

Healthy Living

Relaxation and mindfulness



Creating good relaxation and mindfulness practices in early years can help children to feel calm and more aware of their emotions.

Mindfulness and relaxation can teach children techniques to use when they need to calm down in everyday situations such as when they are feeling anxious during transitions.

Children often benefit from quiet time to think and reflect. How do you facilitate this?

Are there steps that you could take to further develop opportunities for the children to relax and be mindful in your setting?

Here are some tasks that will help you reflect on this.

Task 1

Do your environments promote and facilitate opportunities for relaxation? Look at your room plans. Is there a quiet comfortable area for children to relax? Are they inviting? Do they meet the needs of the children? Can they access them when they want? As an adult, would you find the space inviting? Do the adults use the space to role model how they relax?

Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Provide a quiet corner with bean bags/soft chairs
- Play relaxing music

- Introduce simple yoga/relaxation techniques- signs, books, photographs of children practicing relaxation prompts.
- Use tactile furnishings to aid comfort.
- Consider ways in which you can define the space e.g., through use of a tee pee, tent, or large materials/voiles, to create a cosy den.
- Does your outside space have relaxing areas.
- Is your routine flexible to allow relaxation around the child's needs?

Can you think or research 3 more ideas to add to this list?

Task 2

Do you embed opportunities daily for children to access relaxation or mindfulness in your curriculum? Here are some activities to get you started.

- Yoga session- [Children's Yoga Based On Books \(for 3-5 year olds\) | Cosmic Kids \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Mindful apps- [CBeebies Little Learners - Apps on Google Play](#)- Monster mindfulness
- Practice intentional breathing-[Rainbow Relaxation: Mindfulness for Children \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Gardening and planting seeds
- Colouring
- Blowing bubbles
- Finger breathing-[mindfulness in the early years - Google Search](#)

- Balloon play
- Cloud watching
- Star gazing
- Mindful jars-[How to Make a Mindfulness Glitter Calm Down Jar \(kumarahyoga.com\)](https://www.kumarahyoga.com)

Task 3

Take some time to create a 'soul soothing super kit' or a 'mindfulness mega box' for your setting. What could it include? Could you share this with parents? Consider the following-

- Modelling clay- for squeezing, moulding, thumping
- Feelings board- to open discussion or just to allow children to express feelings without the need to justify.
- Music – prerecorded calming tunes for listening too, or instruments for exploring.
- Paints/Crafts – to allow expressions of feelings in place of words.
- Fidget toys – for calming, soothing, aiding restlessness
- Bag of smells - such as lavender, mint, citrus, tea-tree oil.
- Sensory toys to aid mindfulness

Task 4

Use the links to the resources and apps to further your thinking around mindfulness and relation strategies.

- [Mindfulness activities for kids - Headspace](#)
- [DreamyKid Meditation App on the App Store \(apple.com\)](#)
- [Relaxation exercises to do at home with your kids | Save the Children UK](#)