

TODAY'S FUTURE

Growing Beans on Cotton Balls

This is a really easy, visual way to teach children about root systems and is something to do with children each Spring time.

For directions visit <https://theimaginationtree.com/growing-beans-on-cotton-balls/>



Making Mindfulness a Priority

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In the last decade, practicing mindfulness has been acknowledged more since people have been recognizing the benefits of it. Being mindful can be beneficial to everyone, but we are going to focus on how it can help your child. But first, let's start with the basics.

So, what exactly is mindfulness?

It is simply being present in the moment, which is different from thinking about the present moment. Mindfulness means being aware of what is going on around you, openly accepting one's thoughts and feelings without thinking about the pressures of life. It requires some effort and intentionality.

Why is mindfulness helpful for kids?

Since children are naturally curious, they are more apt to learn, live in the moment, and be attentive. However, they are often too busy just like adults. This causes children to be tired, distracted easily, and restless. Practicing mindfulness helps kids learn to pause for a moment and be present. Mindfulness helps with attention, patience, and trust which will help your child to grow up and be themselves.

Do certain kids benefit more? Yes, actually they do! Although mindfulness exercises are great for all children five years and older who want to calm

their busy minds, feel and understand their emotions, and strengthen their concentration, they suit specific children even more so. Children who have low self-esteem truly benefit from practicing mindfulness because it helps them realize it is okay to be themselves. Other children who are diagnosed with ADHD, dyslexia, and autism spectrum disorders also gain from these exercises. Now, these cannot cure the disorders and it is not considered a form of therapy, but it can help children approach the very real issues they're dealing with in a different, calmer way.

Since mindfulness exercises are great for parents as well, practicing them with your child is a perfect way to spend time together!



Source: Sitting Still Like a Frog by Eline Snel and Photo source: The Learning Child

Engaging Children in Walking and Hiking



A wonderful adventure for a child can begin with simply going on a walk or a hike. Children will not only have fun enjoying the outdoors but experience a wealth of exciting learning opportunities. Listed below are some great ideas that can be used alone or as a springboard to another idea that will engage children of all ages in walking or hiking.

1. **Go on a critter hunt:** When you are on a walk or hike, stop a few times to turn over logs, rocks or pieces of bark to see what's hiding underneath. You might discover beetles, spiders, worms and roly pollies. A magnifying glass is a great tool to bring along to get a closer look.
2. **Animal walks:** This is a fun game of taking turns to decide how to walk until reaching the next landmark (e.g. fence, tree, house). For example: walk like a duck by squatting legs and flapping arms or hop like a rabbit with arms tucked into chest and hopping forward. Sound effects can be added but be careful of other walkers and wildlife which may like a slightly more peaceful environment.
3. **Can you find it?** A player chooses an object they see on the walk and says, "First one to find a ____". The player fills the blank with the object (e.g. green leaf). Other players try to find the object first and the winner then chooses the next object to find.
4. **Follow me:** The goal of this game is to follow a partner as close as possible, without running into them, or anyone else. Take turns who gets to be the leader.
5. **Go on a scavenger hunt:** Before beginning a walk, brainstorm a list of objects you think you might find. For example: a feather, animal tracks, a flower, an acorn, a large rock, moss, a pine cone, etc. Add to the list during the walk.

Source: <https://food.unl.edu/free-resources/newsletters/family-fun-run/engaging-children-walking-and-hiking>

4 Ways to Teach Your Children Money Management

Don't give in to "I wants". As soon as they began feasting their bright eyes on colorful trinkets at the checkout, we began to divert their attention. If they do not expect something each time we shop, it makes errands much easier.

Teach that money comes from effort. Examples of our commissioned chores are: water the flowers, vacuum, fold towels, and the like. Our non-commissioned chores are: keep your things picked up, help with dinner, care for the animals, and so on.

Encourage wise use of money. Saving towards a big, but attainable goal is encouraged (such as the guitar my seven-year-old is working toward.) The remainder of the gift funds they receive is put towards sports and other activities.

Teach the fun in frugality. Lessons learned? Time management, spirituality, creativity, and resourcefulness, to name a few.

Source: <https://moneysavingmom.com/teaching-your-children-money-management/>