Wellbeing Activities for Students

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Contents

Introduction 2
Mindfulness Activities 4
Guided Imagery 20
Gratitude 23
Physical Activities 26
Young person self-care activities 36
Suggested Weekly Wellbeing Routine 37
References 38

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Introduction

Supporting wellbeing

Supporting the wellbeing of children and young people is an important part of what students, families and schools do every day. It is especially important to ensure that children and young people's wellbeing is looked after in times of uncertainty and stress.

Supporting wellbeing not only helps children and young people to feel happier and less anxious, it will also help them to have positive interactions with the rest of the family and to learn more effectively.

Using the wellbeing activities

The activities in this workbook are designed to give students themselves, as well as parents and carers and school staff suggested ways of supporting your students' wellbeing - either at home or as part of classroom activities at school.

Given that schools know their students and communities best, your child's school is best placed to guide you about what resources will support your child's learning at home.

When should children and young people do wellbeing activities?

- Some schools include wellbeing activities for students as part of the school day.
- Regardless of whether wellbeing activities are done as part of the school day, children and young people can do wellbeing activities at any time - on their own, with family members, or with a friend.
- Some parents or carers may chose to do wellbeing activities with their child or even with the whole family. Activities that support wellbeing are beneficial for people of all ages and can provide a great opportunity for family members to bond and experience positive emotions together.

Some of the activities in this booklet (for example "mindful breathing" and "body scan") can be done every day by your children or young people and are good examples of activities, that the whole family does together each morning or evening.

Each activity in this book is designed to take between 5 and 15 minutes (but some can be done for longer if you wish). A suggested weekly wellbeing routine is included at the end of this book – but this is just a guide to help children and young people or families or teachers think about what routine would work best.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Can wellbeing activities in this book be done with children and young people of all ages?

Although this book is designed to be used with all school-aged children and young people, some activities in this book are best suited to Primary or Secondary aged students. A picture against the title of each activity lets you know whether the activity is best suited for:

Children and young people of all ages;

Primary aged children; or

Secondary aged children.

While some activities in the book may be well-suited for children and young people with disability including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), specific resources for how to support the wellbeing of children and young people with ASD can be found on the Department's learning@home website at https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home/inclusion/autism.

Description of each type of wellbeing activity

Mindfulness Activities

Mindfulness is noticing what is happening right now in the present moment. When children and young people notice what is happening around them, it can help them to calm down, especially if they are feeling sad, angry or frustrated. Mindfulness can help them deal with difficult emotions, and can help them feel happy and feel good.

A simple mindful breathing activity is a good place to start. Then try activities focussed on the senses, which are also included in this book (e.g., mindful eating and mindful walking). Introduce mindfulness exercises when things are calm and participants in a good space. Mindfulness activities are a great way to connect as a family or as a class.

Gratitude

It is always important, especially In difficult times, to appreciate the things that we may take for granted – like having a place to live, food, clean water, friends, family, even access to technology. Gratitude is pausing to notice and appreciate these things, it's taking a moment to reflect on how fortunate we are when something good happens — whether it's a small thing or a big thing.

Did you know that practising gratitude for 21 days in a row can re-train the brain to look for positives in the world instead of negatives? By simply being grateful, children and young people can experience a greater sense of optimism, happiness and calm.

Physical Activities

It is very important that children and young people engage in physical activity. Physical activity not only has physical benefits, but also benefits for mental health and wellbeing. Including the activities in this book into a daily routine will support a balanced approach to each day.

Young Person Self-Care Activities

It is important that children and young people have the opportunity to do activities that support their wellbeing and that they enjoy. A number of activities are listed in this book but there may be other activities that are not included that help to make children and young people feel happy. Even during difficult times, as much as possible, children should continue to do the things that bring them joy.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Mindfulness Activities

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Mindful hand washing

Washing your hands is always important to keep you healthy and safe. Washing your hands provides a great time to practice mindfulness and to be in the present moment.

Instructions:

1. Turn on the water and listen to the sound it makes as it comes out of the tap and goes down the drain.
2. As you put soap on your hands, think in your head or say out loud what it feels like.
3. As you rub the soap together in your hands, notice how slippery it is. Do you see bubbles coming up between your fingers?
4. Now remember to wash your hands for 20 seconds. While you are doing this:
   a. focus on your hands and what the soap and water feel like
   b. listen to the sound of the water and any other sounds you can hear around you.
5. As you wash the soap off your hands, watch the bubbles and the water going down the drain – imagine your worries going down the drain with the water.
6. As you dry your hands on a hand towel, notice the feeling of the towel on your hands – is it soft? Or scratchy?
7. When your hands are dry, take a moment to think. Now your hands are clean, you are ready for your next task. How does that make you feel?
8. If you are still worried about anything, talk to someone at your home or at school about it - it always helps to talk to someone else about how you're feeling.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Glitter jar

This activity can teach children about how strong emotions can sometimes be overwhelming, and how to find calm when these strong emotions take over.

Tip: make sure an adult helps you with this exercise

Materials:

- Jar or bottle that will not leak liquid
- Glitter and/or other small objects to add such as LEGO or beads
- Food colouring
- Clear glue
- Hot (not boiling) water
- Spoon or stick to mix

Instructions

1. In the jar or bottle, mix the clear glue and hot water.
2. Add a very small amount of food colouring to the water and glue mixture.
3. Choose a glitter or object to add to the mixture.
   - Imagine the object or glitter represents a feeling such as sadness, anger, fear, happiness, love or anything else you feel.
4. Add that glitter or object to the mixture.
5. Keep adding glitter or objects and assigning feelings to them.
6. Fill the jar or bottle all the way to the top with the hot water.
7. Mix the contents together with the spoon or stick.
8. Make sure the lid is on tight!
9. Shake the jar or bottle and watch all the objects interact.

Questions to think about

What sorts of things or events make the glitter and objects (emotions) in the jar swirl? Say them out loud as you shake the jar.

- **Distressing events**
  - Losing a game
  - Missing friends
  - Getting frustrated with a parent or sibling
  - Scary stories on the news
  - Sick family members
- **Positive events**
  - Spending time with family
  - Making a new friend
  - Getting a good grade
  - Learning a new skill
  - Winning a game

Notice how it is hard to see through the jar with all these events going on.

Now, watch what happens when you keep the jar still. Does the water begin to clear?

The same thing happens in our mind when we stop for a little while and are mindful…bad or hard feelings start to go away and we can focus on other things that make us happy or calm.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Mindful breathing

This exercise can be used as a relaxing and thoughtful way to start the day, end the day or help relax and calm your child.

> **Tip:** find somewhere quiet or put on some relaxing music in the background. For younger children, this can be done with a parent or teacher guiding them. For older children, it can be done alone or with others.

1. Find a comfortable place to sit or to lie down on your back.
2. Place your hands on your stomach.
3. Take a big deep breath – in through your nose and out through your mouth. Do this three times and then gently close your eyes.
4. Continue to slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud).
5. Hold your breath and count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud).
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud.
7. Count 1, 2, 3 in your head (or out loud) and then breathe in again through your nose.
8. Repeat these steps for five minutes and think about the questions below while you are breathing.
9. When you have finished, gently open your eyes. Have a look at the room around you and think about how you feel. Do you feel different compared to before the activity?

Questions to think about

- What parts of your body move when you breathe in?
- Do different parts of your body move when you breathe out?
- Can you feel your hands moving?
- What does it feel like when you breathe in – where does the breath go?
- What does your breath sound like?
- What other sounds can you hear while you're breathing?
- Does your body feel heavy or light while you're breathing?

