

# Mindfulness

## Mindfulness in school

As a happy and healthy place to learn, we encourage children to look after their mental health as well as their physical health. This parent/carer guide suggests some different mindfulness strategies to support mindfulness with your child at home. Let us know how these techniques benefit your child.

## What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is about focussing on the present moment. This is done through a variety of techniques to calm the mind and help manage our reactions to our thoughts and emotions.

## Why mindfulness?

Studies in mindfulness have shown many positive benefits. These include stress relief, mental focus, emotion control and improved sleeping. Children have been taught they have the super power of mindfulness. This empowers them to take control of their emotions, make better choices and control situations.

## Further ideas

As well as the techniques in this guide, you could also try:

- Listening to guided meditations for children (<https://annakaharris.com/mindfulness-for-children/>)
- Listening to mindfulness music
- Mindful colouring and doodling
- Yoga poses especially balances
- Cosmic Kids yoga and mindfulness (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>)
- Headspace app
- <https://www.gonoodle.com/>

## Mindful breathing

Deep breathing is one of the best ways to calm down and relax. Here are some techniques to try...

### Breathing

#### hug

Start with both arms in the air. Put one hand across your tummy and the other on your shoulder. Breathe slowly in and out. Focus on the breathing.



### Breathing tree

In a standing position, raise your arms as you breathe in and release your arms back down as you breathe out.



### Ok breathing



Make an 'ok' sign on your tummy and slowly breathe in and out. This sign is to represent that it is ok to feel different emotions. No emotions are bad. Emotions change and you won't feel like that forever.

### Belly breathing

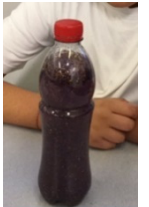
Sit or lay down, place your hands on your belly and close your eyes. As you take a big breath in, blow up your belly like a balloon (place a favourite toy there to feel it moving). Hold the breath briefly and then slowly exhale deflating the balloon in your belly.

### Nostril breathing

Place one finger on one nostril, breathe in, then place the other finger on the other nostril and close for a beat. Release and open the opposite nostril to breathe out.

## Emotion bottle

An emotion bottle is a bit like a snow globe. Shake it up and watch it. The bottle is our mind. The glitter is our emotions. Let the bottle clear and the glitter settle. To make your own, take a bottle, add glitter (different colours could represent different emotions), optional food colouring and seal.



## Starfish meditation

This is a great way to refocus the mind. Spread your fingers on one hand like a star fish. Slowly trace your finger around each finger as you breathe in and out. Continue until you feel calm.



## Finger sticks



This involves co-operation, trust, concentration and focus to control the sticks as you move your fingers.

## Focus on an object

Focus on an object for 90 seconds. If you lose focus, make an effort to bring the focus back to the object.

## Emotion blocking

In partners, face each other, placing palms together, and push as hard as you can. One partner is the mind and the other is the emotion. If we continue to fight against our feelings, we'll find it hard to control our mind.