



Incorporating Mindfulness into Your Child's Day

Children are naturals at focusing on the present moment. We can help them cultivate this natural tendency to appreciate the here and now, and at the same time build confidence in their ability to manage the ups and downs of daily life.

1. **Be curious** - Notice when your child is curious about something and wonder with them. Ask questions, even if you know the answer. Be interested in what your child has to say.
2. **Appreciate nature** - Take a walk outside with your child. Pick up rocks. Get down on your hands and knees and observe bugs, flowers and other living things.
3. **Mindful moods** - Note your child's moods or make note of your own mood by periodically naming your mood. Let your child know that it's natural and normal for moods to go up and down. Teaching children that mood's pass will help them appreciate happy times, and be comforted by the the fact that grumpy moods pass.
4. **Mindful tantrums** - Sometimes we lose control of our moods. Children who understand mindfulness basics are better able to sooth themselves after a tantrum. Teach your child mindful breathing techniques (see *Teaching Your Child Mindfulness Basics* on our website). Regular breathing exercises can even help your child prevent or decrease the frequency of tantrums.
5. **Mindful yumminess** - Practice mindful eating with your child. Pretend that the ice cream you are eating is the first one you ever had. Have your child use all his senses while eating this first ice cream cone. Ask him if it tasted different than other ice cream cones he has eaten.
6. **Mindful water** - We all come in contact with water periodically throughout the day. Teach your child to take a deep breath or two as she is washing her hands after school, washing her face in the morning or before drinking a glass of water.
7. **Mindful mornings** - Make note of something you do together every morning. You don't necessarily have to add anything new to your routine, or make this a time consuming process. *Mindfulness is in the noticing.* Notice the sound of the cereal pouring into a bowl, or the quality of the light in your kitchen in the morning.
8. **Mindful bedtimes** - Bedtime is the perfect time to incorporate mindfulness into your child's day. Listening to the bathtub fill with water, taking a few deep breaths after getting into bed, or playing a favorite song can become cues for your child's nervous system to rest.
9. **Mindful rituals** - Every family is different. Is there something you do with your kids almost every day? Take note of the small, pleasant moments you have with your child during the day - *with emphasis on the small.* It can be tying her shoes, or buttoning her coat. Anchoring these moments in your child's memory will help them during stressful times.
10. **Mindful media** - choose movies and other media that have universal themes. Watch these movies together and talk about how we are all connected, and how slowing down and paying attention can help us feel more connected to our family, our community and our world.

We wish you twenty minutes of mindfulness everyday!