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

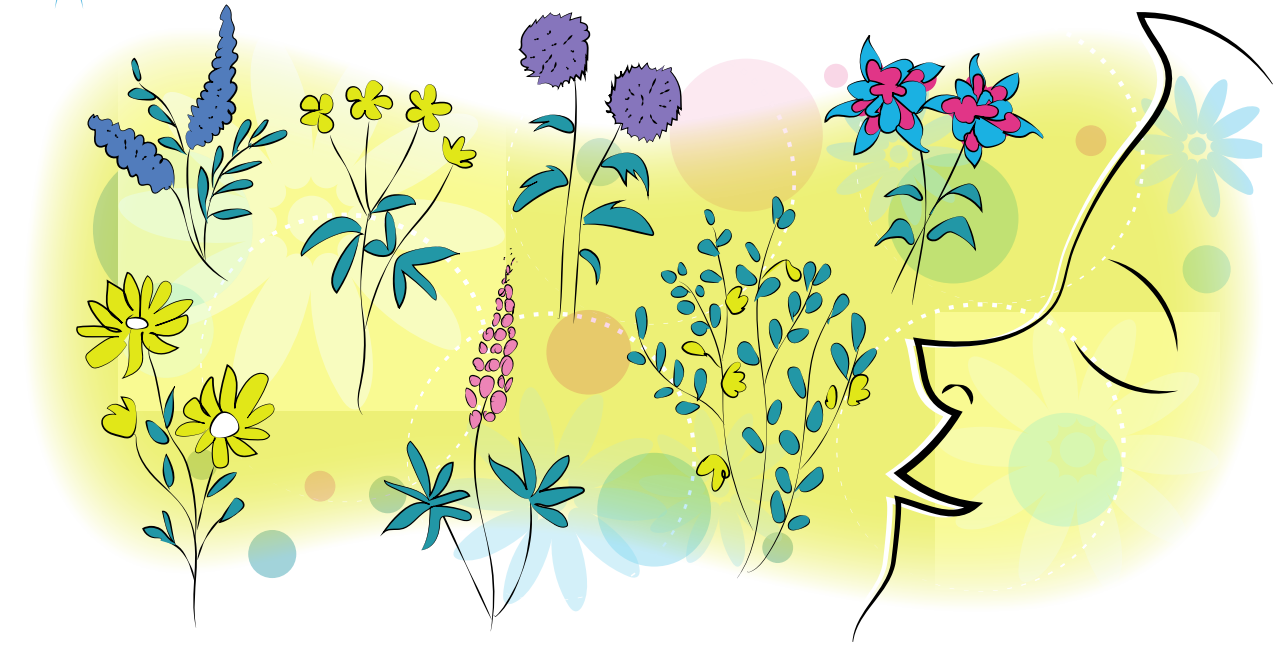
Smell the flowers

Tip: try this with real flowers and plants outside! Adults should supervise young children

1. Find a flower to smell or imagine you can smell a flower.
2. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
3. Hold your breath and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
4. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
5. Repeat with as many flowers you can think of or find.
6. Younger children may then want to draw and colour in all the flowers they can think of or find.

Questions to think about

- Which one did you think smelt the best and why?
- What did you smell when you breathed in?
- What did you smell when you breathed out?
- Could you feel the flower?
- What did it feel like?
- Did smelling the flowers remind you of any memory from your past?



© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Best belly buddies

Since breathing is something that we do all the time, it is one of the best tools you have to bring you into the present moment, and there is no better way to engage young children than by using their favourite soft toy.

> **Tip:** pick your favourite soft toy as your belly buddy. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Lie on the ground on your back.
2. Place your soft toy on top of your belly.
3. Look at your toes.
4. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
5. Hold your breath and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
7. Repeat these steps for at least 3 minutes.

Questions to think about

- Can you see the toy on your belly?
- What does it feel like having your toy on your belly?
- What did your toy do when you breathed in?
- What did your toy do when you breathed out?
- What does the air sound like when it comes in your nose?
- What does the air sound like when it comes out your mouth?
- What do you think it would feel like for your toy sitting on your belly?

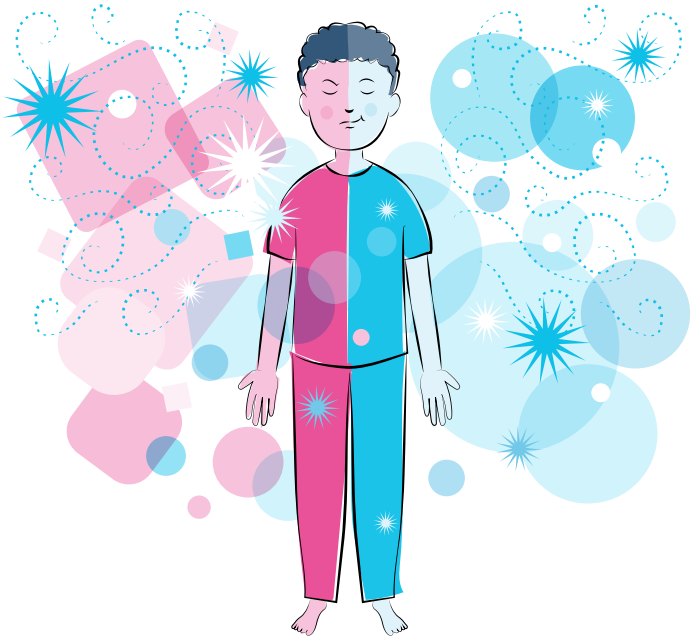
© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Colourful breathing

Colour breathing is a simple stress reducing activity that can be learned quickly. It involves picturing a colour in your mind that represents how you want to feel.

Tip: this works best in a quiet and comfortable place. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Sit or stand so that your body is straight.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Think of a colour that makes you feel relaxed or happy.
4. Imagine that colour is all around you.
5. Now think of a colour that makes you feel sad or angry.
6. Slowly breathe in and imagine the relaxing or happy colour filling your lungs.
7. As you breathe out imagine the colour that makes you feel sad or angry mixing with the colour that makes you feel relaxed or happy.
8. Watch as the sad or angry colour mixes with the relaxed or happy colour and it disappears.
9. Each time you breathe in, imagine more of your relaxing colour filling your body – your whole body is filling with that colour and you are feeling relaxed.
10. Each time you breathe out, see the sad or angry colour leaving your body – your worries and sadness are being let out and going far away.
11. Keep going until you stop breathing out your sad or angry colour – now there is none of that colour left and only the relaxing colour is in your body.



© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Breathing together

This activity is very similar to mindful breathing, but with the added benefit of doing it with someone. Can be used at the start or end of the day.

Tip: this works best in a quiet and comfortable place

1. Find a partner. This can be other students in the class, or, if you're at home, a brother, sister, mum, dad or someone else.
2. Sit back-to-back with your partner.
3. Sit up straight and gently close your eyes.
4. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
5. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
7. Repeat these steps for at least 3 minutes while you think about the questions below.

Questions to think about

- How can you tell that your partner is breathing?
- Did you breathe at the same time as your partner?
- What does their breath feel like, is it fast or slow?
- What feelings did you feel while breathing with your partner?
- Do you feel closer to your partner after doing this exercise?

