

The cover features several decorative elements: pink hearts of various sizes in the top-left and bottom-right corners; a large purple circle in the top-right containing an illustration of a man and a child; a blue circle in the bottom-left containing an illustration of a man and a child; and purple and blue brushstroke-like lines on the right side. The background is a light green rounded rectangle.

MINDFUL MOVEMENT: LET'S PLAY TOGETHER



**A GUIDE FOR PARENTS
AND GUARDIANS**

FunConnectFam Project

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DESIGN TEAM

This guide has been developed under the scientific and clinical supervision of:
Dr. Jalila Jbilou and Dr. Éleine Deschênes

Edited by

(List in alphabetical order)

Marie-Eve Carrière (Medicine)
Kelly Félicita Francisque (Medicine)
Michelle Healey (Psychology)
Vanessa Hyslop (Psychology)
Olivia Marcotte (Medicine)
Iza Pinette-Drapeau (Psychology)

Revised and translated by

Jézabel Jaumain (Family counseling)

English version revised by

Irène Caron (Psychology)



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Mylène Lachance-Grzela, Dr. Annie Roy-Charland, Dr. Anik Dubé,
Dr. Vickie Plourde, Dr. Josée Nadeau, Dr. Liette Andrée Landry, Mrs. Danielle Doucet,
Dr. Roger G. LeBlanc and Dr. Salah-Eddine El Adlouni

IN THIS NOTEBOOK YOU WILL FIND THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

- What is mindful movement?
- Positive body image
- Benefits of games and tips to get started
- Mindful attitudinal qualities
- How to use the "Here for my child" box
- But... what about time?
- Play... safely!
- Tool box overview



WHAT IS MINDFUL MOVEMENT?



Mindful movement is intentionally bringing your attention to the sensory experience. The goal here is to become aware of our body and our movements in the present moment.

Mindful movement is also...

The awareness that we can work on a specific and precise part of our body which allows us to relax this part of the body and reduce stress, just with the mind!

The acceptance of our body, to become aware of our body, that it is beautiful, and that we must be comfortable in it.

Acceptance of others's bodies.



The importance of moving with your child...

Moving with your child can promote good communication and thus help develop a relationship of mutual trust

Moreover, these moments of physical activity with your child can be useful to address conversations on topics of disagreement between you or to pass important messages to your children

Positive body image

What is it?

Body image is how a person perceives their body and how they believe others perceive and see them.

Why is it important?

Developing a positive body image can have a positive influence on health and well-being.

Some tips to promote a positive body image:

Here are some tips to help your child develop a positive body image, feel good about themselves, take care of their body and health.

- **Celebrate body diversity.** Try to show respect and openness. Each person is unique and each body is different and beautiful in its own way.
- **Listen.** Do your best to be available and encourage your child to express themselves.
- **Reassure your child.** Help them have a better understanding and acceptance of the natural changes that take place during adolescence by explaining that physical changes at puberty are normal and transient.
- **Value your child other than on their physical appearance.** Compliment her/him on her/his achievements, her/his personal qualities (perseverance, creativity, curiosity, etc.)
- **Bet on their personal interests.** Encourage your child to participate in physical activities that meet their interests and through which they can experience positive moments and thrive.

BENEFITS OF GAMES

FOR YOU:

- Reduce your stress
- Improve the quality of your sleep
- Be more aware of your emotions and your thoughts
- Good for physical and mental health
- Improve your automatic reactions to your child's opposition behavior

FOR YOUR CHILD:

- Improve the child's control of emotions
- Improve the child's quality of sleep
- Improve the child's concentration and attention span at school, during sports, at home...
- Good for physical and mental health
- Reduce the child's stress
- Improve the child's behaviors

FOR YOUR FAMILY:

- Quieter family life
- Improve your family relationships and bonds

TIPS TO GET STARTED

1 Moving is an essential need for everyone. We move every part of our body constantly, even without realizing it! Unfortunately, with our increasingly busy lives, it becomes difficult to devote quality time to the practice of this activity. So, to enjoy mindfulness activities to the fullest, let go and try to devote time to them, in order to experience moments of sharing, parent-child interaction and discovery!



