



3-STEP EMERGENCY CALM-DOWN BREATHING CHECKLIST

Help Your Child De-escalate Stage Fear, Speech Anxiety, and School Stress in Under 3 Minutes

[FREE PARENT RESOURCE GUIDE](#)

3-Step Emergency Breathing Checklist

When a child experiences stage fear, their body enters a "fight or flight" response—heart rate spikes, breathing becomes shallow, and cortisol floods the system. Use this quick checklist to physically reset their nervous system before they step onto the stage or present in class.

Step 1: Box Breathing (The Anchor)

60 Seconds

Box breathing triggers the parasympathetic nervous system, lowering heart rate and bringing cognitive focus back.

- **Inhale:** Breathe in slowly through the nose for 4 seconds, feeling the chest expand.
- **Hold:** Pause and hold the breath gently for 4 seconds. Do not squeeze the throat.
- **Exhale:** Release the air slowly through the mouth over 4 seconds.
- **Hold:** Pause again for 4 seconds with empty lungs. Repeat the cycle 3–4 times.

Step 2: Belly Breathing (The Balloon)

60 Seconds

Deep belly breathing (diaphragmatic breathing) counteracts the shallow, rapid chest breathing that causes hyperventilation.

- **Placement:** Have the child place one hand on their chest and the other on their belly.
- **Inhale:** Breathe in deeply through the nose. Ensure the hand on the belly rises while the hand on the chest remains still.
- **Exhale:** Exhale slowly through the mouth, feeling the belly contract like a balloon deflating.

Step 3: Straw Breathing (The Cool Down)

60 Seconds

Extending the duration of the exhale relative to the inhale sends a direct signal to the brain to calm down immediately.

- **Inhale:** Take a deep, comfortable breath in through the nose.
- **Pucker:** Purse the lips as if holding a drinking straw.
- **Exhale:** Blow out through the pursed lips as slowly and smoothly as possible, taking double the time of the inhale.



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ABOUT THE FOUNDER & LEAD MENTOR:



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Written by Simran Bagwan, Founder & Lead Mentor at Victory Fluent Forum. Holding an M.A. in English and pursuing advanced studies in educational leadership, she specializes in building communication, creative writing, and public speaking confidence for K-12 students.