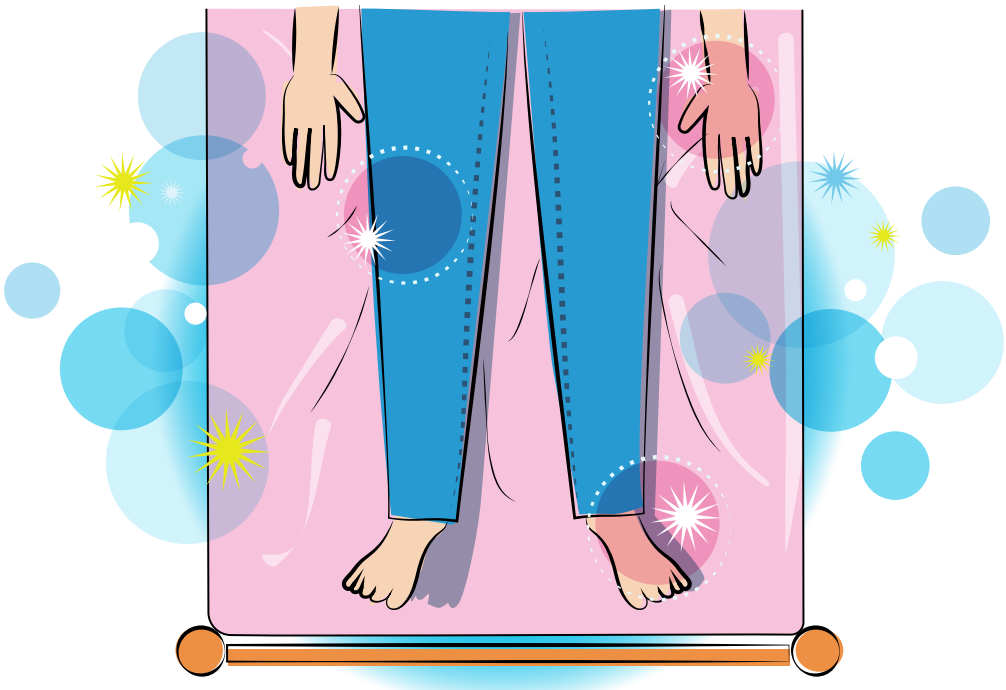
© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Body scan

The purpose of a body scan is simply to notice and be aware of your body and where the stress or tense feelings may be.

> **Tip:** this works best somewhere comfortable and quiet. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Lie down on your back somewhere comfortable.
2. Keep your body still.
3. Take three deep breaths in and out and then gently close your eyes.
4. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
5. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
7. You are going to start at the lower end of your body and work your way up.
8. Focus on your feet and your toes for 10 seconds. Ask yourself:
   a. How does this body part feel?
   b. Wiggle your toes – how does this feel?
   c. Can you feel this part of your body touching the floor? Which parts are touching and which parts are not?
   d. Is there anything else touching this part of your body (like clothes, furniture)? What does it feel like?
   e. Does this body part feel cold or warm?
   f. Does this body part feel relaxed or tight?
   g. Does this body part feel heavy or light?
9. Next ask the same questions about your ankles, then knees, then legs – all the way up your body until you reach your head.
10. If a body part feels tight or heavy, slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
11. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
12. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
13. Repeat this until the body part feels relaxed.
14. When you have reached the top of your head, gently open your eyes. How does your body feel now? Do you feel more relaxed?



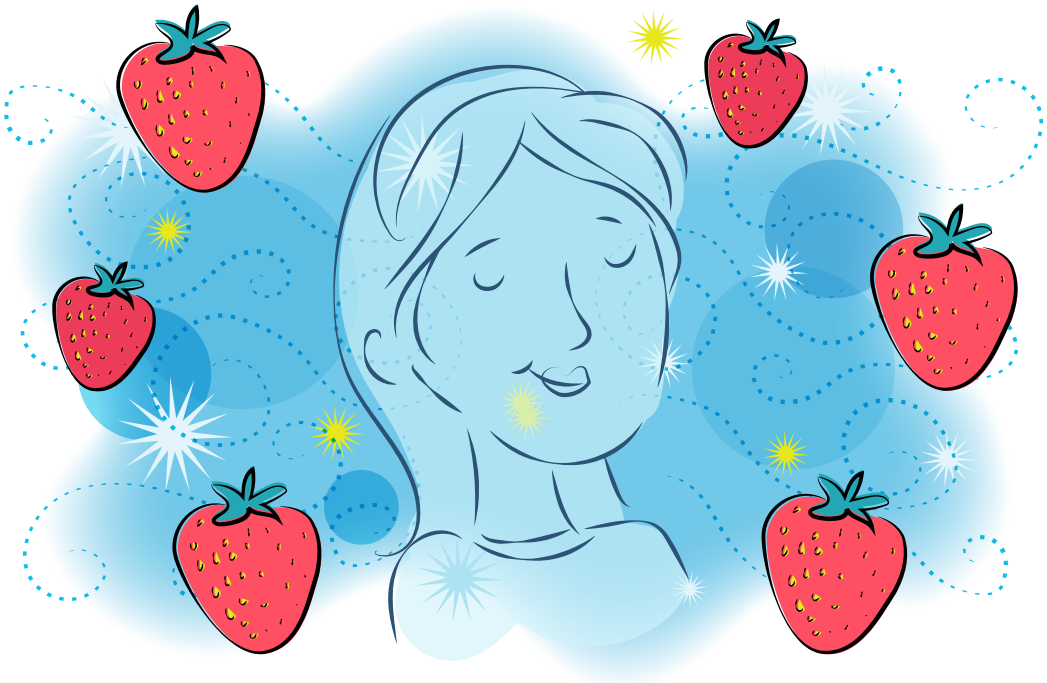
© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Mindful eating

Eating is something that is rarely done mindfully by young people or adults. Mindful eating is a valuable task for children to slow down the mind and become more focused on the present.

> **Tip:** choose a food you love to eat! Maybe a piece of your favourite fruit or a muffin. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Sit somewhere comfortable and quiet.
2. Close your eyes and hold the food you have chosen in your hand.
   a. What shape is the food?
   b. Is it heavy or light?
3. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
4. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
5. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
6. Hold the food up to your nose and take a deep breath in and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
   a. What does the food smell like?
   b. How does the food make you feel?
7. Take a small bite and keep the food on your tongue for a moment.
   a. What does the food feel like on your tongue?
   b. What can you taste?
8. Swallow the food.
   a. What did the food taste like? Was it sweet or salty or bitter?
   b. What did the food feel like as it went down your throat?
9. Try these steps again with bigger or smaller bites and ask the same questions.
10. Keep going until you finish the food.

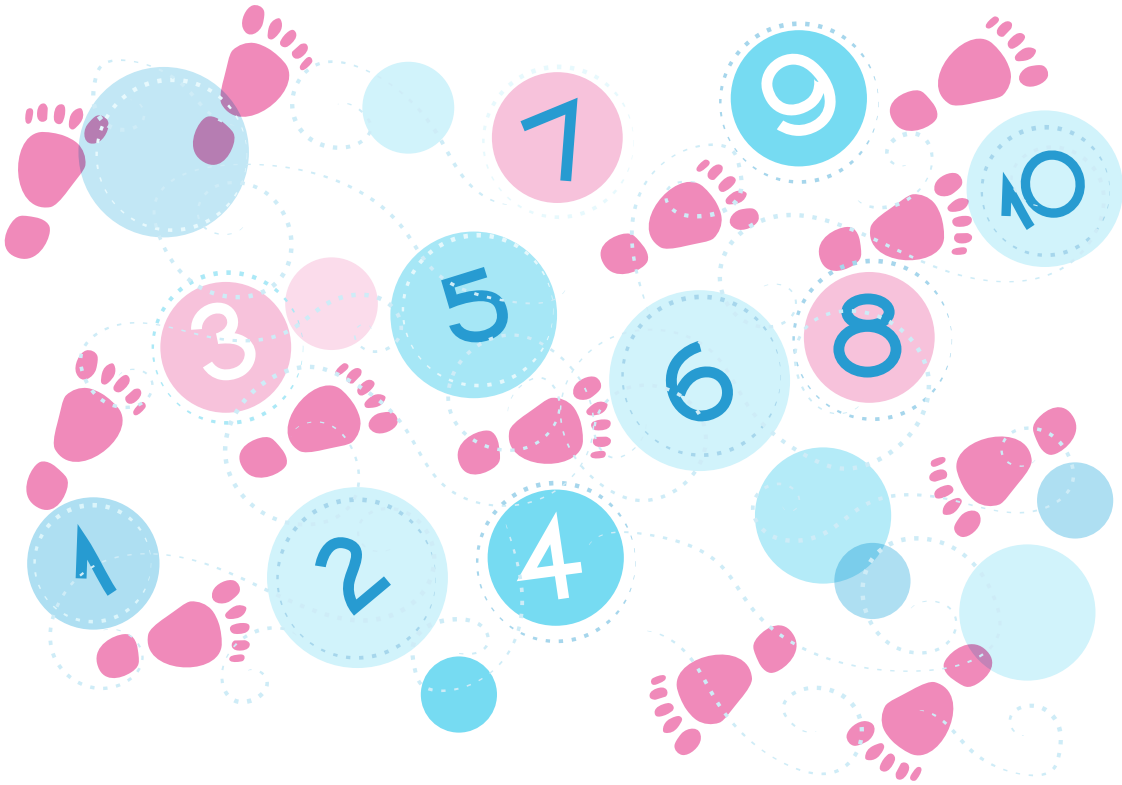


© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Mindful walking

A mindful walk is an excellent way to clear the mind of clutter and restore a sense of focus.

