

ADVENTURES IN VOICE

S t r e t c h e s

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These are examples of stretches that can be used with a child who exhibits an exceptional degree of tension. The child can also do these stretches at home.

These simple movements help to prepare the child's body for voice work. At the same time, they may also calm down the mind.

An adult should demonstrate each stretch, then have the child slowly imitate. For each stretch, the child should be guided to feel the muscles getting longer and letting go. Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth.

Music may be played through the stretching activities. Choose a type of music that fits the personality of the child and the style of the clinician.

Basic Stretches



YES Stretch



Look straight ahead, then move your chin up while inhaling through your nose. Be careful not to force your neck.

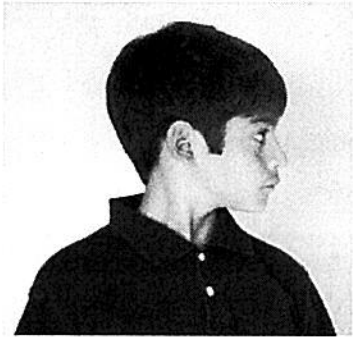


Slowly, start looking down & say a gentle "SSSSS". Repeat the same thing, saying "SSHHHH". One more time, with a gentle "FFFFFFF".

NO Stretch



Look to your right and slowly move your head to the left. Say "SSSSSSS" while you're doing this.



Slowly bring your head to the right, keeping the easy "SSS". Now repeat the right to left movement again: once each with "FFFFFF" and "SSSHHHH".

MAYBE Stretch



Tilt your head to the right. Feel the stretch on the other side.



Now, slowly move your head to the left & say "SSSSSS". Repeat the tilt while saying "FFFFFF" and "SSSHHHH", once each time.

WHATEVER Stretch



Shrug your shoulders all the way up to your ears while you inhale through your nose. Bend your arms, palms up, and feel the muscles tighten.



Relax your arms and bring them down, while rotating your shoulders slowly back. Feel the muscles in your back come together while your chest opens up.



Now, slowly drop your shoulders, while exhaling through your mouth. Repeat 2 times and feel the stretch!

Lip Trill ("Car Motor")



Blow your lips gently apart, so they vibrate like a "raspberry". Don't use any voice at first; just feel the vibration in your lips.

Now add some gentle voice to make a motor sound—"BRRRRR".

If you have trouble doing either of these, just relax your lips & make "puh" sounds.

Tongue Trill ("Jackhammer")



Put your tongue behind your upper teeth, get some good air behind it, and vibrate it like a jackhammer. Use gentle vibration and repeat two times.

If this is hard for you, say several sloppy & relaxed "la-la-la-la" sounds to work with your tongue.

SURPRISE Stretch



Pretend you just got the biggest surprise in your life! Open your mouth as wide as you can & raise your eyebrows. Feel the stretch in all those muscles in your face.
Now relax.

SLEEPY Stretch



You are so-o-o-o tired! Make a big yawn & feel how the muscles in your neck, mouth, and face move.
Now relax.

BODYBUILDER Stretch



Hold your arms back and away from your chest, making fists with your hands. Smile wide and feel how open your chest is. Take a deep breath through your nose and exhale "ahhhh" as you relax.



"Sculpture" Massage

Adult and child should do this together. Let the child go first, pretending s/he is making a face out of clay. But the adult's face should be the "clay". After the child is comfortable with the activity, switch and have the adult do the same massage with the child.

Imagine you're going to make a beautiful sculpture of an adult's head. Slowly start massaging the face with both hands to make a round form. Now, from the center, and using the tips of your fingers, smooth out the forehead.

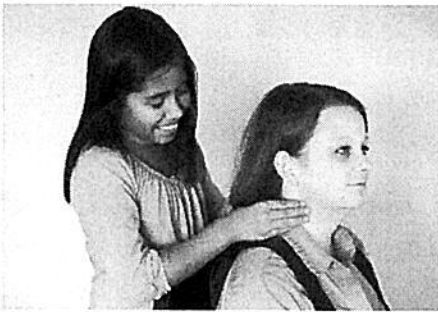


Next, work around the eyes, massaging in circular motions as much as you can.

Then, pay attention to the cheeks. Still circular, but you can add some smoothing motions to make them nice and round. Make sure you don't forget about the ears!



The mouth and lips are hard! They need special attention to get them just right. Use lots of circular & smoothing motions to make them perfect.



Next, the neck. You might need to press just a little harder to get rid of the "clay" you don't need. Make sure the neck is nice and smooth, especially in the front and back.

Now, we need a good base for your beautiful sculpture. The shoulders are the base, so you'll need to shape them all the way out to the end. Circular and smoothing motions again. Pay some attention to the collarbone and the upper back, just below the neck.



What a beautiful work of art!

Let's do yours now!!