reminder
13. When to seek support/advice.
14. Links and Resources.
15. Body map.
16. ABC chart.
17. Exercise ideas

Reference list-Some of this information is adapted/referenced from:

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS  
Tics - NHS -[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))

Tourette's Action - [www.tourettes-action.org.uk](http://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)

[www.ticktocktherapy.co.uk](http://www.ticktocktherapy.co.uk)



Everybody's brains are different and work in different ways...



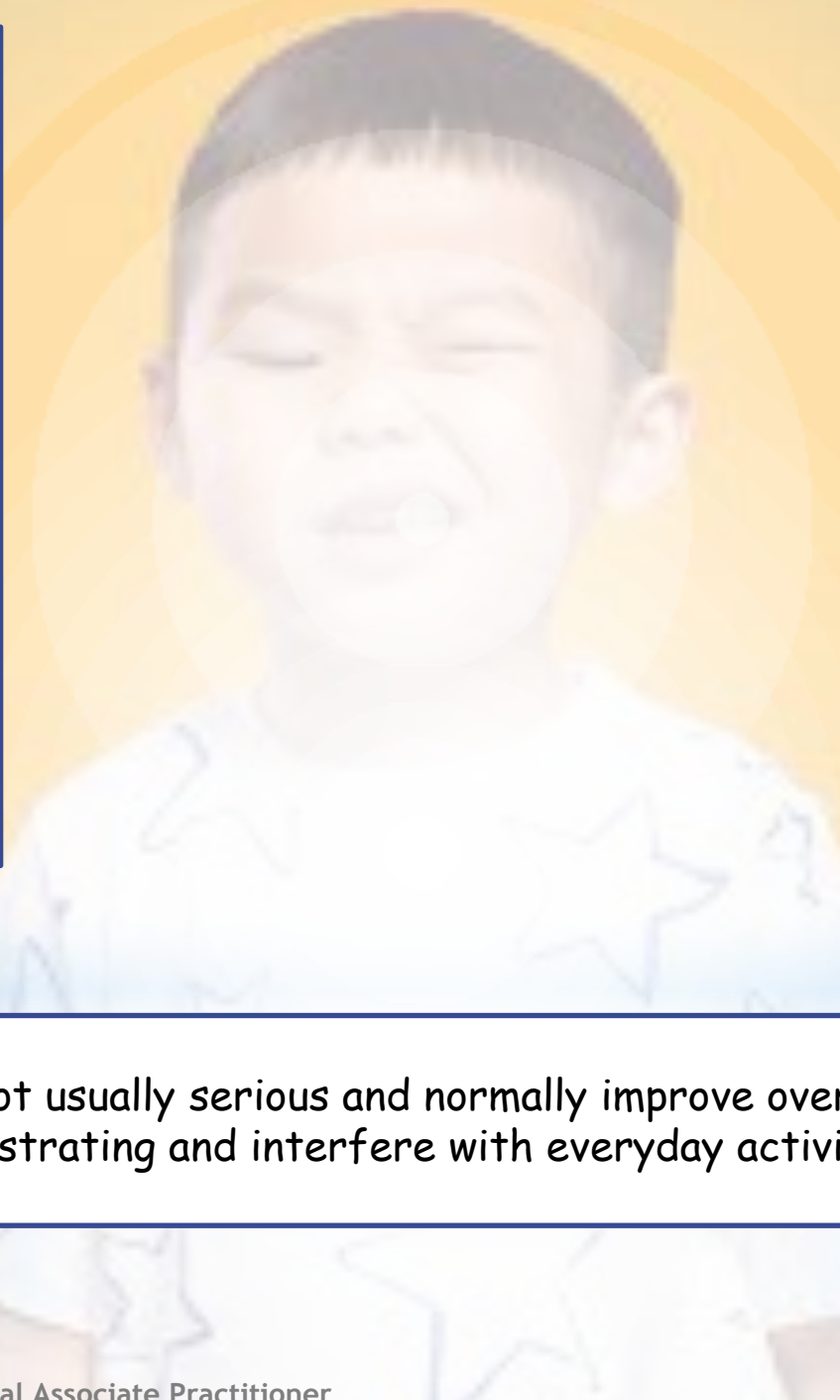
**WHAT DO YOU SEE?**

**A DOG  
OR  
A BIRD**



"We are all different but there's something kind of fantastic about that, isn't there?"

