

TIPS FOR PRACTICING MINDFULNESS WITH YOUR INFANT

Mindfulness is the practice of focusing on the present moment with kindness, curiosity, and acceptance. During the first year of life, the most effective way to share mindfulness with a child is to embody it. These cards offer simple tips for practicing mindfulness with your infant.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's growth or want to talk with someone about parenting, please call **2-1-1** and ask for **Help Me Grow**. For more tips and activities, visit onlib.org/makingsmallmomentsbig.



TAKE A DEEP BREATH



When we're stressed, we take shallower breaths to get more oxygen into our blood. Taking deep breaths instead will help you calm your emotional response and regain control so you can respond appropriately to your baby, fully aware of your actions.

GROUND YOURSELF



When changing or feeding your baby, pause and pay attention to your feelings and to your body. Ground yourself in the present moment by looking at your child, making eye contact, smiling, and talking about what you're doing.

TAKE SOME TIME OUT



As the parent of an infant, it's hard to find time for yourself. Try to notice the signs that you need a break and consider what your self-care needs are. Taking time to focus on your needs will make you feel more grounded in your role as a parent.

CALM YOURSELF DOWN



Find a feeling of calm in your own body before engaging with your baby. Put your hand on your belly and inhale deeply as you count to four, feeling your belly rise. Pause at the top of your inhale, then exhale for a count of six, feeling your belly contract.

REFLECTIVE MIRRORING



Hold your baby quietly and maintain eye contact with a gentle, loving demeanor. This reflective mirroring behavior is a good way to practice mindfulness with your baby.

BE FULLY PRESENT



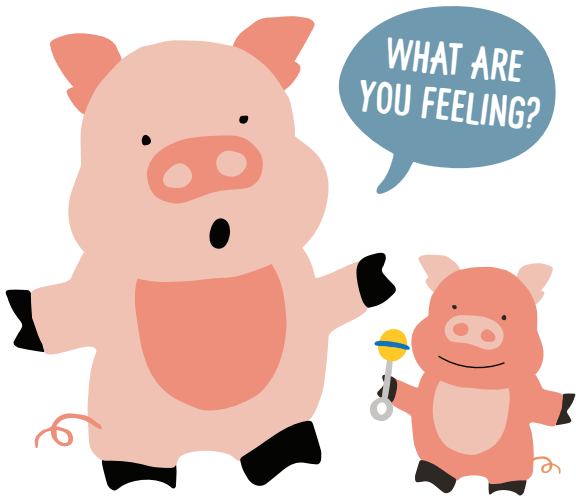
Experiment with being fully present during everyday activities with your baby, such as bathing. Notice the temperature of the water, the feel of the soap suds, and the sounds your baby makes as the water passes over him/her.

MINDFUL WALK



Find a space where you can safely walk indoors. Holding your baby securely, turn your gaze downward and begin walking slowly and deliberately. Every time you take a step, think of how much you appreciate your child and the ways he/she makes your life better.

BABY'S POINT OF VIEW



Try to see the world through your baby's eyes. What is his/her experience like in this moment? By mindfully tuning in to your baby with your full attention, you'll be better able to respond to his/her physical or emotional needs.

SELF COMPASSION



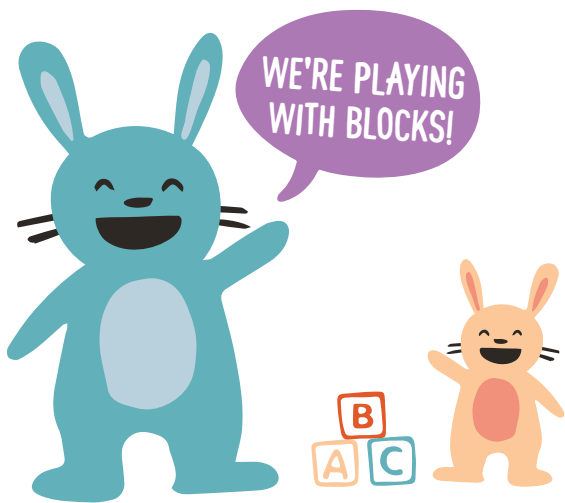
Take a few moments each day to congratulate yourself for your daily accomplishments, no matter how big or small. Place a hand on your heart, breathe deeply, and fill your mind with self compliments and kindness.

THOUGHT REDIRECTION



When you feel frustrated with your baby, take a few moments to acknowledge your thoughts and feelings and then try to replace them with loving ones, either directed towards yourself, or your baby.

GIVE YOUR FULL ATTENTION



Your baby is always intently focused on what you're doing in the present moment. Try to reflect this behavior back to him/her. Instead of thinking ahead to what you want to accomplish while s/he's napping, give your full attention to the present moment.