2 Mindful movement can also allow you to explore your emotions and sensations. On the other hand, it is also ok if nothing happens; you do not need to force yourself, just let it go and have fun!

DON'T GIVE UP!

Like any activity, whether sports, arts, cooking and many others, mindful movement is an exercise that can be practiced. The more you practice, the more things you will notice and the more you will enjoy them. It's important to have patience and be kind to yourself and your child.

MINDFUL ATTITUDINAL QUALITIES

The games will also allow you to explore, develop and increase the mindful attitudinal qualities that are explained below. Each game aims one or a few of these qualities.

Non-judgment

To be able to observe your environment, others and yourself with neutrality

Patience

Endure during the wait with calm and perseverance, accept the rhythm of things

Acceptance

Welcoming reality as it is, whether it is others, oneself or situations

Self-confidence

Know yourself, believe in our potential and abilities, be aware of our strengths and assert ourselves

Beginner's mind

Try to do everything as if it is the first time and marvel

Don't force yourself

Try to do everything without thinking about any pressure of execution and results

Let go

Detach oneself from the desire to control things, let oneself be invaded by a feeling of freedom and lightness

Anchoring

Pay conscious attention to the present moment, the lived sensations and the inner peace

Emotional intelligence

Manage your emotions, perceive and understand your own and those of others

Loving kindness

Wish happiness and the good of all, including oneself

Compassion

Recognize, accept and remain benevolent with our own difficulties as well as those of others

Gratitude

Be grateful for the people, things, and situations that bring you joy

Forgiveness

Free yourself from feelings of resentment towards others and yourself

Positive self-talk

Be kind and encouraging in the way you see yourself and how you talk to yourself

Resilience

Recover from trials or difficult experiences and continue with hope

How to use the "HERE FOR MY CHILD" box



Why?

The "HERE FOR MY CHILD" box is a tool that aims to validate children's emotions and thoughts. Listening to what the child shares with us allows the recognition, acceptance and normalization of what the child feels in order to establish with her/him an action plan (resolution, management or adjustment). The box also aims to create an attentive and reassuring communication and listening space that will strengthen your relationship with your child. This kind of discussion improves communication and builds trust between you and your child.

This tool will also be useful to help you start conversations about sensitive topics or topics that you do not know how to approach with your child.

When?

You can use the "HERE FOR MY CHILD" box at the end of each activity and encourage your child to share his/her emotions and thoughts with you. It's just as important to discuss challenging emotions (and thoughts) as the ones that seem to be more pleasant to you or to your child.

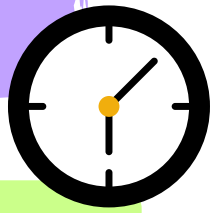
You can also use this approach in everyday life to talk about the emotions and thoughts your child is feeling.

It is important to use it only if the child agrees to open up about her/his emotions and thoughts. If he/she is not comfortable to do so, reassure him/her by saying "It's OK, I understand, I'm available to listen to you and we can talk when you're ready".

How?

It is important to be patient (do not interrupt your child while he/she speaks, respect moments of silence, let him/her take all his/her time). Kindness, empathy and compassion are important to demonstrate so that the child does not feel judged. As so, avoid making judgments, for example saying what is right or wrong, positive or negative, or saying comments or comparisons with other situations or people. You can show openness, acceptance and confirm your support to your child.

BUT... WHAT ABOUT TIME?



Sometimes you might feel overwhelmed by everyday events. It is sometimes difficult to maintain a balance between work, family and other responsibilities. When this is the case, find a time to take a break, make sure you are kind and patient to yourself and your child and do your best.



Tips and tricks for a better balance between the different spheres of your life

- **Family activities:** Try to reserve specific time periods during the week for family activities. The duration of activities can be shorter (5-15 minutes) or longer (1-2 hours). Also, remember to do these activities when you wake up in the morning or at anytime during the day, when you feel like it.
- **Workspace at home:** If you often work from home, try to reserve a place in the house that is only for work. This will allow you to have clearer boundaries between work and family life. .
- **Enjoy family meals:** Try to eat family meals at the table, without distractions (turn off cell phones and TV). Find topics of conversation to discuss together or make plans as a family. Everyone can propose a topic to discuss.
- **Involve your children:** Try to include children when doing household chores or when cooking. This will allow you to spend time with your family while being productive and have a little help with the household tasks! Take advantage of these moments to laugh and talk to each other. This is neither a chore nor a punishment.
- **Manage your time:** When possible, try to do your work-related tasks when the children are busy. For example: replying to emails when children are in bed or out to play with friends. This will allow you to have more family time when the child is at home.

