



Conewago Valley School District Counselors' Corner

December 2019

Mindfulness

Road to Relevance

Mindfulness is a fancy way of describing the process of taking a pause to focus on the task at hand without distraction from inner or outer influences. Mindfulness practices can promote in children--and adults--a higher level of emotional intelligence and the ability to be attentive in completion of complex tasks. Research has shown that when students are taught to use mindfulness in their day-to-day lives, their attention-level and grades increase, their mood increases and negative behaviors decrease, and they are able to self-regulate more efficiently (Foundation for a Mindful Society, 2019).

Mindfulness Activities for Conewago Valley School District Students

Mindfulness Activities:

Teachers and parents can partner to encourage students to practice some of the following activities:

- ❖ Just One Breath
 - Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit and set a timer for one minute.
 - Closing your eyes, breathe deeply in and out and pay attention to any stimuli around you (sensations, noises, etc).
 - Take a slow, deep breath and envision the air moving into your lungs as you inhale, and back out as you exhale.
 - Take another deep breath, hold it while counting to ten, then breathe out slowly.
 - Repeat as needed (Eidens, 2019).
- ❖ Hand to Heart
 - Stand up and jump up and down or do jumping jacks for one minute.
 - While remaining standing, place your hand over your heart and pay close attention to your heartbeat, your breathing pattern, and how your body (your arms, legs, feet) feel as your body begins to cool down (Eidens, 2019)..
- ❖ Tense & Release (Muscle Relaxation)
 - Starting with your feet, gently squeeze your muscles and then release them slowly.
 - Moving up, squeeze the muscles in your calves, thighs, bottom, etc.
 - Continue moving up your body until you reach your hands (Eidens, 2019).

How Does Mindfulness Work?:

- ❖ Mindfulness techniques can alter a child's mindset from a FIXED mindset to a GROWTH mindset.
- ❖ Mindfulness can assist in empowering children to try new things and take risks.

- ❖ Techniques such as deep breathing and grounding can assist children in overcoming anxiety, particularly in reference to when they make mistakes.
- ❖ Mindfulness can encourage children to choose positive self-talk, self-compassion, and love (Eidens, 2019).

What Can You Do at Home to Practice Mindfulness?

At dinner time, encourage your children to take the time to pay attention to the texture and flavors of their food. Using words like “sweet/salty, smooth, etc.,” ask them to describe their food. Discuss how each of the items on their plate nourishes their bodies in different ways. Think about and discuss where your food comes from.

Resources:

For More Information Visit:

- ❖ Foundation for a Mindful Society
 - <https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>
- ❖ University of California San Diego Center for Mindfulness
 - www.medschool.uscd.edu
- ❖ Stanford WellMD
 - www.wellmd.stanford.edu
- ❖ Harvard Health Mindfulness Resources
 - www.health.harvard.edu
- ❖ Portland Psychotherapy Clinic
 - www.portlandpsychotherapyclinic.com
- ❖ Headspace
 - www.headspace.com

References

Eidens, A. (2019). 5 Fun Mindfulness Activities for Children. *Big Life Journal*. [Link](#)
 Foundation for a Mindful Society. (2019). Getting Started with Mindfulness. *Mindful*. [Link](#)

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