Tip: if you are able to go outside into a garden or on a veranda/balcony, try this in the shade or wearing a hat and sunscreen. Young children will need an adult to guide them while older children may do this independently.



1. Find an area that you can walk in a straight line for 10 steps.
2. Decide where you will start and end your walk.
3. Stand up straight at the start mark.
4. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
5. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
7. Take 10 slow steps until you reach your end mark.
8. While you're walking:
   a. Notice how your body moves with each step – pay attention to the lifting and falling of your foot. Notice movement in your legs and the rest of your body. Notice how your body moves from side to side.
   b. What surface are you walking on?
   c. Can you feel it under your feet? What does it feel like?
   d. Which part of your foot touches the ground first?
   e. Do you feel heavy or light when you walk?
   f. Do you make any sounds when you walk? What does it sound like?
   g. Are there any other noises around you? What are they?
9. Turn around and walk 10 steps back to your start mark.
   a. Are there any changes from the way you walked the first time? What are they?
   b. Are there any new noises this time?
10. Try doing this exercise with and without shoes.
    a. Does it feel different when you wear shoes and when you do not?
    b. What are these differences?

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Mindful listening

Practicing mindful listening may help children to improve the way they interact with others by allowing them to actively listen to what they have to say.

> **Tip:** you can listen to sounds you find around the house or in the classroom, or play a recording of sounds that you might hear in nature or other calming music. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Find a place where you will hear the chosen sound without too many other sounds getting in the way.
2. Sit somewhere comfortable.
3. Sit up straight.
4. Gently close your eyes.
5. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
6. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
7. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
8. Focus on the sound that you have chosen.
9. If you feel like you start to think of other things, try to change your attention back to the sound.
10. Keep slowly breathing in and out and counting 1, 2, 3 in your head.
11. Keep your focus on the sound until it stops.
12. When the sound has finished consider the questions below.

Questions to think about

- How did your body feel while you were listening? Was it relaxed or tight?
- Was it easy or hard to focus on the sound?
- Did you hear any other sounds? What were they?
- How do you feel after this activity

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Spidey-Senses

This activity allows children to engage all of their senses while acting like their favourite superhero.

> **Tip:** try this exercise in a superhero costume or make your own with the help of an adult! Young children will need an adult to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Stand or sit up straight.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Put your hands on your hips.
4. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
5. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
6. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
7. Think of a superhero and imagine you are that superhero.
8. You might imagine that you are Spiderman and turn on your 'Spidey Senses' or have the super-focused smell, taste, touch, hearing, or sight that Superman has when protecting the world.
9. Open your eyes!
10. You can now see, hear, smell, taste and touch like that superhero!
11. Focus on the sounds you can hear.
    a. What can you hear around you?
    b. Can you notice sounds you didn't hear before? What are they?
    c. Can you hear anything outside? What is it?
    d. How many different sounds can you hear?Focus on what you can see.
    e. What can you see now that you did not before?
    f. Can you see small things?
    g. What colours do you see?
12. Focus on what you can smell.
    a. What do you smell in the air?
    b. Are there new smells that you didn't notice before?
    c. Where do you think the new smell is coming from?
13. Focus on what you can taste.
    a. What can you taste?
    b. Does your mouth feel dry or wet?
    c. Do you have a sweet, sour or salty taste in your mouth?
    d. Can you feel your tongue in your mouth?
14. Focus on what you can touch.
    a. Can you feel your feet? What are they doing?
    b. Can you feel what you are sitting or standing on? Is it soft or hard? Wet or dry? Smooth or bumpy? Cold or hot?
15. Keep your superhero senses switched on as long as you like. Think to yourself or tell someone how it makes you feel being a superhero.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Test your senses

An excellent activity to engage the five senses and notice the difference in how each sense is engaged.

> **Tip:** this works best in a quiet and comfortable place. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
2. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
3. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.

See

1. Look around the room you are in.
2. Notice 5 things as you look around. Try to pick out things you would not normally notice.
3. Focus on the shapes, colours and different patterns that surround you.
4. Write down the 5 things you can see.

Feel

1. Now, close your eyes. Bring your attention to the things you are currently feeling.
2. Can you focus on 4 things you can feel?
   a. Where are your hands? Are they touching anything? What does it feel like?
   b. Can you feel your shirt against your skin?
   c. What about your body? Can you feel where you are tense or relaxed?
   d. Can you feel the air around you? Is it warm or cold? Is there a breeze?
   e. Can you feel what you are sitting on? Is it soft or hard? Wet or dry? Smooth or bumpy? Cold or hot?

Hear

1. Keep your eyes closed.
2. Focus on 3 things you can hear.
   a. What sounds can you hear around you? Can you notice anything different to before?
   b. Can you hear noises in other rooms?
   c. Outside?

Smell

1. Keep your eyes closed.
2. Focus on 2 things you can smell.
   a. What different scents can you pick up around you?
   b. Are there strong smells around you? What are they?
   c. Are there familiar or new smells?
   d. Do you like the smells?

Taste

1. Keep your eyes closed.
2. Focus on 1 thing you can taste.
   a. How your tongue feels resting between your teeth?
   b. Can you still taste the last thing you ate?
   c. Can you taste something that you can also smell?

Open your eyes and write down or draw all the things you felt, heard, smelt and tasted.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Mindful Safari

Everyone spends a lot of time indoors during the day. This activity allows children to get outside and move and refresh the mind.

> **Tip:** if you are able to go outside into a garden or onto a veranda and you're in the sun, wear a hat and sunscreen while exploring outside! Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

Explain that you are going to go on an exciting Safari adventure to look for animals that jump, fly, crawl. To look for plants and objects that may be big or small and to listen for different sounds.

1. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
2. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
3. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
4. Now, make sure to move slowly and stay quiet and calm so you don't scare away the animals.
5. Engage your super-senses of sight, smell, hearing and touch while you walk around.
6. Focus on something such as a plant, animal or object you can see.
   a. What does it look like?
   b. Is it small or big?
   c. What colour is it?
   d. Does it smell? What does it smell like?
   e. Can you safely touch it? What does it feel like?
   f. Does it move? How does it move?
   g. Have you seen this before?
7. Write or draw all the things you find! Show someone else in your classroom or home of all of the things that you have discovered – you could even write a story about it to read to them later.

Alternative Step 6: Rainbow Walk

Instead of focusing on an object, plant or animal, take a walk, and look for something red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Keep going through the colours, in order, until the end of your walk.

