

# Mindfulness with your Little One

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“It's important for young people to know that they are made the way they are made and they're beautiful and that's how they're supposed to be.”

**- Raven Symone, Actress**

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Mindfulness is a big word for a simple idea - it is consciously paying attention, with care, to one moment at a time. Our minds can easily be filled with busy thoughts. Too many things going on in your mind can become distracting or feel overwhelming and take you away from this present moment.

From a young age children can explore the practice of mindfulness in a fun and safe way. You and your little one can explore practices together that support your child in better understanding their mind and how they can put any busy thoughts to one side and focus on what is happening right here right now.

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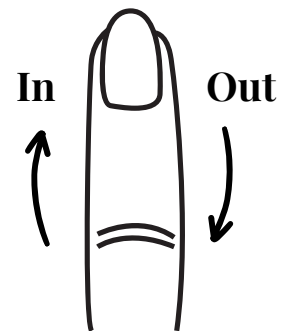
## Practice

These simple practices can be enjoyed together with your little one to practice focusing their attention in the present moment, knowing how to feel calm and giving themselves love and care.

## Focus

You can get a better understanding of what your attention can do by focusing on something. Creating sensations can give you something to focus on.

- ◆ First, together with your little one, try to focus your attention on how your hands feel right now. Look at your hands, wiggle and bend your fingers.
- ◆ Now, together clap your hands three times and then stop.
- ◆ What sensations can you feel? You can focus on one area of your hand such as a finger tip or expand your attention to your whole hand. Ask your little one to explain how they feel.
- ◆ Don't worry if their attention wanders, everyone's attention can drift and get distracted and that's okay. Try again another time!



## Calm

This practice can help you feel calm by paying attention to your breath. Matching mindful movement with your breathing.

- ◆ First, together with your little one, starting at the outside edge of your thumb, breathe in and use your index finger to trace up to the top, when you breathe out slowly trace back down the other side.
- ◆ Together, keep breathing in and out, tracing up and down for a total of five breaths across your five fingers until you reach the other side of your hand.

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## Care

To care means to feel concern for yourself and others. Let your body help you feel love and care, begin with the way you treat yourself.

- ◆ First, together with your little one, find a comfy seated position and sit up tall. Spread your arms wide, keep your chin up and take a long deep breath in.
- ◆ On your out breath wrap your arms around yourself into a hug, taking your hand to the opposite shoulder. Tuck your chin in and look down. Close your eyes if you wish. Notice and feel the comfort and love you have for yourself.