



6 Activities to Introduce Mindfulness to Young Children

March 10, 2021 by Charity Quinn

How do you introduce mindfulness to young children and babies? Mindfulness is simply being aware, noticing, observing, paying attention, and being present in the moment. Babies and young children are naturally good at living in the now...they are not stuck in the past or looking too far into the future. So, perhaps, as you teach young children about mindfulness, you will discover something new for you, too!

Why is mindfulness important? We can all benefit from introducing mindfulness activities into our daily lives. Learning mindfulness from an early age can influence their learning for a lifetime! Being mindful calms your mind, relaxes your body, and soothes your worries. It helps you



Here are 6 fun and creative activities to introduce mindfulness to your young child:

Mindful Storytime

Make storytime into a mindful activity for your child as they read and look at books, both on their own and together with you. Books are an amazing way to practice mindfulness, as the pictures and the words help you use your senses to enter a story world! There are many books to help you learn mindfulness, but any and all books can help us pause and live in the now. Use the [Mindfulness for Young Children list](#) with links to amazing books and ebooks you can check out through Daniel Boone Regional Library.

It's fun to find books that are interactive, such as touch-and-feel books or books with songs and actions. You don't have to always sit still when you're reading – get your whole body moving in the story!

Imagine and tell your own stories! Tell your child stories about when you were young, or stories about the people you love, or about the day your child was born!

Mindful Breathing and Meditation

Introduce your child to breathing and meditation activities. Early childhood experts have made so many fun, interactive breathing and meditation exercises for little ones! You'll find many on our [Mindfulness for Young Children list](#) such as author Kara Willey's *Peaceful Like a Panda* and *Listen Like an Elephant*.

Start small – you can try even just one intentional breath – inhale, exhale. Choose a time of day you know will be helpful to take an extra breath. For you, it may be wake up time, before nap or bedtime, before or after a meal or snack, getting dressed, before getting into the car, or when you come home.

Make the breathing or meditation activity a playful time to learn and be together. Download and print our [Breathing Cards](#) with 3 fun breathing exercises for young children: Starfish breathing, Balloon Breathing, and Breathing with a Buddy. Read the instructions aloud and practice the breathing exercises with your child. Once you get the hang of it, you can use the cards as reminders to take an extra breath when you need it!

Mindful Sensory Learning

Help your child learn mindfulness through sensory learning activities.

Take a moment within your daily routines to pause and discover with all five senses. What do they see, feel, smell, taste, and hear? You can play the [Five Senses game](#), [Take a Listening Walk](#), or do a [Mindful Raisins activity](#) with your child to encourage them to notice what they are learning through their senses.

Introduce sensory play activities such as blowing bubbles, water play, playing with play dough, playing/ listening/dancing to music, or making sensory bins for your child.



introduce your little one to active mindfulness activities such as stretches and yoga poses. Lead your child through a few animal stretches or yoga poses each day. Watch or listen to a yoga video using one of the resources on our [Mindfulness for Young Children list](#). Movement activities like stretching and yoga can be an effective way to direct your child's energy positively, build gross motor muscles, and learn new skills!

ANIMAL YOGA



I am a giraffe.
EXTENDED MOUNTAIN POSE



I am an elephant.
STANDING WIDE-LEGGED POSE



I am a dog.
DOWNWARD-FACING DOG POSE



I am a cat.
CAT POSE



I am a butterfly.
COBBLER'S POSE



Participants will be entered into a drawing to win one of three Mindfulness Bundles with a yoga mat, book, and yoga ball, courtesy of Cynthia!

Mindful Balance and Focused Movement

Your child can learn mindfulness while working on balance and gross motor skills. Movement games are a silly and fun way to build large muscles and burn energy as well as teach focus, memory, and following directions. Young toddlers can work on following one direction at a time. As they grow, you can try giving two or more directions at a time to work on memory!

Try the following “Balance Spot” activity with your child. Use a small carpet circle, rug, or tape a small X on the floor to make a “balance spot.” Read out one line of directions at a time. Each line represents a new skill. You may have to show them first and have them copy you. Repeat lines if your child responds positively or needs more practice with that skill.

If they get frustrated with learning a skill, remind them, “You are still learning!” Patiently help them or move on to the next line or skill.

Read quickly through the directions if they can master the skills easily. Read slowly if they are working hard to learn and master the skills.

As you get comfortable, make up your own directions. Give your child a turn to make up directions and movements!

Balance Spot Directions

Stand on the “balance spot” and try these movements:

Balance on the spot on two feet. Lift arms out to the side. Arms straight up. Arms back down.

Lift one foot straight up off the floor. Count 1-2-3! How long can you balance? Foot back down. Lift the other foot straight up off the floor. Lift your arms out to the side to help balance. Foot back down.

Lift one foot in the air out in front of you. Foot back down. Lift the other foot into the air out in front of you. Foot back down.

Lift one foot into the air behind you. Can you lean forward and still balance? Try putting your arms out to the side or in front of you. Foot back down. Lift the other foot into the air behind you. Lean forward. Foot back down.

Step forward off the spot. Step backward onto the spot. Step sideways off the spot. Step sideways back onto the spot.

Stomp your feet on the circle. Stomp fast! Stomp slowwww.

Stand on two feet and lift up onto your toes. Count 1-2-3! How long can you balance? Back



Hop straight up and down on the spot.

Hop forward off the spot. Hop backward onto the spot. Hop sideways off the spot. Hop sideways back onto the spot.

Hop backwards off the spot. Can you hop forward over the spot?!

Keep feet on the spot and spin in a circle. Step off the spot and walk in a circle around the spot.

Lay on your tummy on top of the spot...

Lift up onto all four arms and legs. Lay down again. Lift up onto all four arms and legs. Keep one hand on the floor and touch the spot with your other hand. Switch hands. Still on all fours, keep one foot on the floor and touch the spot with your other foot. Switch feet.

Mindful Calm Down Spot

Helping your child identify all their feelings and emotions is an important part of learning mindfulness! Try making a Calm Down Spot where your child can sit and relax their body, especially when they are having big feelings of frustration or anger. This activity works best for ages 3+. Use the following steps adapted from the article [How to Create a Calm Down Spot by Coping Skills for Kids](#):

Step One: Make the Calm Down Spot Cozy

Choose a spot that is quiet and not too busy. It could be a corner in a room, or it could be an area in their own bedroom. Figure out what's going to work best for you and your family.

Step Two: Add Calming Tools

Give them a few items that will calm them and that they can play with quietly on their own – toy, stress ball, breathing cards, emotion rocks, stuffed animal, blanket, books

Step Three: Explain and Practice

Show them where the spot is and explain to them that this is a place they can go when they need a break or need to calm down when they get upset or frustrated. Let them add in their own specific items like a special blanket or a special stuffy. You want them to feel as cozy and comfortable as possible in this space.

When they are in a calm frame of mind, have them go into the spot and see how it looks and feels. It's always best to practice using these strategies before a crisis arises.

Step Four: Give a Calm Reminder



Will it work perfectly every time? Absolutely not! But it will be another coping skill to add to your child’s growing list of things to try to help deal with stress and big feelings.

Mindfulness can look so many different ways! Beyond these 6 activities, you can explore a new mindfulness activity every day of the month with our [March Mindfulness Calendar](#). You can also download our full [Mindful Activity Kit](#) for young children or [Mindful Baby Activity kit](#) for infants. We hope you enjoy introducing mindfulness to your child and discovering more together!

📁 Family Activities

🔍 mindfulness

- < Mindfulness for Children and Babies
- > The Importance of Getting the Covid-19 Vaccine



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