

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Mindful Smelling

Gather some household items for your children to smell, such as citrus fruit, a candle, flowers or fresh herbs. Encourage them to think about how they feel as they breathe in each scent.



The Happiness Board

Print family photos, sketch pictures of warm memories, or cut out happy scenes from magazines. Combine them into a collage, and place it somewhere your children can see it often, such as near the dinner table or within sight of their beds. When they're eating a meal or you're tucking them in at night, invite them to look at the board and reminisce with you.



Active Listening

On your walks, encourage your kids to be silent for several moments and identify every sound they can hear.

Breathing Buddies

Lie down on your backs with a favorite stuffed animal in your arms. Encourage the kids to watch the stuffed animal rise and fall as they slowly inhale and exhale. Learning to focus on breathing is a great life skill, but it can be hard for children to really understand

what this means. A visible cue, like a stuffed animal rising and falling, can help them better understand what we mean when we say, "Take a deep breath."

Press Flowers

Go outside and find some fresh flowers to press. Put each flower in a book, and spread the flowers out so there are spaces in between. Close the book and place something heavy on top. Every few days, move the flowers to different pages so they can continue absorbing the moisture. After 2 or 3 weeks, the flowers should be dry and you can gently move them. Your flowers can be framed, used in art projects,

BREATHE TO THRIVE

or preserved in a scrap book.

Creative projects like these are great for cultivating mindfulness as they help us focus our attention on what we're doing and express ourselves creatively!

Yoga

Find out if your local yoga studio offers child-friendly classes, or look up an easy tutorial online to try at home. Encourage your child to listen to his body and tune in to his breath, and make sure you try, too!



Meditate

Try attending a class together, using a meditation app, or downloading a simple meditation script and reading it to your child.

Journaling

Journaling is another mindfulness practice that we can easily incorporate in everyday life, and it can be a fun and meaningful way to spend time with your child. Here are a few ways to try journaling:

- » Buy journals for you and your child and dedicate ten minutes each evening to sitting down and writing about your favorite memories from your day.
- » Create a gratitude journal by passing a journal back and forth between you and writing down three things for which you are grateful.

Memory Box

At night, write down with your child a favorite memory to place in the box. Before the start of the New Year, read through all the memories you kept from that year.

No matter which exercises you try, keep in mind that mindfulness is the practice of being present in the moment, letting go of the past and future, and being open to your experience.

