

Health from Every Degree



Our mental health is just as important to maintain as our physical health. It is imperative to value every "degree" of our health, such as stress and anxiety. In fact, our social, emotional and psychological well-being impacts our physical health.

One method for maintaining mental health is practicing mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present in the moment. It asks you to pause, breathe, take in the world around you and acknowledge the various thoughts, feelings and sensations floating across your mind at the time.

It's important to know that mindfulness is learned over time through practice. By learning mindfulness techniques at an early age, children can practice as they grow and build a foundation of stress management and self-soothing for their long-term mental health and resilience.

By Dr. Carmela Sosa

Valley Children's Medical Director of Primary Care

Mindfulness Activities

Try these two activities with your kids to practice and build mindfulness skills.

1. What's in the bag?

This anxiety-reducing activity is especially good for younger children because it focuses their energy and attention on things they can actually physically touch, instead of asking them to describe intangible things, like thoughts or feelings.

- Place a few common household items in a non-see-through bag.
- Using only their sense of touch, have your child reach in and describe what they feel.

2. Notice five things

This activity, often called “grounding,” is a great way to reduce anxiety for kids, teens and adults. Taking a few moments to notice the world around you can help bring you back to the present.

- Sit down with your child wherever you are.
- Together, take a few deep breaths, then slowly look around and notice five things around you.
- Take turns sharing what you saw.
- You can also practice noticing five things you hear or feel.

