

# 'CHILLAX TACTIC'

## Children and Young People

Going back to reality after the weekend break can be tough! Having a consistent routine on Sunday evening and Monday morning to get you ready for a new school week can help. You can create a plan yourself or jointly with a parent, friend, or teacher. Others may have ideas that they can share with you and support you to follow the plan. You can make the plans whatever way suits you best, how about as visually possible? With pictures or photographs?

The following suggestions are adapted from "Sunday night/Monday morning" by Dr. Tina Rae.

Be organised – pack your school bag, get all your school books and equipment ready. It will be one less stress in the morning, and reduces the chances of something going wrong or being lost in the morning. This can relax you to know that everything is ready and sorted, and all you will need is to pick the bag up in the morning.



Try to keep Sundays stress-free - Light activities such as art, cooking, time with family and outdoor play are good ways to engage the mind and body on Sundays. Maybe if you're older, you can help someone else by volunteering for a local organisation or a neighbour? There are more ideas here <https://bcuhb.nhs.wales/health-advice/five-ways-to-wellbeing-invisible-folder/five-ways-to-wellbeing/children-and-young-people/>

Outdoors - Going running or biking on a Sunday afternoon or walking with a parent/sibling/friend can be fun and also works to release endorphins in your body that reduce stress.



You may benefit from seeing your weekly/daily schedule in advance so you know what to expect. You can choose your clothes the night before and even your breakfast to help you better predict what's going to happen the next morning. You may prefer a visual layout.



**Laugh** - Laughing is good for you! It helps reduce stress hormone levels such as epinephrine and cortisol. This has a positive impact on the mind and body.



**Sleep** - Adequate sleep can be a big factor in helping you cope with anxiety. You should try to go to sleep the same time every night, even on the weekends. You can incorporate a relaxing bedtime routine, including a bath and reading, or set a screen time limit 1 to 2 hours before bed to help you relax.



**Neutralise** - Share your concerns (ideally a few hours before you go to bed) and talk through each of them with a parent/sibling/friend. You can draw or write in a journal or stress book if you find it difficult to discuss verbally. Challenge any unrealistic thoughts by considering the evidence.



**Distract** - Distraction or grounding techniques can be useful when you're feeling overwhelmed with emotions. Noticing what's around you using each one of your senses is a powerful technique. Examples of distraction techniques are included in the EBSA Information Pamphlet for young people found [here](#).



**Breathing** - Inhale slowly and steadily to help calm your mind and body. Deep breathing to calm a nervous tummy and calm anxious thoughts can do wonders. An app or podcast can be helpful to guide you to focus on breathing or start practicing meditation.



**Empathy** - Remember that every emotion is valid, and that many children and young people experience similar feelings and emotions. Be kind, and demonstrate empathy towards yourself.



Try to place firm boundaries around your social media use e.g. try not to look at your phone before going to sleep. In the same way, take time to wake up slowly and relax before looking at your phone in the morning.

Try your best, that's all you can do. Every small step is a step in the right direction. Be proud of yourself for achieving every small step.