

Parent Workshop: Mindfulness

Mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.
- Mindfulness is a quality that every human being already possesses, it's not something you have to conjure up, you just have to learn how to access it.
- <https://www.mindful.org/what-is-mindfulness/>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4>

Mindfulness in Schools

- [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) has linked mindfulness to two core social-emotional skills: self-regulation and self-awareness.
- Skills in these areas teach students not only how to recognize their thoughts, emotions, and actions, but also *how to react to them in positive ways*.

The Potential Impact of Mindfulness Meditation Practices on Identity Development and Psychological Stability for Adolescents

By Dr. Ken Verni, PH.D.

"As we come to know ourselves within the good enough meditative environment, the self we experience is one which is ongoing, constantly emerging process as opposed to static or fixed entity".

"The repeated practice of mindfulness, can facilitate a freedom from feeling constrained by labels, transient physical or social limitations, or historical events that might otherwise be seen as confining to an individual to a fixed, immutable sense of who he/she is without the potential for alternative experiences of self over time. The experience and conceptualization of the self as fluid, emerging process can have a profoundly positive impact on adolescents as they struggle to make sense of the changes occurring in their inner and outer worlds." (Verni, 2007)

<https://www.mindfulnessnj.com/docs/ThePotentialImpact.pdf>

Mind Jar

- *"A Mind Jar is a meditation tool to use whenever a child feels stressed, overwhelmed or upset. Imagine the glitter as your thoughts. When you shake the jar, imagine your head full of whirling thoughts, then watch them slowly settle while you calm down"*
- This activity can teach children how strong emotions can take hold, and how to find peace when these strong emotions feel overwhelming.
- 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.

<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>



Mindfulness Activities

- Five Finger Breathing Activity
- Belly Breathing – taking deep meaningful breaths that fill our abdominal area
- Color Counting – counting the colors of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) to refocus on the present surroundings and moment.
- 5 Senses Body Scan – What do you see, feel, hear, taste, smell?
- Safari Exercise – take a walk around your neighborhood & utilize 5 senses to observe surroundings
- Mindfulness Card Deck
- Guided Imagery



7 Tips To Help Children Practice Mindfulness Successfully:



Use it for positive situations only



Practice mindfulness yourself



Create a daily routine for the children



Prepare the environment



Involve the children in the decision-making process



Share your experience of mindfulness



Encourage the children to share their experiences



PositivePsychology.com

NAMI Mercer County: Parent Support Network

National Alliance on Mental Illness: Mercer County

The Parent Support Network of Central New Jersey, developed by the Youth Mental Health Project and sponsored by NAMI Mercer, is a parent-driven family-focused program to support parents/caregivers who are concerned about their kids' struggles with anxiety, depression and/or emotional dysregulation.

NAMI Mercer hosts regular monthly meetings of The Parent Support Network of Central New Jersey, providing parents/caregivers who are concerned about their child's mental health and well-being valuable peer connections and the opportunity to share insights and resources through confidential, informational meetings run by and for parents. **(Please note: During the COVID-19 health crisis, meetings are being held virtually to help everyone stay safe and well.)**

<https://namimercer.org/find-support/parent-support-network/>

Phone: [\(609\) 799-8994](tel:6097998994)

Mental Health Hotlines

2nd Floor Youth Helpline of New Jersey - Call or Text 888-222-2228

New Jersey Hopeline - 1-855-654-6735

Crisis Text Line - Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor

The Trevor Project - Call 1-866-488-7386 or Text START to 678-678

Rutgers UBHC Acute Psychiatric Services - 855-515-5700

Penn Medicine Princeton Medical Center ER - 609-853-7730