

Skills Sheet for Caregivers: Elementary

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention on purpose to the present moment, without judging or trying to change your experience. As we learn with Hedgie, the practice of mindfulness can help children to increase their self-awareness, self-control, and attention. It can also reduce their emotional suffering and increase their compassion for themselves and others. Practicing mindfulness allows children to see reality more accurately and without judgment. Regular practice will help to foster an increased sense of well-being for your child.

Below is a summary of **KEY POINTS** in the video.

- Mindfulness is an ongoing practice, just like daily physical exercise.
- There are three mindfulness skills for kids to focus on.
 - Observe: Notice, without words, what is going on in the environment or in their body
 - Describe: Name what they notice using descriptive and non-judgmental language
 - Participate: Throw themselves fully into an activity or experience

Practice Skills:

- Model for your child and schedule daily mindfulness activities for yourself. Invite them to participate with you when possible. Activities can include:
 - Take a mindful walk together. Encourage your child to use all five of their senses to observe their environment and then describe what they experience using non-judgmental language.
 - Practice paced belly breathing together. Every time the mind starts to wander to a thought, consider it an opportunity to practice mindfulness and bring your attention back to the breath.
 - Practice mindful eating at family meals. Rather than eating without thinking about it, encourage your child to slow down and notice the colors, smells, taste, and textures of their food.
 - Put on some music and dance like no one is watching (or like you don't care if they are).
- Engage in mindful parenting. When you notice feeling stress when you are interacting with your child, slow down and be. Be mindful of thoughts, urges, and sensations that arise. Take a deep breath and bring awareness to your breathing body. Observe how the breath naturally brings balance to your body. Proceed as you have shifted to having a more mindful response.

- The mindfulness practice of bringing your attention to gratitude helps to increase compassion for yourself and others. You and your child can spend a mindful minute thinking about what you are grateful for today.

Start with this →

- When it comes to mindfulness practice, everything that is taught has to be lived. Encouraging your child to be mindful starts with you creating your own mindfulness practice.
- Start by creating and holding space for your mindfulness practice, and protect five minutes each day to engage in a mindfulness exercise. Talk about your intention with your child, and share with them your mindfulness practice.

On the next page there is an activity that you can share or even place somewhere in your house as a reminder to engage in mindfulness practice.



MINDFULNESS

Practicing these skills helps you to increase awareness of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to improve your mental health and wellness.

Mindfulness Skills & Activities

The more you practice mindfulness the more it will help our mental muscles to have better focus, attention, and awareness. Below are the skills of mindfulness to practice. You can choose from many activities below to practice the skills of mindfulness.



Notice It

(Observe Skill)



Say Something About It

(Describe Skill)



Do It

(Participate Fully Skill)

1-2-3

Counting Breaths



Mindfully eating your favorite treat

Playing a game



Listen to music and paying attention to one instrument



Dancing

Color



Going for a walk and naming what you see



Playing an instrument



Blow bubbles