

Breathing Wands

With this activity, children learn how paying attention to their bodies can help them learn how they feel and how to calm down. Here's a simple breathing mindfulness activity that can be used individually with a child or with a group.

Have the child or children start by noticing their breath. Have them put their hands up to their mouth and notice how the air is cool when they breathe in and warm when they breathe out through their mouth. Then have them notice the movement of their breath by putting a hand on their chest or stomach and noticing the rise and fall when they breathe in or exhale.

To add an extra visual cue, you can work with your child/children to help them make their own breathing wands to use at home or school.



Supplies Needed

- a toilet paper or paper towel roll
- markers or other decorative things
- streamers or thin ribbon that is light enough to be moved easily by their breath

Instructions

1. Take a toilet paper or paper towel roll and cut off the top (about an inch wide) and set aside.
2. Cut a straight line all the way up the remainder of the roll.
3. Use this cut to tighten the roll into a thinner tube and tape the top and bottom to hold it in place.
4. Allow child to decorate the roll with paint, markers, stickers, etc.
5. Tape strands of thin, light decorative ribbon or streamers along the inside of the small ring you cut off earlier.
6. Tape the ring on top of the thinner roll to make the wand.
7. Lead group in taking deep breaths and ask what they notice about theirs.

Gratitude Exercise

Gratitude: the quality or feeling of being grateful or thankful.

Materials:

- Pen
- This worksheet

Instructions:

1. Sit by yourself so you can work independently.
2. Reflect on recent and past events and people who have given you experiences for which you feel gratitude. List several of these experiences below:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Now that you have developed a list of things or people for which you experience gratitude, write about the experience below. If you're comfortable doing so, you can also use social media to share one of your experiences:



The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign is a collaboration of the Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) and the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) with support from the Maryland Department of Health - Maryland Behavioral Health Administration. The Campaign goal, with community and school champions across the state, is to raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health. For more information, please visit www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org



Center for School Mental Health
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