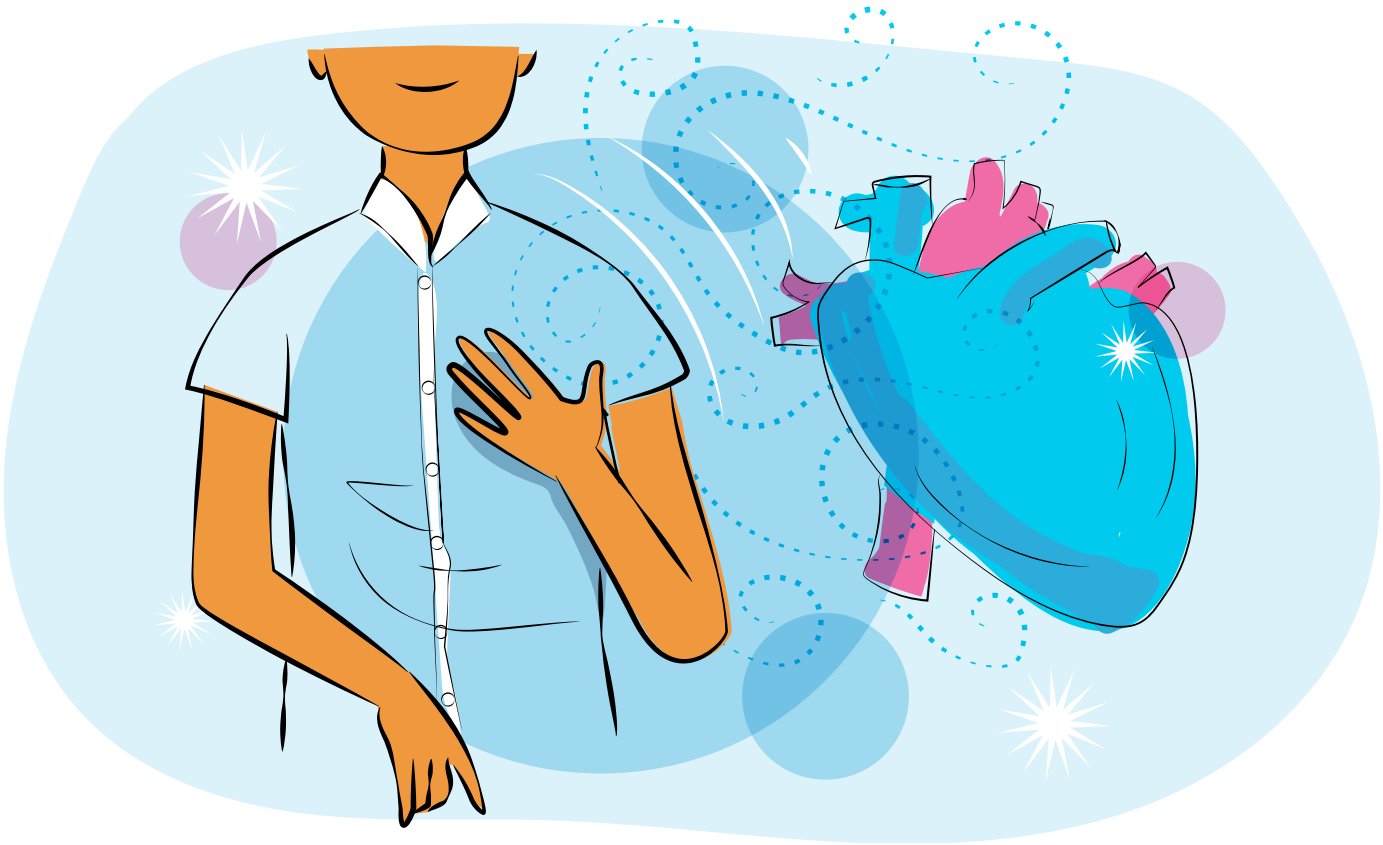
© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Mindful heartbeat

The mindful heartbeat is a good exercise to focus on the sensations in the body and when a child may be stressed or anxious.

Tip: this works best in a quiet and comfortable place. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

1. Sit somewhere comfortable.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
4. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
5. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
6. Put your fingers somewhere on your body where you best feel your heartbeat (this can be your neck, wrist or over your heart).
   - Is your heart beating fast or slow?
   - Is your breathing different?
   - How do you feel? Relaxed, tense, excited?
7. Open your eyes and stand up.
8. Jump on the spot or do star jumps 10 times.
9. Sit back down and close your eyes.
10. Put your fingers in the same spot to feel your heartbeat.
    - What has changed?
    - Is your heartbeat slower or quicker?
    - Are you breathing slower or quicker?
    - Are there any other changes? Are you sweating?
11. Keep your eyes closed until your heartbeat slows down again.
12. Once your heartbeat has returned to the same speed as before you did the jumps, open your eyes.



© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Guided Imagery

Below are three guided imagery activities. Although the story-like nature of the activity may appeal more to younger children, there are benefits of guided imagery for children and young people of all ages. Young children will need a parent to guide them while older children may do this independently.

A. ICE MELTING

1. Sit or stand somewhere comfortable.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Sometimes we have those moments when we can't move or speak and we just freeze. But we can get better through practice and melt that freezing feeling away.
4. Scrunch up all your muscles so you are as hard as a block of ice. Hold tight like an ice statue. Feet tense, legs tight, belly tight, squeeze your fists, close your mouth, keep your eyes and jaw tight.
5. Now slowly begin to melt and let go. Feel your chin, your mouth melt. Slowly open your eyes, feel your shoulders melt and hands let go. Take that feeling down to your legs and feet. Feel you melting away.
6. Now, scrunch up again. Feel your muscles tighten, hands clinched, mouth tight.
7. Now let go.
   - This time imagine your block of ice is melting into the floor.
   - Your muscles are getting softer as you melt.
   - Let your fingers melt.
   - Let your feet melt.
   - Let your back melt.
8. Now wiggle your fingers to wake them up.
9. Wiggle your toes to wake them up. Open your eyes. Sit up slowly.

Questions to think about

- How did that make you feel?
- What could you do to help get rid of stress next time you feel tense or angry?

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

B. FLOATING CLOUD

This activity requires someone else to read the imagery to the person doing the activity.

1. Sit somewhere comfortable.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Imagine that you are floating on a fluffy white cloud.
   - Feel how soft it is.
   - How relaxed it makes your arms.
   - How it makes your legs relax and feel light and floaty.
   - How it makes your back feel soft.
4. When you are all soft and settled, the cloud is going to slowly lift you up. The cloud can float wherever you choose. It can take you really high or can keep you near the ground.
5. The cloud is very safe, calming and relaxing.
6. The cloud is now going to take you on a ride to your favourite place.
7. Can you imagine now what your favourite place looks like?
8. See the sights around you as you are floating on the cloud.
   - Is there something nice there?
   - Is there something fun to do?
   - Is there something peaceful there?
9. It is now time to return to your day.
10. Let the cloud take you back into the room.
11. Imagine that it is gently setting you down now.
12. Feel the cloud disappear as you wiggle your fingers to show you are back.
13. Wiggle your toes to show you are back.
14. Open your eyes, and slowly sit up.

Questions to think about

- How did that exercise make you feel?
- Could you try this activity when you are getting ready to go to sleep to help you relax?

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

C. MAGICAL CARPET RIDE

This activity requires someone else to read the imagery to the person doing the activity.

1. Lie on your back or sit somewhere comfortable.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Read the Magic Carpet Ride story provided below.
4. Ask the person doing the activity to be aware of their breathing and also how their body feels during the activity.

Close your eyes… allow your body to relax and be quiet… take some deep breaths… relax your legs and arms. Make sure your head is in a comfortable position, not lying to heavy or light. Keep your hands open and relaxed, release any stress you may have. For the next few minutes, we are going to go on an adventure. So, keep your body still and listen closely with your ears.

