



Evidenced Based Massage Therapy for Helping Anxious Children

Children with SEN can often become anxious and stressed in a variety of environments, the transition to them including the classroom, home and new settings, changes to their routine and other events in their lives including exams and family life. This has only become heightened by the covid pandemic. This increased tension can impact on sleep patterns, increase stress and anxiety levels and lead to low self-esteem.

SEN Indian Head massage is a bespoke clothed massage which is carried out using hand cream, essential oils and tailored for age and needs of the child. With parental permission I will review professionals' reports, such as occupational therapy, paediatrics and EHCPs, to ensure I am aware of all the client's needs.

It may take time for the child to get used to massage, be it the change in routine, the increased contact, and the length of time they are able sit. Over time the children are able to sit for the entire 20-30 minute massage sessions. I provide a transition including: initially meet the clients prior to massage, timetabling sessions at the best time for the client and staff, provide appropriate visuals/transition preparation (which continues throughout the sessions), building up sessions length according to the needs of the client and monitoring the client during and then following the sessions through their class staff and adapting the sessions accordingly.

I am very happy to discuss the therapy further and ways to tailor this to the needs of the school and pupils.

Leanne Sim - Massage Therapist with 14+ years SEND experience

www.relaxandrefine.co.uk

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To see more information on massage therapy and my research on using massage therapy to support children with their fundamental needs to enable them to access their education, please visit:

www.relaxandrefine.co.uk/sen-massage



Clare Collett, Assistant Head teacher, Riverside School (Community Special School Ages 4-19)

"Leanne was very in tune with the pupils. She enabled them and the staff supporting to feel at ease. She used minimal language and created a calming atmosphere for pupils to feel comfortable with her. Pupils responded very well and we noticed the calming influence continued for the remainder of the day."



Quotes from Fleetdown Primary School parents:

- ***"She loved it and found it very calming and wanted to have it all the time. She said it helped her and loved the diffuser that was also used during the session."***
- ***"When he started having the massage therapy he started to sleep longer. He used to wake at 5:30 and always by 6am but he now sleeps through until 6:45 and sometimes 7:00."***
- ***"When he touches people he applies too much pressure but when he showed me the massage he was all soft and gentle. It was lovely."***
- ***"I think it's a very positive intervention and would be something I think would benefit her from receiving long term."***

Charlotte (Mother of Leo who attends sessions at Leanne's treatment room in Otford):

"I would like to highly recommend Leanne. My son Leo has autism and I was on the search to find someone to give Leo regular massages as a way for him to completely relax and be calm - that doesn't often happen. I must say Leanne has been absolutely fantastic with him. I was dubious about finding someone that would be able to meet his needs and be flexible and kind so he didn't feel anxious. Leo absolutely loves coming to Leanne's treatment room, she has made us feel so welcome and it's made a massive difference to Leo. We can't thank her enough."