Roald Dahl

- 
- Tics are fairly common and without realising you have mostly likely seen a tic. This could be a cough that appears constant or a blink that happens many times or body movements that seem out of place. Tics are common in children and often seem as though they have appeared from nowhere.

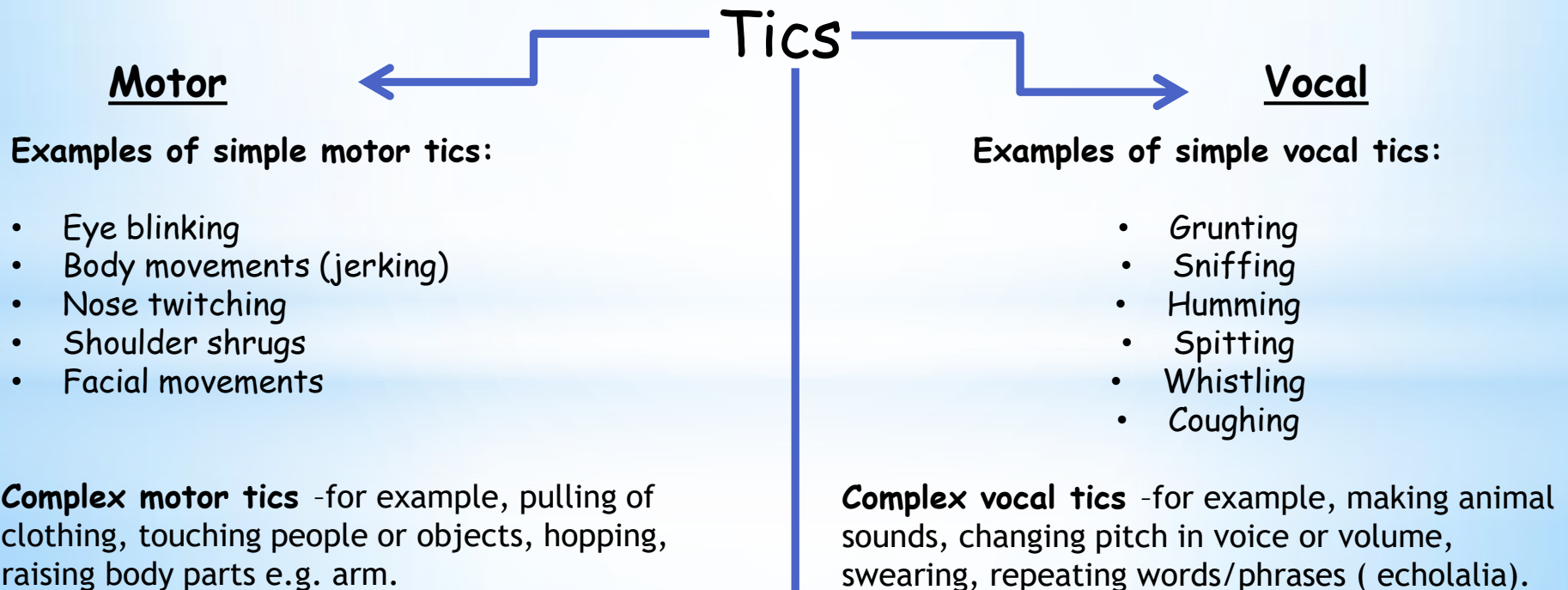
- For most children and young people their tics improve over time or go away on their own completely. Tics can sometimes last a few months and may come and go over time.

- Tics are not usually serious and normally improve over time. But they can be frustrating and interfere with everyday activities.

# What is a tic?

A 'tic' can be described as a brief repetitive, involuntary (although can sometimes be suppressed or triggered) purposeless movement or sound. Tics tend to occur in bouts. Those that produce movement are called 'motor tics' and those that produce sounds are called 'vocal (phonic) tics'.