You are going to take a journey. A magic carpet, has been sent just to you. It floats down and lands quietly at your feet. As it floats down, you feel a gentle breeze on your face. Then you notice the deep blue and bright yellow colour of the carpet. The carpet wants you to climb aboard. As you step on the carpet, it feels soft and silky. With each step the carpet changes colour, as you take your last step you lie back among the soft, silky cushions. The cushions feel so soft, it is as if you have fallen onto a cloud. Allow yourself to sink further into them and feel their supportive embrace. You feel comfortable, safe and protected. As the magic carpet begins to rise, it lifts you into the sky. You feel very calm and relaxed. You feel a soft, warm breeze flow over you.

As you travel higher into the air, you look down to a see a big green forest that goes as far as your eyes can see. The magic carpet floats down taking you closer to the trees. You notice all the details that are there. You see monkeys jumping gracefully from tree to tree. As if it is almost effortless. Birds fly around you inviting you to pat them. Their feathers are soft like the carpet, and glisten in the sunshine. The magic carpet then takes you just above the tree tops where you can now see all the animals on the ground. You can hear the animals squeal and squeak as you get closer and closer.

The carpet then rises back higher and higher into the bright blue sky. As you rise, the air becomes cooler. The carpet turns and in the distance you see a great mountain range. Flying over the mountains you see goats jumping from one rock to the next. You can see the snow-capped mountains and how soft and fluffy the snow looks. You lie back and close your eyes.

Now the magic carpet is slowing and descending. You realise that the adventure is almost over. Take a deep breath. Feel the carpet dropping you back off in a familiar spot. When you are ready, wiggle your toes, and wiggle your fingers. Allow your attention to come back to lying on the floor/sitting in your seat/on the ground. Stretch your arms back behind your head. Take a deep breath. You can open your eyes when you are ready.

Questions to think about

- What happened to your breathing while you were on the adventure?
- How did your body feel?
- What things were going through your mind?
- How do you feel now compared to before the exercise?
- Is this something we should do more often?

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Gratitude

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

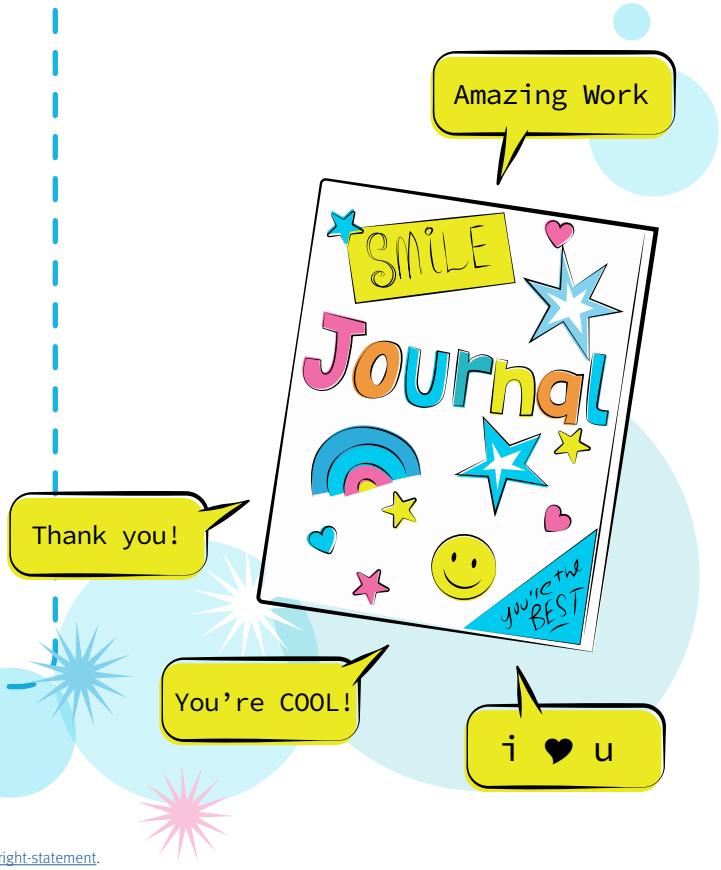
Gratitude Journal

Young children will need an adult to help them and to write things down while older children may do this independently.

1. Select your journal.
   - Pick out a journal that looks appealing, or decorate a cheap notebook with cherished pictures of people or things you love and care about.
2. Before writing in a gratitude journal, choose a ritual to repeat every time beforehand.
   - This might include playing a favourite song or drinking a cup of tea.
3. Express gratitude. A list of gratitude ideas are below.
   - Gratitude journals can take on any desired format. You might:
     - make a gratitude list of items to express gratitude
     - draw images or create a collage of pictures
     - write a poem to capture and motivate your gratitude.
4. If the moment of gratitude is about someone else, organise to call, message the person or meet up with the person and tell them why you are grateful for them. This will make you feel good and also make the other person feel valued and improve their wellbeing.

Gratitude ideas

- Something someone did for you today
- A person who you love
- Something you like to do
- A talent you have
- A part of your body you are grateful for
- Something that made you laugh today
- A song you like
- A game you like to play
- A new skill you have learned
- A food you like to eat
- A pet that you love
- Something you have that you know other people don't have
- A memory of something you have done in the past



© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Gratitude moment

Tip: it may help to write down your gratitude moment and share it with the person it is about.

1. Sit somewhere comfortable.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Slowly breathe in through your nose and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
4. Hold the breath for 1, 2, 3.
5. Slowly breathe out through your mouth and count 1, 2, 3 in your head.
6. Repeat this 2 more times.
7. Think of something that made you feel grateful today (ideas below)
8. Focus on how this thing affects your life or the life of the people around you.
9. Focus on how you feel about your gratitude moment.
10. Let the feeling grow in your body until you can feel it from your head to your toes.

Gratitude ideas

- Something someone did for you today
- A person who you love
- Something you like to do
- A talent you have
- A part of your body you are grateful for
- Something that made you laugh today
- A song you like
- A game you like to play
- A new skill you have learned
- A food you like to eat
- A pet that you love
- Something you have that you know other people don't have
- A memory of something you have done in the past

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Physical Activities

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Exercises

The Queensland Government's Healthier. Happier website has a collection of exercises that suit all ages and levels. Each exercise on the website also comes with instructions and a guided video to ensure that you are doing each movement correctly.

1. Before starting a workout ensure that you have enough space around you and that you are not going to hurt yourself.
2. Go to the Healthier. Happier website at https://www.healthier.qld.gov.au/fitness/exercises/and choose 10 exercises.
3. Make sure that you have warmed up so you do not hurt yourself.
4. Take five minutes to jog on the sport, do arm circles, shoulder rolls and controlled punches.
5. Do each exercise you have chosen for 60 seconds and have a 10 second rest between exercises.
6. Explore other fun exercises to do at the Healthier. Happier website the next time you do some exercise or complete one of the pre-made workouts.

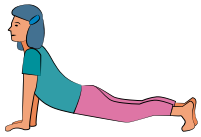
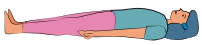
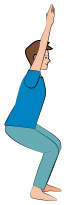
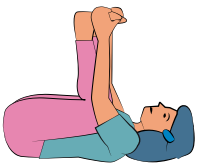
© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Yoga

Yoga is great for stretching and for relaxation. Younger children may only be able to try some of the poses and may need an adult to help them while older children may do this independently.

> **Caution** – it is important to be very careful when trying yoga poses and to not put strain on your neck or back. Yoga should be avoided (or done with extreme caution and under supervision) if you have spinal pain or an injury or chronic condition. Children should be supervised by an adult

1. Ensure that you have enough space around you.
2. Take five minutes to jog on the spot, do arm circles, shoulder rolls and controlled punches.
3. If you have a yoga mat, bring it out and sit on it. If you do not, choose somewhere that is not a hard surface where you can comfortably lie down. Choose ten exercises from the list below (instructions on how to do each exercise can be found on pages 29 - 35):

Bridge Pose	Tree Pose	 Cobra Pose	Cat Pose	Bow Pose
Frog Pose	Easy Pose	Butterfly Pose	 Sleeping Pose	 Chair pose
Hero Pose	Boat Pose	Mountain Pose	 Happy Baby Pose	Lion Pose

4. Do each exercise for 60 seconds.

You may be able to find good yoga classes or ideas for poses online – do a search and see what you can find.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Easy Pose

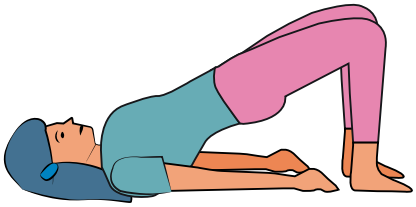
This is the simplest of all poses – try this before trying any others.

