



# Talking Mental Health



## Mindfulness

By teaching children meditation and mindfulness skills we help them increase their well-being and enable them to meet the stresses of the world with presence, self-compassion, and openness. The benefits of mindfulness for children may include:

1. Increased focus, attention, self-control, classroom participation, compassion.
2. Improved academic performance, ability to resolve conflict, overall well-being.
3. Decreased levels of stress, anxiety and disruptive behaviour.

### Appreciation Practice: Three Good Things

#### Leading the game:

1. Ask your child: "Do you ever feel disappointed by something or someone?"
2. Ask: "How did that make you feel?"  
*Acknowledge their feelings and, if appropriate, talk about them.*
3. Say something like: "I bet even when you're feeling disappointed there are good things happening in your life, too. Let's name three good things together."

#### Tips for naming three good things:

1. Remind your child that the point of this game *isn't* to pretend they're not upset when they feel upset. It's to remember that they can feel two things at once: they can feel grateful for good things while feeling sad, hurt, or disappointed by challenges.
2. If children have trouble thinking of three good things on their own, help them discover some through discussion.
3. When children understand that this game is not about sweeping their feelings under the rug, the phrase "three good things" can become a playful response to the minor gripes that show up in family life.
4. To develop a habit of thankfulness, play *Three Good Things* around the dinner table, before bedtime, and at other times when the family is together.