Tics can be either 'simple' involving one muscle or one simple sound, or 'complex' involving a coordinated movement of a number of muscles or an utterance of a meaningful phrase. (GOSH NHS Foundation Trust)



# Tics

## **Other Tic disorders**

Tourette Syndrome is on the spectrum of conditions known as Tic Disorders. Other conditions on this spectrum include:

**Transient tic disorder or provisional tic disorder** - motor tics usually confined to the face and neck although other body parts may be affected; sometimes vocal tics are also present. Tics only last a few weeks or months.

**Chronic tic disorder** - tics tend to persist rather than be transitory and can include blinking, sniffing or neck movements. Tics occur for more than 1 year

**Tourette Syndrome** - multiple motor tics and one or more vocal tics present for at least 12 months although not always concurrently.

**A tic disorder not specified** - tics are present, but do not meet the criteria for any specific tic disorder.



# What may cause and increase Tics?



Tics can happen randomly and they may be associated with:

- Places
- Social situations
- Activities
- Internal experiences and/or feelings( scared, worried, excitement, anxiety)
- Other people
- Tiredness

They tend to get worse if they're talked about or focused on.

They often start with an unpleasant sensation that builds up in the body until relieved by the tic - known as an urge - although they can sometimes be partly suppressed.

- *It may be useful to keep a diary to note any patterns of when the tics are happening and what happened after. For example an ABC chart - The ABC chart can be used to record and assist in identifying any patterns / triggers (please see example on p.g 16). If you have identified any patterns or triggers you can then think of strategies to offer support during these times and start to recognise what may be a challenging time for your child/young person.*
- ***Include your child/young person in this process using methods that are appropriate for the child's abilities.***

# What can I do to help my tics?

Tics can be difficult to understand and can often change as well as disappear completely. Sometimes it can be helpful to try different things to help yourself deal with you tics. Below are some ideas that may be useful:



→ **Coping Skills Bag** - A collection of items in a bag / basket children can use to help them calm down and to express their emotions in healthy ways. There are lots of strategies your child can use to calm down, and having a toolbox is one way to keep several of these tools readily available to use.



→ **Distraction / Fidget Bag** - Distraction can often de-escalate a situation and help children to self-regulate. Distraction bags can also offer reassurance for children in times that they may feel anxious or stressed. It also supports children that may have a need for some sensory input e.g. pulling or fiddling with an object.

- **Sleep** is important to us all and supports us to be healthy. Sleep is important because it helps the body to repair and be fit and ready for another day.



- **Weighted blanket**- → provides pressure on the body to help relieve stress and create a sense of calm.



## **Mindfulness apps**

- Smiling Mind
- Headspace (for Kids)
- Calm
- Insight Timer





# What can I do to help my tics?



## **Think about your triggers ?**

Some times tics happen in certain situations or places. Tics may happen more when you are feeling worried about something or perhaps stressed. There may also be times that you tic when you have certain thoughts. It can be helpful to keep a diary and write down when your tics are happening to help you know when you might need support.

**Relaxation-** For some people relaxing can make their tics happen more and for others less. You will find what works for you when you try.

- Reading
- Listening to music
- Lying on your bed
- Breathing exercises
- Grounding techniques



**Have a plan-** Once you have recognised your triggers you can plan. For example:

- Spitting- you could chew gum or carry tissues.
- Throat clearing- suck on a sweet
- If your tics mean it can take you longer to do things, let people know you might be late.

**Exercise-** wear out the tics 😊

You exercise all the time without even thinking of it. When you run around outside or play football at school, you are exercising. When you exercise, you make your body stronger. So be active every day. Your body will thank you!

Exercising can also put you in a better mood. When you exercise, your brain releases chemicals that make you feel happier. It's just another reason why exercise is a good idea!

For some people exercise can help to ease their tics. Exercises that involve stretching the body can also help to ease any soreness of overworked muscles brought on by tics.





## to help support your child/ young person with their tics

- If it is possible try to draw as little attention as possible to your child/ young person's tic.
- Do not tell your child/young person off about their tic; they are not doing it intentionally.
- Do not try to stop the movement; this can cause stress and may increase the tic.
- Reassure you them that tics are common and often short lived.
- Talk to them and ask them how you can help?
- Be kind and understanding.
- Ensure your child/young person is getting enough sleep.