How to do:

- Sit up straight with your legs crossed.
- Place your hands on your knees, palms facing up.
- Balance your weight evenly on the bones of your body you are sitting on.
- Keep your head, neck, and spine aligned all the way along your body.
- Lengthen your spine – without stiffening your neck.
- Relax your feet and thighs.
- Hold this posture for 30 seconds.
- Release and change the cross-legged position.

Tip: Use a firm pillow or fold a blanket if you are finding it difficult to sit flat.

Bridge Pose



This pose helps to open and stretch the spine and thighs..

How to do:

- Lie on your back.
- Bend your knees and keep the feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart.
- Your knees and ankles must be in a straight line.
- Place your arms in a resting position beside the body, with the palms downwards.
- Press your feet into the floor, take a deep breath in and lift hips of the floor.
- Balance your body in a way that the arms, shoulders, and feet support your body weight.
- Keep your bottom squeezed.
- Press down into the arms and shoulders to lift your chest up. Engage your legs and bottom to lift hips higher.
- Hold this posture for as long as you are comfortable and breathe slowly while you are in the pose.
- Exhale and release.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

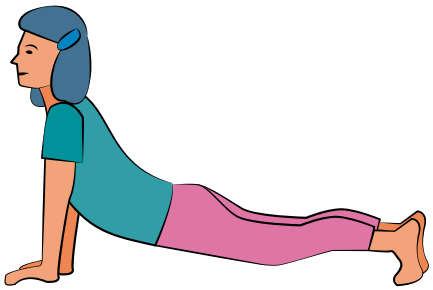
Tree Pose

Establishes strength and balance in the legs, like a tree

How to do:

- Begin the posture with the mountain pose. Legs and back straight, hand by your side. Distribute your weight evenly across both feet.
- Shift your weight to your left foot. Bend your right knee and lift your right foot.
- Place your right foot on your left inner thigh.
- Press your hands together above the head.
- Gaze at a point about 1.5 metres away.
- Hold the position for 30 seconds to a minute.
- Return your hands to your chest and then lower your right leg.
- Repeat it on your left leg.

Tip: If you get unsteady in the beginning while trying to hold your posture, you can stand with your back against a wall.



Cobra Pose

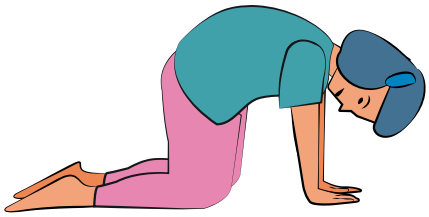
This pose promotes strength and flexibility in the back, abs, and strength.

How to do:

- Lie on your belly with the tips of your feet flat on the floor, chin on the floor and palms on either side of the body.
- Inhale as you gently lift your head and chest off the floor. Keep your lower ribs on the floor.
- Pull your shoulders slightly back towards the spine.
- Lift your body into a cobra pose while keeping the chin up. Use your hands for support, but without unnecessary pressure.
- Hold the posture for 15 to 30 seconds, before gently releasing your body to the floor.

Tip: Everybody has different flexibility, so take the stretch slowly. This is a good, morning yoga pose that you can to practice daily.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.



Cat Pose

A gentle pose for the back and core and a great warm up exercise.

How to do:

- Start in a tabletop position. Point your fingers to the top of your mat.
- Your knees should be directly below your hips,
- Your wrists, elbows, and shoulders should be straight and perpendicular to the floor.
- Centre the head in a neutral position with eyes looking downward.
- With an exhalation, carefully round your spine up towards the ceiling.
- Release your head towards the floor without forcing the chin towards the chest.
- Come back to the initial tabletop position while inhaling slowly.

Caution: If you are having difficulty, have someone place a hand above and below your shoulder blades for extra support.

Bow Pose

Bend the back like a bow and open the chest and shoulders with the bow pose.

How to do:

- Begin by lying flat on your stomach, with your chin on the mat and hands resting at your side.
- Inhale and bend your knees, bringing your feet towards your hips.
- Reach back with both hands and grasp your ankles.
- Lift your heels towards the ceiling and lift your shoulders, stomach, legs, and hips off the floor while gazing straight ahead.
- Hold the posture for four to five breaths, then lower your knees and release your feet.
- Rest on your stomach.

Caution: Sometimes beginners find it difficult to lift their thighs away from the floor. You can give your legs a little upward boost by placing a rolled up blanket under your thighs.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Frog Pose

This pose is good for opening your hips and groin muscles

How to do:

- Begin in a tabletop position.
- Make sure your hands are underneath your shoulders and knees are stacked under your hips. Have your ankle in line with your knees. Point your fingers forward.
- Look downwards and focus at a point between your hands.
- Inhale and slowly widen the distance between your knees as much as you can without over stretching. Point your toes away from your body.
- Make sure the ankles and hips are in line with your knees.
- Continue sliding downwards while keeping your palms and elbows flat against the floor, if you can and aren't over stretching.
- Exhale and keep pushing your hips backwards until a stretch is felt.
- Now, hold this position for three to five breaths.
- Come back to the table position again.

Tip: Listen to your body as you slide your knees out and press your hips backward. The stretch should not be painful.

Butterfly Pose

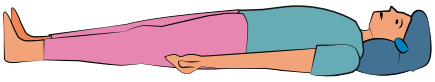
A pose that makes you flutter like a graceful butterfly.

How to do:

- Sit with your spine upright and legs spread out straight.
- From a seated position, bring the bottoms of the feet together with the knees bent out to the sides, and interlace the fingers around the toes
- While exhaling, gently move your thighs and knees in a downward motion.
- Then start flapping your legs up and down, like the wings of a butterfly.
- The flapping should be slow to start with, and then pick up speed.
- Keep your back flat and the chest open.
- Slow down gradually and then stop.
- Gently release your posture while exhaling.

Caution: If you have tightness in your hips, knees, or groin, sit a blanker under your thighs to prevent pain.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.



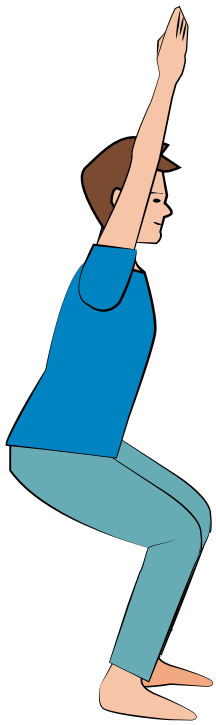
Sleeping Pose

Don't underestimate the art of relaxation. This can be a challenging pose and requires patience.

How to do:

- Lie on your back with your legs straight and arms at the sides.
- Rest your hands about 15cm away from your body.
- Keep your eyes closed, and palms faced upwards.
- Let your feet drop open.
- Breathe normally while resting your body's weight on the ground.
- Slowly exhale while relaxing and de-stressing all your body parts.
- This is the best relaxing yoga pose for young people.

Tip: If you are uncomfortable lying on your back, place your legs on a chair or supporting your neck with a pillow.



Chair pose

The chair pose works the muscles of the arms and legs, but it also stimulates the diaphragm and heart.

