



## HELLO PARENTS,

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment. It is the ability to give your full attention to the present moment in an open and non-judgmental way. Practicing mindfulness is beneficial for your child: it strengthens their self-control, lowers anxiety and stress, and increases their sense of well-being and happiness. In this newsletter, we provide activities and tips on how to practice mindfulness at any age.

## ACTIVITIES

### INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

#### BABY MASSAGE

##### MATERIALS:

- Relaxing music
- Baby oil

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Place your baby on the carpet or on the bed in a quiet area.
- Turn on relaxing music.
- Put a drop of baby oil in your hands, rub it in, and then use gentle pressure to massage your child. Start with your baby's feet, and work your way up their legs, lightly squeezing their calves and thighs, move up their whole body.
- Spend half a minute on each part of the body, going slowly and calmly.
- Pay attention to how your baby responds to your gaze and touch.
- Talk to your baby softly, repeat their name and tell them how much you love them. You can also sing their favourite tune.
- Your calming touch will make your baby feel loved and cared for.

[Click here](#) to read more about mindfulness with infants.

### TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

#### BREATHE WITH ME

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Create a calm atmosphere in the room and turn off all distractions.
- Lie down with your child on the floor.
- Place your hand on your child's tummy and their hand on your tummy.
- Encourage your child to take a deep breath in and slowly exhale. Do the same and observe how your hands are moving up and down with your breaths.
- Describe for your child what is happening: when you inhale the air, it makes your stomach expand and your hands are rising with them. When you exhale, your stomach contract and your hands go down, too.
- Practicing breathing together with your child helps them stay in the moment and calms them down.

[Click here](#) for more information about mindfulness.

### PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

#### HEARTBEAT EXERCISE

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Encourage your child to jump up and down in place or do jumping jacks for one minute.
- When they have finished, have them sit down and put their hand over their heart.
- Ask them to close their eyes and pay attention only to their heartbeat and their breath.
- This activity helps children to notice their heartbeat, and use it as a tool to help them focus.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

### JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

#### MINDFUL TASTING

##### MATERIALS:

- Your child's favourite fruit

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Present the fruit on a plate.
- Close your eyes and smell the aroma of the fruit together.
- Ask your child to describe the smell.
- Open your eyes and describe the colour and shape of the fruit.
- Put some in your mouth and talk about texture and taste.
- This activity will help your child to slow down, stay focused and take notice of every part of the experience.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

### SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

#### DRAW YOUR BREATH

##### MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Pen or pencil

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Place a paper and a pen/pencil on a table, close your eyes, bring your attention to your breath.
- Allow your breath to dictate where your pen goes on the paper.
- Follow your breath which feels continual, feels choppy and more like scattered marks. Draw for as long as you need to.
- Open your eyes, look at your paper, notice the lines.
- Close your eyes again, take a couple of deep breaths, focus on the inhale, breathing all the way into the belly, and then letting that breath slowly come all the way back out.
- Keep with this deep breathing and bring your pen to the paper, allowing the breath to guide the route.
- Open your eyes, look at your paper, notice the lines.
- Drawing your breath can help you manage your stress responses to help decrease anxiety, fear, racing thoughts, a rapid heartbeat and shallow chest breathing.

[Click here](#) for more guided imagery video for children.



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#### A TIP FOR TODAY

- Listen to your child with full attention.
- Be a role model and try to manage your own feelings and reactions.
- Explore textures and sounds in nature.
- Explore emotions by prompting your child to scan their body when experiencing a feeling, and describe where they feel it the most.
- Listen to some music and see how many different instruments you can each hear.
- Sit down with your child and "colour your feelings" together using a different colour for each emotion.