- Speak to the school/teacher to work together to find ways to best support your child. For example, where your child sits in the classroom, (near the door if they need to leave or a larger space if a touching tic or large motor tic involving limbs.)

- Some times tics may cause discomfort for your child/young person. A gentle massage can help.
- Be aware that you child/young person may have held their tics in throughout the day and will need to release them.
- Give them some time on their own or a safe place if they want to release some tics in private.
- When family questions you or your child's tics, explain that tics are not intentional, but that there are things that both you and your child are learning to do that may help manage the tics.
- Avoid stress, anxiety and boredom - for example, try to find a relaxing and enjoyable activity to do (such as sport or a hobby).

# TIC ATTACKS

The under reported phenomenon of tic attacks are sometimes described as:

The constant urge to tic, where the urge isn't satisfied despite a cluster or singular tic's.

Constantly ticking without interval

Sudden bouts of tics lasting from as little as 10 minutes to several hours

→ Other complementary therapies/ suggestions taken from the Tictock Therapy website-

## Tic Attack Prevention Ideas

Weighted blanket  
Homeopathy  
Magnesium baths, spray or supplement  
Reflexology  
Craniosacral therapy  
Distraction  
Massage  
Essential oils  
Fan  
Hot water bottle  
Heated wheat bag  
Music  
Singing  
Hiding under blankets  
Dark room  
Compression / tight squeeze  
Anxiety reducing exercises  
Stress reducing exercises

## Tic Attack Management ideas

Tictock Therapy  
Tic Management Consultancy



Tictock Therapy

[www.tictocktherapy.co.uk](http://www.tictocktherapy.co.uk)



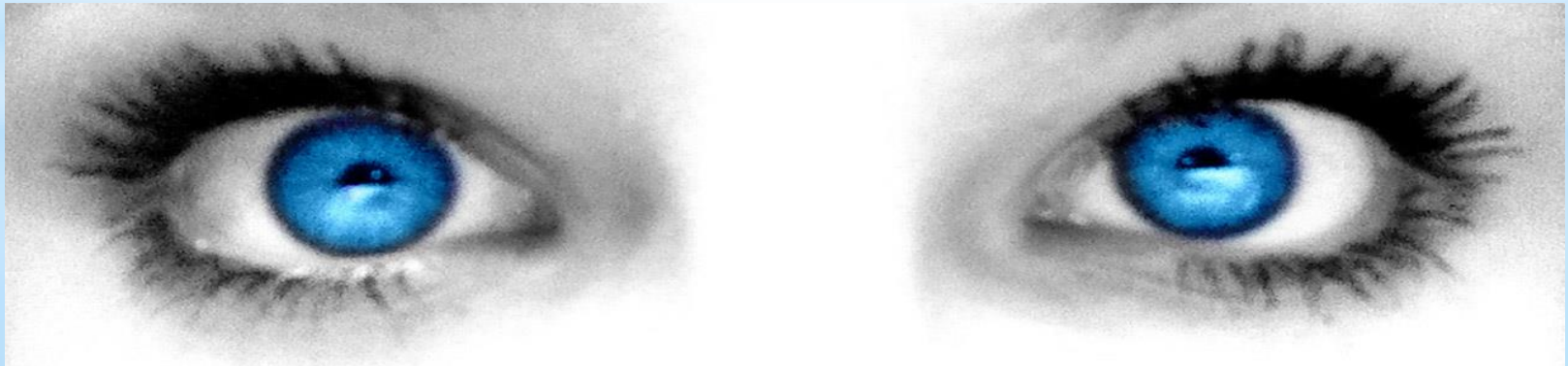




It may be that a child/ young person are able to stop their tics for a short time. This may take a lot of concentrating and is hard work, uncomfortable and draining.

This sometimes causes confusion for others. Sometimes others may think, "can they control when they tic? Are they doing this for attention?"

**Try not to blink for a whole minute and you'll see how uncomfortable this feels. This feeling is how some children describe how it feels to have to hold a tic in.**



# When to seek support/advice

Tics are not usually serious and they do not damage the brain.