How to do:

- Begin in Mountain Pose. Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- Inhale and raise your arms above your head.
- Bend your knees forward while exhaling; your thighs should be parallel to the floor.
- Your knees will move slightly project over your feet while doing this pose.
- Keep your tailbone down and your lower back long. Shift most of your weight onto your heels.
- Keep your breath steady and easy throughout.
- Keep your gaze forward.
- Retain this posture for as long as comfortable, but not more than a minute.

Caution: Avoid this pose if you are experiencing headaches or insomnia.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Hero Pose

A seated yoga pose that stretches the thighs and ankles.

How to do:

- Begin kneeling on the floor. Sit with your knees together and your feet hip-width apart.
- Sit on your heels with your heels touching your hips. Lower your bottom to sit on the floor between your feet.
- Rest your hands on your knees with your palms facing down.
- Straighten your spine and drop your shoulders down.
- Relax your core while taking deep breaths. Retain your posture for as long as it is comfortable.

Tip: If you cannot sit easily on the floor, sit instead on a rolled up blanket or towel placed between your shins.

Boat Pose

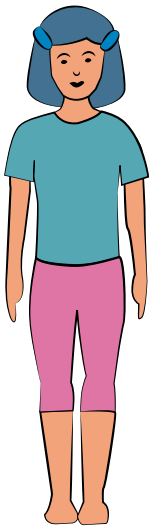
This balancing yoga pose might help you to de-stress and revitalize.

How to do:

- Begin in a seated position with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- Keep your arms and fingers outstretched in the direction of your toes.
- Inhale and while exhaling, lift your feet off the floor. Keep your knees bent at first.
- Straighten your legs to a 45-degree angle. Take care not to let your lower back sag or chest collapse.
- The weight of your body will solely rest on your hips.
- Your eyes, hands, and toes should align straight.
- Spread your shoulder blades wide and reach out through your fingers, actively engaging your hands.
- Hold your breath and retain the posture for a few seconds.
- Exhale slowly while bringing your body down to the neutral position. And relax.

Caution: This pose should definitely be avoided if you have spinal pain/injury.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.



Mountain Pose

An active pose that helps improve posture, balance, and stress

How to do:

- Stand straight and tall.
- Spread your legs 10cm apart and spread your toes. Press your weight evenly across both your feet.
- Keep your arms alongside your body.
- Your shoulders must be relaxed and not stiff.
- Raise your arms above your head.
- Hold your posture and breathe slowly.
- Retain as long as comfortable.

Happy Baby Pose

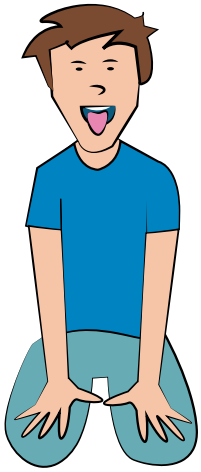
A gentle stretch for the lower back and hamstrings.

How to do:

- Lie on your back with a neutral spine
- Bring your knees toward your chest. Hold your feet with your hands. Ensure that your arms are in front of your stomach.
- Tuck the chin into your chest with the head on the floor. Press your tailbone down into the floor as you press the heels up and pull back with the arms.
- Flex your feet and show the soles of your feet to the ceiling. Draw your shoulders to the back.
- Draw your knees wide apart, as much as comfortable.
- Retain the position for a minute or less, and then release.

Caution: Avoid this pose if you have any knee or ankle injuries.

Lion Pose



This animal pose may help you to de-stress – you may even wish to roar.

How to do:

- Start in a seated position with your hips on your heels.
- Rest your palms on your knees.
- As you inhale, bring your palms to the floor in front of your knees and arch the spine. Stick your ongue out.
- Keep your eyes wide open, exhale through your mouth, and make a sound of a roaring lion.
- Inhale back to the starting position and repeat.

Caution: Be careful if you have a knee injury.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Queensland Government

Young person self-care activities

Make a music playlist

1. Music can make us feel so much better. Hop on to a streaming app or your own music player and make a playlist of your favourite songs.
   a. You could make a group playlist and ask your friends to add five of their favourite songs as well.
   b. If you want to get fancy, you could make several playlists for different moods/vibes (e.g. rainy day, feeling happy, etc.).

Guess that song

1. Hop on a streaming app or your own music player.
2. With your family, friends or classmates, one person chooses a song. Don't let the other players know what you have chosen.
3. The other players need to guess the name of the band/artist and the song. You get one point for each correct answer.
4. Once someone gets the band and song correct or they give up, pass the song controller to the next person.
5. First person to 10 points wins.

Learn Something New

1. Have you wanted to get into drawing or learn a musical instrument? Now's a great time to make a start.
2. If you want to learn a new language, there are lots of apps or online lessons that help you to learn a language for free – you can access these from your computer or phone.

Chat with your mates

1. It is important to stay in touch with your friends and family.
2. You can use text, or make a video call with an app or arrange a catch up
3. Ask your friends how they're feeling and share your own experience if you feel safe to do so.
4. You can even start a group chat where each person shares one good thing that happened in their day.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Incorporate mindfulness practices into everyday tasks

1. ***Washing the dishes***
   a. When you wash the dishes after dinner, do you usually think about everything you still have to do before you can finally relax?
   b. Instead, try focusing only on washing the dishes.
   c. Start by listening to the sink fill up with water.
   d. Feel the warm water on your hands, and smell the dishwashing liquid.
   e. When you notice your mind wandering, bring your attention back to your senses.
   f. What can you see/hear/smell/feel?

2. ***Write a 'thank you' list***
   a. Writing a 'thank you' list is one way to slow down and appreciate the small (and big) things in your life.
   b. It doesn't need to be long, you could just write down three things you're thankful for.
      i. Maybe it's the delicious breakfast you had this morning,
      ii. the support and love you get from your friends, or
      iii. the courage you found to speak up for yourself the other day.
   c. Make it your mission to write three things in a 'thank you' note every day!

3. ***Have a quick stretch***
   a. We sometimes get so caught up in our thoughts that we forget about everything else.
   b. But when we take a moment to focus on our body, such as by doing some stretching exercises, it gives us a break from our thoughts.
   c. Take your time, and focus on how your body feels.

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

Suggested Weekly Wellbeing Routine

Below is a suggested weekly routine to support the wellbeing of children and young people at home or in the classroom. Understandably, every child, family and classroom will be different. You may choose to do all the activities or a selection. The most important thing is that the activities support wellbeing and provide a break from learning activities so that children can come back to learning refreshed and settled.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before Learning Day	5 minute mindfulness activity (e.g. body scan, mindful breathing)	5 minute mindfulness activity (e.g. body scan, mindful breathing)	5 minute mindfulness activity (e.g. body scan, mindful breathing)	5 minute mindfulness activity (e.g. body scan, mindful breathing)	5 minute mindfulness activity (e.g. body scan, mindful breathing)
Morning	Mindfulness (e.g. mindful eating, mindful walking)	Physical Activity	Mindfulness (e.g. mindful eating, guided imagery)	Physical Activity	Mindfulness (e.g. sensory jar, superhero senses)
Afternoon	Physical Activity	Mindfulness (e.g. mindful eating, mindful exploring)	Physical Activity	Mindfulness (e.g. mindful listening, smell the flowers)	Physical Activity
After Learning Day	Check-in and Gratitude Activity	Check-in and Gratitude Activity	Check-in and Gratitude Activity	Check-in and Gratitude Activity	Check-in and Gratitude Activity

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.

References

- Attuned psychology – attunedpsychology.com
- Blissful kids – blissfulkids.com
- Headspace – headspace.com
- InnerHealthStudio – innerhealthstudio.com
- Living well – livingwell.org.au
- Mindful – mindful.org
- Our Own Kids – ourownkids.org
- Skills for action – skillsforaction.com
- Teach Starter – teachstarter.com
- Waterford – waterford.org
- Momjunction – momjunction.com

© State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2020, as per https://qed.qld.gov.au/copyright-statement.