

# MINDFULNESS FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS...



New Zealand children rank among the poorest in the world in terms of overall child well-being outcomes. (35/41 OECD countries\*).

Mindfulness is a form of grounding, in which a child is able to be fully present in the moment and pay attention to what is happening around them.

In practicing mindfulness, children are learning skills that will better enable them to face outside pressures openly and calmly to increase their own well-being.

## IN THIS RESOURCE:

- What are the benefits of mindfulness for children?
- Some techniques for teaching mindfulness

## BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS FOR TAMARIKI

Studies show that teaching mindfulness techniques to children can help to:

- Increase focus, self-control, attentiveness and contribution to classroom activities
- Improve academic performance, social skills and overall wellbeing
- Reduce levels of stress and instances of anxiety and depression



**“MA TE RONGO, KA MOHIO; MA TE MOHIO, KA MARAMA;  
MA TE MARAMA, KA MATAU; MA TE MATAU, KA ORA.”**

**From resonance comes cognisance; from cognisance comes understanding;  
from understanding, comes knowledge.**



## POSITIVE TIME

Positive time with a parent or caregiver, that focuses on the child's strengths, provides the child with support and will help them develop the confidence. Use this time to affirm your child and acknowledge their strengths. These affirmations can become internalised by the child and help to foster self belief.

## SIMPLE MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES TO USE AT HOME

### APPRECIATION PRACTICE

- Ask your child if they've ever felt let down or disappointed by someone or something
- Ask your child how that experience made them feel. Acknowledge those feelings and encourage your child to talk more about them
- Acknowledge your child's experience, then ask them to think of three good things that happened in their life at the same time as those disappointments. Name them together.

This is a simple exercise that is not focused on teaching your children to pretend as though they don't have negative feelings. It's about teaching your child that they can experience both negative and positive feelings at the same time, and the importance of accepting both.

The 'name three things' exercise can also be an effective technique to use when your child encounters future disappointments.



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## MINDFUL BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Using imagery and harnessing imagination can be particularly useful in helping make breathing exercises more fun for children, which in turn, makes it more likely that they will remember and use them!

- The Bunny Technique: Have your child imagine they are a bunny! Have them take three short breaths through their bunny nose and one long exhale out their bunny mouth
- The Snake: Similar to the Bunny Breath, have your child inhale through their nose, and then exhale through their mouth, making a long hissing noise as they do
- Birthday candle: Have the child imagine they have a birthday cake in front of them. Have them take a big sniff of the cake through their nose, the blow out the candles with their mouth.



## REFERENCES:

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