

WAYS TO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS



The best time to learn coping strategies is when we are relaxed and comfortable. Practicing tools in the car, before bed, or as part of a story can embed the tools in our memory and body so we are prepared to use them when under stress.

Use these activities or games during long drives, waits, or just as a fun activity.

GAMES:

Games like I spy or Simon Says are engaging ways to practice mindfulness. They encourage children to focus on one thing at a time such as finding a specific item, color, or doing a movement such as “Simon Says touch your nose”

DEEP BREATHING:

Encouraging children to practice breathing techniques using party blowers, bubbles and pinwheels. Encourage them to use short quick breaths or long slow breaths. Notice how their body changes and feels when they breathe differently.

Ask children to breathe in counting to 3 and breathe out counting to 5 or release a big sigh. Both these activities will encourage children to notice how they are holding air in their body without realizing it. Releasing it will support muscle relaxation.

CREATE SENSORY EXPERIENCES:

Ask children to think about their senses:

- Name 5 things you can see
- Name 4 things you can hear
- Name 3 things you can feel
- Name 2 things you can smell
- Name 1 thing you can taste

Go for a mindfulness walk. Being in nature is good for our mind, body and spirit. While walking, look for something specific. Ask children to look for red or focus on the word connection.

ACTIVITIES:

Reading to children is a sensory experience that grounds in relationships with others. Choose books that encourage the exploration of feelings.

Music and movement encourage children to express feelings and get in touch with their bodies.

Coloring encourages children to focus and provides safe ways to make choices about what to draw and color to choose.



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