

Mindfulness  
for  
children

Each activity has a number of icons displayed at the bottom of the page.

The key below shows what type of activity it is.



see



care



feel



focus



listen

## Introduction

Children of all ages can benefit from mindfulness, the simple practice of bringing a gentle, accepting attitude to the present moment. It can help parents and caregivers, too, by promoting happiness and relieving stress.

What if the school day has a few moments of quiet and stillness? Numerous studies have shown the many benefits of teaching mindfulness to children. Through mindfulness education, children can develop a lifelong capacity for greater self-awareness, concentration, patience, resilience and well-being. Our creative mindfulness activities can be easily integrated into the school day to increase personal wellness and positive feelings, reduce reactivity and negativity, and improve overall classroom culture. They are a great way to teach mindfulness in the classroom.

The UK government reports in the guidance paper, Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, that “one in ten children and young people aged 5 to 16 has a clinically diagnosed mental health disorder and one in seven has less severe problems.”

This Mindfulness For Children activity booklet helps support teachers and parents support well-being for children through exclusive mindfulness activities that help children focus on their feelings, thoughts and environment. Busy classrooms need to be calm and safe places. Mindfulness for Children provides resources that teachers can use to create a calm, quiet, focussed time without distractions. They can be used anywhere, at any time and by everyone.

We also have an online app that includes these activities plus guided visualisations, muscscapes (mindful music) and soundscapes (mindful videos with sound effects). This online resource can be accessed by following this link:

<https://www.jmbeducation.com/mindfulness-for-children/>

## How to use the activities

Always start with the pink circles - these introduce the activity.

Read the introduction to the children.

Then move onto the blue circles. These are the activities themselves.

Read out the instructions to the children.

Blue circles also contain additional prompts and variations of the activity.

## Mindful listening

There are always sounds around us - even in a quiet room.

Sit with your back straight and your body relaxed. Rest your hands gently on your knees, and close your eyes if you feel comfortable doing so. Notice what it feels like to breathe in and out right now.

Listen to the sounds in the room. Don't make an extra effort to hear them. Just relax and listen - the sounds will come to you. What do you hear? A bird? Someone's clothes rustling?

Just listen - sounds will come up all on their own, like little surprises.

Make a list of the sounds that you heard.

What did you hear? Did anything surprise you? Did the sounds stay the same or did they change? Did you feel more relaxed after hearing some of the sounds? Did you feel less relaxed when you heard other sounds?

Can you draw a picture of the sounds that you heard?

How many sounds can you hear in 30 seconds?

How many sounds can you hear in 1 minute?



## Root like a tree

Take off your shoes and socks for this activity.

Now imagine tree roots growing from the bottom of your feet, down into the ground. Feel connected and rooted to the ground.

Slowly lift one foot and press the sole of your foot against the ankle on your other leg.

Clasp your hands together in front of you with your index fingers pointing out. Lift your hands over your head.

If you are standing up, keep your knees bent slightly. Place your arms by your side.

Sit or stand with your back straight and the soles of your feet flat on the floor. Keep your body relaxed, breathe naturally and concentrate on how your body and mind feel right now.

We are going to pay attention to the bottoms of our feet to help us relax, concentrate and to be aware of the moment.

Balance and relax. Feel rooted to the ground like a tree.

Move your attention to the soles of your feet and notice how they feel against the ground. Allow any thoughts and emotions in your mind to come and go.

Now lower your arms and try balancing on the other foot.

Try this activity on different surfaces, such as grass or sand.

As a challenge, try lifting one foot higher and pressing it against the inner thigh of your other leg.



## Changes

You will need some ice and a paper towel.

Look around you and notice something that has stayed the same and something that has changed. Maybe the weather has changed.

We are going to hold a piece of ice and hold it until it melts. We are going to notice the difference between a feeling and a reaction.

Many things change every day, such as the weather. Perhaps a flower has wilted or a branch on a tree has a new bud. Maybe your fingernails are longer than they were last week.

Before you pick up the ice, focus on how you feel. Focus on the thoughts in your mind. How does your body feel?

Maybe someone new has joined your class, or you have a different teacher today.

Some changes are big and some changes are small. Some changes might make you feel happy, and some may make you feel sad. It is okay to feel different when changes happen.

Now pick up the ice. It will feel cold. If the ice feels uncomfortable, take a few deep breaths and relax your hand.

Hold the ice for a minute. Notice how your hand feels now. Has the feeling changed? What about your thoughts?

Notice how the ice feels in your hand as it starts to melt. Do you like how it feels?

Squeeze the ice in your hand. What happens? How did the feelings in your hand change the longer you held the ice? Did your thoughts change too?