You do not always need to see a GP if they're mild and not causing problems. Sometimes they can disappear as quickly as they appear.

See a GP if you're concerned about your or your child's tics, you need support or advice, or the tics:

- occur very regularly, or become more frequent or severe
- cause emotional or social problems, such as embarrassment, bullying or social isolation
- cause pain or discomfort (some tics can cause the person to accidentally hurt themselves)
- interfere with daily activities, school or work
- are accompanied by anger, depression or self harm

A GP should be able to diagnose a tic from a description of it and, if possible, seeing it. Recording a short video can be helpful, but be careful not to draw too much attention to the tic while filming as this can make it worse. [Tics - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/a-z/t/tics/)



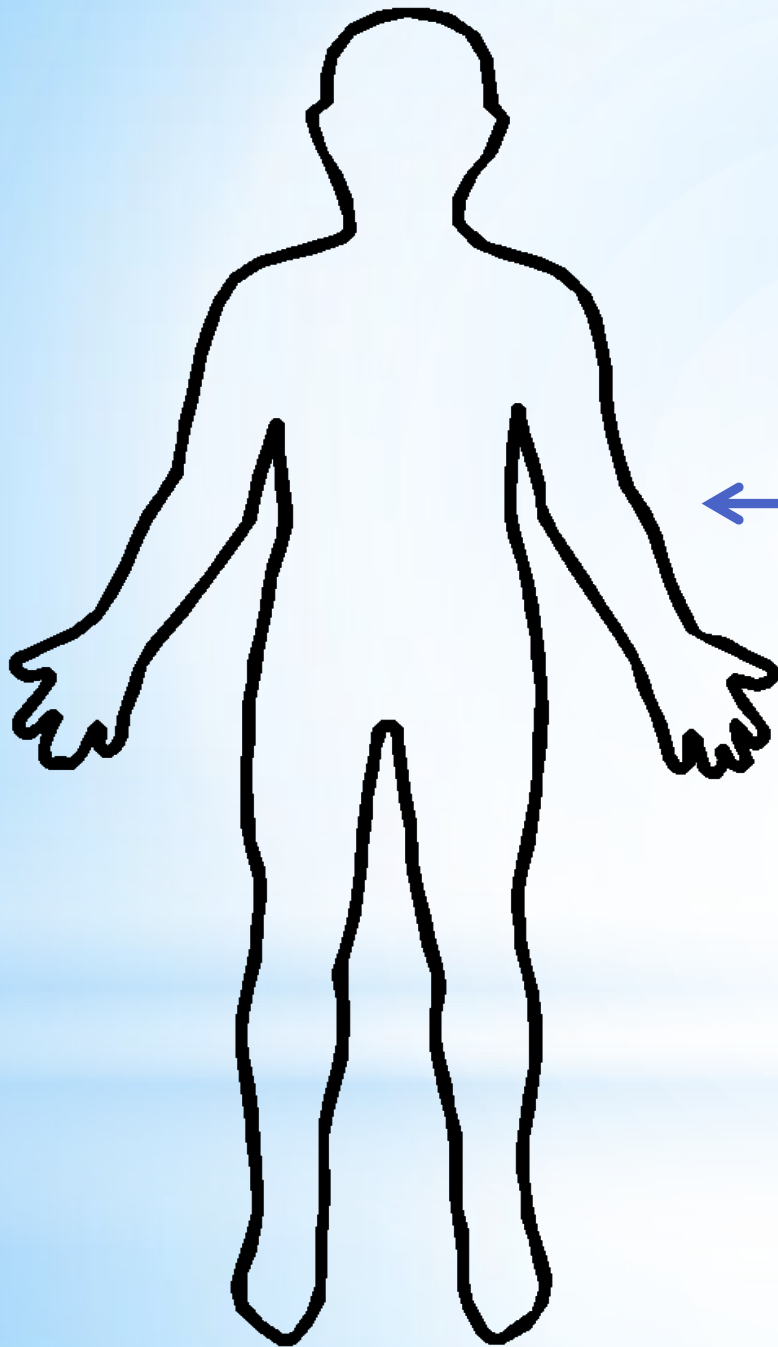
# LINKS & RESOURCES

- Tourette's Action - [www.tourettes-action.org.uk](http://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)
- Books: *Can I tell you about Tourette Syndrome: A guide for friends, family* (Mal Leicester). *The Tourette's survival kit: Tools for Young Adults* (Tara Murphy & Damon Millar). *Me and My Tourette's* (Siânna Stodd & Gemma Denham).
- *Tic disorder: a Guide for Parents and professionals* (Uttom Chowdhury & Tara Murphy)
- Videos: YouTube by Douglas Woods - regarding behavioural approaches to tics. helpful information for parents on how to manage tics in the home setting.
- YouTube - Are You a Kid with Tics? Empowerment & Information for children with Tics.
- [www.tictocktherapy.co.uk](http://www.tictocktherapy.co.uk)
- [Tic-Toc-Tic Challenge || Dealing with Tourette's Syndrome - YouTube](#)
- CAMHS Resources via [www.camhs-resources.co.uk](http://www.camhs-resources.co.uk)
- SHOP- School Health One Point- support regarding health, well-being and other concerns- 03001234062- [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/esshreferral](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/esshreferral)
- [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZQlch6v3W4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZQlch6v3W4)- Famous you tuber Caspar Lee -Tourette's Awareness.
- Bullying and what to do as a parent [www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk/Content/bullying\\_and\\_what\\_to\\_do\\_as\\_a\\_parent/#/id/59faf75a1b64e89c49ede5a4](http://www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk/Content/bullying_and_what_to_do_as_a_parent/#/id/59faf75a1b64e89c49ede5a4)