AND HOW ABOUT YOU...?

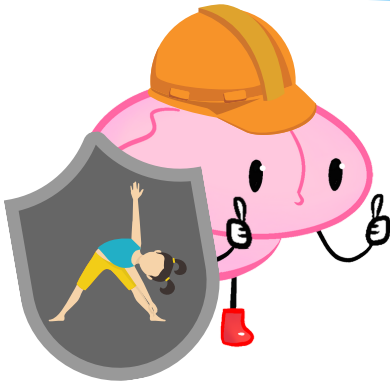
- Even though work and family life at home is a big part of your life, it's also very important that you take time for yourself. You deserve it!

Take some time for relaxing activities that you like (ex: take a good hot bath, go for a walk, pamper yourself) in order to **recharge your batteries**. You will then be much more confident and ready to go forward despite everyday life challenges!



PLAY...SAFELY!

Games are fun, but we always need to make sure we keep ourselves and others safe while activities are going on. It happens to everyone to be distracted from time to time, so here are some tips to ensure the security and safety of the whole family while having fun!



1 SECURE A SAFE PLAY AREA :



Before you start playing, it's important to make sure the play area is safe. To do so, you can **check the following**:

- Check that there are no dangerous objects around you (sharp or pointed objects, objects that produce heat or toxic products).
- Check that there are no objects on which you can stumble.
- Check that there is enough space to play.
- Check that the surface to do the activity is not slippery, do not hesitate to use a carpet or mattress.

If you notice any hazards during the verification, eliminate them safely, if this is not possible, choose another place to do the activity.



2

Be aware of...

*If you think a game or an object is dangerous for you or your child, follow your instincts. **Never** take risks!*

Examples of safety measures :

- Engage in gentle and slow movements.
- Wear fairly loose and comfortable clothing, as well as sports shoes. If you wish, stay in socks or barefoot.
- Ask the child if they feel comfortable doing the activity before starting.
- Answer the child's questions and concerns if they have any.

3 Moment of discussion..

3



Take the time to discuss safety with the children and encourage them to recognize the hazards when they are present. You can even ask them to help you identify the hazards before you start the games! The more you will involve them in the preparation of the game, the more they will be ready to play.

TOOL BOX OVERVIEW

The tool box contains:

- Instructions for exploration games
- Instructions for routine games
- Mindful cards for kids
- Calendar for organizing the activities.
- Material required for certain games.



The program "Mindful movement: let's play together", presents different ways to move mindfully with 2 kinds of games:

Exploration games

You can start with these games to try the activities of mindful movement and see if you and your child enjoy them.

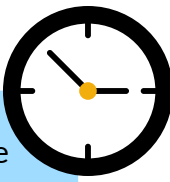
It will help you, and your child, decide if you would like to engage in a more regular practice of mindful movement.



Routine games

These games are quite short and can be easily integrated into your everyday life.

Moreover, some games can take place any time of the day, for example, in the car, in bed, at school, at work, during a walk and at any time you, or your child, are experiencing a stressful situation.



2

Tip! Mindful cards for kids can help the child choose their game of the day and use it when he/she is feeling stressed while at school, during sports activities or elsewhere.

SCHEDULING PLAY TIMES

- **Exploration games:** It is recommended to play at least once a week. Choose the game at the beginning of the week with your child.
- **Routine games:** It is recommended to play once a day so that mindful breathing becomes a habit and is fully integrated into the daily life.

We recommend that you schedule the play times with your child and adapt the scheduling to your family preferences. You can use the calendar to mindfully organize your week!



The activities offered are simple and easy to adopt to help your family manage stress mindfully. These tools can be useful for your child throughout their life in developing their full potential. Try to set aside time to have fun and laugh heartily with your child, it's important!

