

Stress Ball or Fidget

<https://www.pbisworld.com/tier-1/stress-ball-or-fidget/>

Why should I do it:

- Some students require the need for outside stimulus to help them maintain focus
- Anxious students can benefit from stress balls and fidgets as a coping mechanism
- Hyperactive students can benefit from keeping their hands busy and off other students and objects

When should I do it:

- When a student has difficulty staying in seat, is overly fidgety, hyperactive, always grabbing and playing with objects around them, chewing on pencils and pens a lot, etc
- When a student is anxious, nervous, etc
- When a student bites their nails, pulls their hair, or has other self destructive habits
- When a student seems to have a lot of extra energy or movement
- When a student has ADHD/ADD
- When a student seems to require extra physical stimuli
- When students take tests, quizzes, exams, or give speeches in public or in front of the class
- When a student has to do something that makes them anxious, nervous, etc, like reading, writing on the board, etc

How do I do it:

- Explain to a student in private that they will receive a stress ball or fidget to use when they are unfocused, nervous, anxious, feeling fidgety, hyper, etc
- Tell the student this will help them to focus better or get through feelings of anxiety or nervousness
- Tell the student the appropriate and inappropriate uses of the stress ball and fidget
- You may either allow the student to keep the item in their desk or keep it in a certain spot where they can retrieve it from when needed or as part of a routine, for example, in the morning and afternoon
- If other students in the class ask about the item or want one too, explain to the class why the student has it and that it is only for that student to use
- When using stress balls or fidgets with the class or groups, for example during tests, speeches, presentations, reading out loud, etc, keep a bucket of stress reducing items in the front of the class and instruct students to get up and retrieve one before the test, speech, or other event/activity
- Keep a bucket of stress balls and fidgets in the front of the class and allow students to get up and check one out (keep a check in/out sheet by the bucket) any time they feel the need for one
- For students that tend to drop the stress ball or fidget a lot, try tying a thread or some yarn to the item and then to the desk or student's wrist