- YoungMinds information on a variety of issues affecting a young person's mental health and advice on what to do including a helpline providing support and advice to parents and carers worried about the emotional wellbeing or behaviour of a young person in their care. Young people can text the YoungMinds Crisis Messenger for free 24/7 support across the UK if they are experiencing a mental health crisis: text YM to 85258 (free) <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- **The Youth Fairy** Solution Focused Therapist & Educational Professional in the Seaford / Newhaven area. Helping young people to become calmer, happier more confident versions of themselves <https://www.facebook.com/TheYouthFairyUK/>
- **Child Therapy Service** (Tracy Chadwick) a mental wellbeing hub providing an online toolbox of downloadable resources to support children's mental wellbeing. Plus online training workshops for families and professionals on a variety of topics including supporting anxious children, managing demand avoidance and developing emotional resilience [www.childtherapyservice.org.uk](http://www.childtherapyservice.org.uk)
- [1374586633\\_Tic-tips---managing-your-TS.pdf \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](#)



What are my tics? What do they look like? How do they make me feel?

Body mapping is an activity, commonly used in supporting children to better understand what is physically happening to their bodies during certain times. This is a visual activity that can allow opportunities for your child to 'show and tell' you what that may be feeling.



Imagine this is you.

Write on each body part what tics you have. Once you have done this rate from 0-3 how often each tic is.



3= Every day, all day

2= Every day, for parts of the day

1= Most days, many times

0= Every now and then

Now make a mark next to the ones that worry/bother YOU the most.

# Example of an ABC Chart:

<b>Where?</b> E.g. setting / activity / who (adults/peers)	<b>Time?</b>	<b>Antecedent (A)</b> E.g. what happened immediately before? Can include triggers, signs of distress and environmental information	<b>Behaviour (B)</b> A description of what happened / what the behaviour 'looked' like	<b>Duration of outburst</b>	<b>Emotions observed?</b>	<b>Consequence (C)</b> Referring to the consequences of the behaviour or what happened immediately after the outburst, include adult / peers responses to the behaviour and the outcome for the child	<b>Possible function of the behaviour?</b> E.g. to gain attention, avoid task, leave a situation, sensory consequence etc

**Stage 1:** Complete behaviour diary to review possible triggers / patterns:

**Stage 2:** Ask your child

**Stage 3:** Identify a strategy / resource to try

**Stage 4:** Review, and adapt accordingly

***\*Include your child in this process using methods that are appropriate for the child's abilities***

# animal themed HIIT WORKOUT FOR KIDS



## FROG JUMPS

Hop, hop, hop up and down like a frog!



