

# mindup For Families



## OPTIMISM AND HAPPINESS

### Model Optimistic Thinking:

When things don't go to plan, verbalize optimistic thinking to your child, e.g. instead of 'we're never going to get there with all this traffic' try 'the traffic is bad today, oh well, we'll get there when we can. What shall we play to pass the time?'

### Thoughts:

Catch them, Check them,  
Sometimes we get caught up in what our children aren't doing and forget the good things. Catch the things that make you smile and share the happy experience.

### Praise the Process:

Instead of praising your child only when they achieve something or do something good, praise the process that they went through to get there, praise the mistakes that they make. Managing challenges and failure is how we learn what is possible.

### Create a Happy House:

Is there an opportunity to create more laughter, fun, joy, pride, interest, calm, inspiration and hope in your home? How can the whole family contribute to this?

### Reflect on Happy Times:

Create a record of happy memories - a treasure chest (old shoebox), photo-book, scrapbook, video, diary, have discussions.

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## MINDFUL AWARENESS AND BREATHING

### 15 Mins Child Focus Time:

Take your child's lead, give them your undivided attention. Let them take the lead! Be present.

### Daily Mindful Routines:

Build in mindful activities to daily routines, walk mindfully to school or to the park. Encourage your child to be aware of their footsteps to notice their surroundings, e.g. spot different colors, different shapes. Introduce new adjectives to describe the world around them.

### Mindful Clouds:

Look at the clouds, ask them what they can see, e.g. light wispy clouds, dark puffy clouds. Maybe the clouds have different shapes that look like animals or cars, etc. Notice how they move. They come and go just like our thoughts.

### Balloon Breathing:

Try some balloon breathing. Ask your child to imagine a deflated balloon in their tummy. On the inhale, imagine the balloon blowing up and on the exhale, imagine it deflating. Repeat for several breaths. A great practice for bedtime.

### Brain Break:

Practise mindful breathing using the Brain Break script.

### Moshi Twilight Sleep Stories:

Create a calm atmosphere at bedtime with this audio-only app that helps children fall asleep independently using enchanting storytelling, magical music and soothing sounds.



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## GRATITUDE AND KINDNESS

### Be a role model of gratitude and kindness:

Demonstrate how to be kind and grateful. Children are always watching and learning from us.

### Every day kindness brainstorm:

Think of all the ways that you and your child could be kind. Write them down and each day choose one to do.

### Kindness to the planet:

Discuss with your child what you can do as a family to be kind to the planet, e.g. be mindful of your use of plastics.

### Difficult times:

Help your child to identify things that they can still be grateful for despite difficulties.

### Gratitude discussion:

Discuss at a family mealtime what you are all grateful for. Take it in turns to say 3 things.

### Write a thank you letter:

Encourage your child to write a letter of thanks to someone who helps them, teaches them or is kind to them.



## GETTING TO KNOW OUR AMAZING BRAIN

### Explore emotions and feelings to build emotional intelligence:

Discuss feelings with your child. When your child has been overwhelmed with emotions (an amygdala hijack) discuss how they felt and explain what's happening in their brain. When your child is calm, focused, happy or enjoying a quiet moment with you, explore and discuss their emotions and feelings linked to these experiences. This also helps to extend their emotional vocabulary.

### Bring emotional understanding alive through books/reading together:

Use opportunities when you're reading books together to consider how characters might be feeling, what emotions they're experiencing. Also, discuss what part of the character's brain might be in control in different parts of the story, consider the choices that they make and how they might reflect on those choices, make changes to situations etc.

### Make a calm down glitter bottle:

Use an empty plastic bottle and fill with water. Add a teaspoon of glitter glue and a few teaspoons of biodegradable glitter. Firmly secure the lid. Use the bottle to explain the brain as follows:

Shake the bottle and discuss how hard it is to see clearly through the bottle when the glitter is flying around.

Compare this to when the amygdala is in charge and it's hard to think clearly and make good decisions.

Explain that when the glitter settles it's like the amygdala calming down so clear decisions can be made from the prefrontal cortex.



## PERSPECTIVE AND EMPATHY

### Be a Role Model:

Talk to your child about your thoughts and feelings. Discuss how it can often be difficult to understand other people's views and feelings and that you have to practise very hard so that you can get better at it.

### Storytime:

Discuss the different perspectives of characters in stories that you read together. Ask your child to think about how the character may be feeling, and why or how they would feel if they were in the story.

### Over to You:

Step back when there's an opportunity for your child to solve a friendship problem. Let your child work through their own struggles. Encourage them to look at the problem from a different perspective. Can they practise using empathy, e.g. How do they think the other person feels?

### New Experiences:

Look for opportunities to broaden your child's experiences of learning about different cultures and different places. Discuss their views of what they discover.