**Mindfulness activities for children**

One easy way for children to dip their toes into mindfulness is through body poses. To get your kids excited, tell them that doing fun poses can help them feel strong, brave, and happy.

Have the kids go somewhere quiet and familiar, a place they feel safe. Next, tell them to try one of the following poses:

1. The Superman: this pose is practiced by standing with the feet just wider than the hips, fists clenched, and arms reached out to the sky, stretching the body as tall as possible.
2. The Wonder Woman: this pose is struck by standing tall with legs wider than hip-width apart and hands or fists placed on the hips (Karen Young, 2017).

Ask the kids how they feel after a few rounds of trying either of these poses. You may be surprised.

**The Mindful Jar**

This activity can teach children how strong emotions can take hold, and how to find peace when these [**strong emotions**](https://positivepsychology.com/positive-emotions-list-examples-definition-psychology/) feel overwhelming.

* First, get a clear jar (like a Mason jar) and fill it almost all the way with water. Next, add a big spoonful of glitter glue or glue and dry glitter to the jar. Put the lid back on the jar and shake it to make the glitter swirl.
* Finally, use the following script or take inspiration from it to form your own mini-lesson:

*“Imagine that the glitter is like your thoughts when you’re stressed, mad or upset. See how they whirl around and make it really hard to see clearly? That’s why it’s so easy to not make the right decisions when you’re upset – because you’re not thinking clearly. Don’t worry this is normal and it happens in all of us, even adults.*

[Now put the jar down in front of them.]

*Now watch what happens when you’re still for a couple of moments. Keep watching. See how the glitter starts to settle and the water clears? Your mind works the same way. When you’re calm for a little while, your thoughts start to settle and you start to see things much clearer. Deep breaths during this calming process can help us settle when we feel a lot of emotions.*

This exercise not only helps children learn about how their emotions can cloud their thoughts, but it also facilitates the practice of mindfulness while focusing on the swirling glitter in the jar.

Try having the kids focus on one emotion at a time, such as anger, and discuss how the shaken verse settling glitter is like that emotion.

1. Practice kind thoughts by prompting your child to think of 5 people they’d like to send kind wishes to
2. Bang on a pot/pan and invite your child to signal to you when they no longer hear the sound ‘hanging’ the air
3. Blow bubbles ‘slo-mo’ style, emphasizing a big deep breath in through the nose to fill the bubble… and out through the mouth as slow as possible
4. Squeeze and let go, tensing different muscles in the body for 5 seconds and then slowing releasing
5. Tune into the body by getting down on your child’s level and feeling each other’s heartbeats
6. Focus on breathing by building ‘Elsa’ ice sculptures’ by taking in a deep breath (don’t forget to smell the ‘chocolate fountain on coronation day!) and then slowly blowing out to create amazing ice
7. Have a ‘mindful’ snack by describing the smell, texture and taste of the food
8. Find shapes in the sky by laying down together and choosing different objects to search for in the clouds
9. Explore touch by choosing several objects, then comparing the difference in how they feel dry vs. wet
10. Sit down with your child and ‘colour your feelings’ together depicting each emotion with a new colour
11. “Press the pause button’ together during a tense moment (but not too tense) and check in with how each of you is feeling at that moment
12. Listen to some music and see how many different instruments you can each hear
13. Explore gratitude by going back and forth with your child (for as long as you can!) to name as many things possible that you are grateful for. Make a gratitude tree and write all the things you are grateful for down.