## BEAR WALKS

With your hands & feet on the floor, hips high, walk left and right.



## GORILLA SHUFFLES

In a low sumo squat, use your hands to balance and shuffle around the room



## STARFISH JUMPS

The classic jumping jack; jump up and down spreading your arms and legs wide



## CHEETAH RUNS

Run in place as fast as you can, just like a cheetah!



## CRAB WALKS

Place your hands on the ground behind you, lift your hips, and crawl on your hands and feet



## ELEPHANT STOMPS

March in place, lifting your knees up high and then stomping them to the ground as hard as you can



## SIMON SAYS FITNESS DISGUISED AS FUN

Get your kids moving by playing Simon Says with these fun yet physical activities. You decide when or if you say "Simon Says"!

Shake your whole body. Jump up and down. Spin around in circles. Do a cartwheel. Do a somersault.	Hold your arms out at your side and make circles with them in the air. Hop on your left foot 10 times. Hop on your right foot 10 times. Hop around like a bunny. Balance on your left foot for a count of 10. Balance on your right foot for a count of 10. Bend down and touch your toes 10 times.	Reach behind you and try and hold your left foot with your right hand without falling over. Lay on the floor and stretch out as far you can for 10 a count of 10. Pretend to shoot a basketball 10 times. Pretend to jump rope for a count of 10. Pretend to ride a horse. Pretend to milk a cow. Take 5 of the biggest steps forward that you can. Pretend to lift a car. Do the strangest dance you can think of.
Wave your arms above your head. Walk like a bear on all 4s. Walk like a crab. Hop like a frog. Walk on your knees. Lay on your back & pedal your legs in the air like you are on a bike. Pretend to sit in an invisible chair 5 times - sit then stand, sit then stand, etc.	Balance on your right foot for a count of 10. Bend down and touch your toes 10 times. Reach behind you and try and hold your right foot with your left hand without falling over. Show off the muscles in your arms.	Scream.



WWW.THEYSMELL.COM

## Fit activity for kids what's your name!

SPELL OUT YOUR FULL NAME AND COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY LISTED FOR EACH LETTER. FOR A GREATER CHALLENGE INCLUDE YOUR MIDDLE NAME & DO EACH ONE TWICE! FOR VARIETY YOU CAN USE A FAVORITE CHARACTER'S NAME OR A FAMILY MEMBER'S NAME.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>A</b> jump up & down 10 times                      | <b>N</b> pick up a ball without using your hands                   |
| <b>B</b> spin around in a circle 5 times              | <b>O</b> walk backwards 50 steps and skip back                     |
| <b>C</b> hop on one foot 5 times                      | <b>P</b> walk sideways 20 steps and hop back                       |
| <b>D</b> run to the nearest door and run back         | <b>Q</b> crawl like a crab for a count of 10                       |
| <b>E</b> walk like a bear for a count of 5            | <b>R</b> walk like a bear for a count of 5                         |
| <b>F</b> do 3 cartwheels                              | <b>S</b> bend down and touch your toes 20 times                    |
| <b>G</b> do 10 jumping jacks                          | <b>T</b> pretend to pedal a bike with your hands for a count of 17 |
| <b>H</b> hop like a frog 8 times                      | <b>U</b> roll a ball using only your head                          |
| <b>I</b> balance on your left foot for a count of 10  | <b>V</b> flap your arms like a bird 25 times                       |
| <b>J</b> balance on your right foot for a count of 10 | <b>W</b> pretend to ride a horse for a count of 15                 |
| <b>K</b> march like a toy soldier for a count of 12   | <b>X</b> try and touch the clouds for a count of 15                |
| <b>L</b> pretend to jump rope for a count of 20       | <b>Y</b> walk on your knees for a count of 10                      |
| <b>M</b> do 3 somersaults                             | <b>Z</b> do 10 push-ups  |

CONSULT A DOCTOR BEFORE STARTING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM - WWW.THEYSMELL.COM

FREE DOWNLOAD

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TOOLS FOR RAISING AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSON