

## Brain Integration Strategies

Draw a line down the middle of your body. That's called the midline. Every time you cross over that line, you're helping connect the hemispheres in your brain, resulting in integrating your brain. These exercises can help regulate the part of the brain that controls your emotions. They help you feel relaxed and safe, they release the fight or flight response, and they allow you to respond more rationally instead of emotionally. For best results, these types of exercises should be practiced a few times a day, 4-7 days/week. Doing the exercises to music can help make them fun!

1. **Simple Tap** – Touch your right hand to your left knee and then your left hand to your right knee. Repeat at least 10x.
2. **Bend and Stretch** – Lift left knee and touch with right elbow. Lift right knee and touch with left elbow. Repeat 10x.
3. **Catch a Star** – Reach with right hand up in the air to your left and pretend to catch a star. Then reach your left hand up in the air to your right and catch a star. (You can also pick apples, oranges, etc.) Repeat at least 10x.
4. **Pat on the Back** – Alternate patting the back of your left shoulder with your right hand and your right shoulder with your left hand. Repeat 10x.
5. **Piddle Paddle** – Put fists on top of each other as if holding an oar. Pretend to paddle on the right side of the body and then sweep hands and pretend to paddle on the left. Continue to repeat.
6. **Nose and Ears** – Touch your right ear with your left hand and place your right hand on your nose. Touch left ear with right hand and place left hand on your nose. Repeat 10x.
7. **Hug Your Brain** – Say and demonstrate these motions as your child follows along:
  - a. Thumbs up. - (Stick up your thumbs in front of you.)
  - b. Thumbs down. - (Point thumbs down.)
  - c. Cross your arms. - (Cross fists with thumbs pointing down.)
  - d. Clasp your fingers. - (Keeping wrists crossed, hold hands.)
  - e. Bring your hands in. - (Bring clasped hands down and in toward your chest.)
  - f. Give yourself a hug. - (Squeeze arms.)
8. **You're the Best** – Say and demonstrate these motions as your child follows along:
  - a. Thumb up. - (Stick up one thumb.)
  - b. Across the chest. - (Bring thumb to opposite shoulder.)
  - c. Pat on the back. - (Pat opposite shoulder.)
  - d. Cause you're the BEST! - (Child hugs himself.)
9. **Push and Pull** – Stand with hands on hips. Twist left and push with palms up and then pretend to pull something towards you. Twist and push and pull to the right. Repeat 10x.

10. **Disco Dance** – Put right index finger in the air and point to the left. Bring right index finger down by your side. Place left index finger in the air and point to the right. Then bring down by your side. Do 10-20x.
11. **Crazy Eights** – Make the figure eight in front of you with your right hand then your left hand. Make “lazy” eights by making eight lying down, with your right hand. Make lazy eights with your left hand. Clasp fingers on your right and left hand and make large crazy eights. Lean over and pretend to draw an imaginary “lazy” eight on the floor with your right hand and then with your left hand.
12. **Bending Exercise** – Take a small ball in your hands and bend over and touch the ball to the floor/ground. Legs should be shoulder-width apart. Touch the ball in front of you, then in the middle, then behind your legs.
13. **Glider Exercise** – Put a piece of tape across the floor like a pretend balance beam. Have child walk across it heel to toe. While walking across it, have them raise their right hand above their head as they step, then switch to their left hand as they switch feet.
14. **Clapping Exercise** – Use tape to create a fake balance beam on the floor. Have child walk across the balance beam heel to heel while clapping their hands at the same time. They must clap at the same time their feet are stepping.
15. **Bongo Drums** – (may have to use stickers to match opposite hand to opposite drum) Have child play the drums by hitting the bongo by crossing over left to right and right to left.
16. **Windmills** – Stretch out feet. Touch right hand to left foot. Stand. Touch left hand to right foot. Repeat 10x.
17. **Picking Peppers** – Stand with your feet stretched. Bend to the left and pretend to pull something beyond your left foot with your right hand. Stand. Bend to the right and pretend to pull something with your left hand. Repeat 10x.
18. **Shopping** – Pretend to steer a grocery cart and then reach to the left with your right hand and take something off the shelf and put it in your cart. Reach with the left hand to the right and put something in the cart. Repeat for a few minutes.
19. **Climbing** – Act like you’re climbing a ladder as you reach up with your right hand and lift your left knee. Reach with your left hand and lift your right knee. Repeat at least 10x.
20. **Put the Fire Out** – Pretend to get a pail and scoop up water on the floor by your right foot. Throw that pail of water over your left shoulder. After 10x in this direction, scoop water from the left and throw it over your right shoulder.