

Mindfulness

Storytime To Go

Books

Calm: with the Very Hungry Caterpillar
by Eric Carle

Here & Now
by Julia Denos

Freedom, We Sing
By Amyra Leon

I am Peace: a book of Mindfulness
By Susan Verde

Breathing Makes it Better
By Christopher Willard

Breathe Like a Bear: 30 Mindful moments for kids to feel calm and focused
By Kira Willey

Other Items

Deck of cards:
Mindful Kids: 50 Mindfulness Activities for Kindness, Focus and Calm

Mindfulness Practices

Breathing Breaks

Deep breathing calms children (and adults!) by slowing them down. Breathing exercises can help children respond to stress in a healthier way. Teach and practice breath work before it is needed!

- **Smelling Flowers:** Imagine you are smelling your favorite flower. Breathe in deeply through your nose and exhale through your mouth.



- **Breathing Buddies:** Use a stuffed animal to practice deep, calming breathing. Have the child in your life lay down on their back and put a stuffed animal on their belly. Have them breathe in deeply through the nose and watch the stuffed animal move up, then exhale and bring the stuffed animal back down. This helps children use their belly to take deep breaths.
- **Blow out a candle:** Imagine a birthday cake. Take a deep breath through the nose and exhale through the mouth to blow out the candle.

Mindfulness Activities

Name your feelings!

Talk to your child about your emotions. This will help your child understand their own feelings and the feelings of others.

Balancing on One Foot

Make it a simple game out of balancing on one foot! This will help your child develop body awareness and practice mindfulness.

- Tell child to focus on a non-moving object.
- Root one leg strongly into floor.
- Slowly lift the other leg off the ground.
- Be sure to practice on both sides of the body.
- Challenge child to see how long they can stay focused and balanced.
- Optional: perhaps sing or dance around them and see if they can be distracted.

Focus on the Five Senses

Teach your child how to stay in the present moment by using their senses. Taking a moment to focus on each sense can help create calm.

To perform the five senses exercise, have your child pause and look around. Ask the following questions:

- What can I see?
- What can I hear?
- What can I smell?
- What can I feel?
- What can I taste?

Give them an item to hold and have them describe it with their senses.

Nature

Take a walk. Walking is a great way for children to practice mindfulness, to notice the present moment and also to get exercise and fresh air. While walking, take a few minutes to be completely silent and pay attention to all the sounds that you hear: rustling leaves, dogs barking, maybe a car passing by. Afterwards, talk about what you and your child heard and how that made you both feel.

Mindfulness Glitter Jar

Supplies:

- Recycled water bottle or glass jar-16 ounces.
- 1/2 cup clear glue or glitter glue
- Extra glitter (1-2 teaspoons)
- Distilled Water
- Optional: hot glue

Directions:

1. Pour 1/2 cup distilled water into jar/bottle. Distilled water will keep your glitter jars mold-free.
2. Pour 1/2 cup of clear or glitter glue into the jar. If you use this exact recipe—it will take about 2 minutes for glitter to settle.
3. Add extra glitter.
4. Fill the remainder of jar with distilled water.
5. Option to secure lid with hot glue.
6. Shake the jar well to disperse glitter.

Tips on using a glitter jar:

- The jar is like our mind and the glitter is like thoughts twirling around. When the glitter settles at the bottom of our jar it is like when our mind is calm.
- A glitter jar can be used as a visual timer for other practices such as breath work or brushing teeth.
- Use the jar as a calming down time.

Source: *firefliesandmudpies.com*



Early Literacy Take Home:

Including mindfulness practices in your child's life will help improve their active listening skills which in turn will help them with learning.

Questions about this kit?
Email youth services staff
at youth@nols.org or
contact staff at
(360) 417-8500 x7705.

www.nols.org