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Practice Mindfulness with Your Baby

Nowadays people are rushing through life with work, caring for children, and other daily tasks. We are used to doing these tasks without pausing, paying attention to details, and simply enjoying what we are doing. How many times have you rushed through lunch? Without paying attention to the flavor of the food, the texture, or the nutrients meals have. This can cause stressful moments in life and affect having meaningful interactions with your child. Mindfulness is an opportunity to learn how to be more present in the moment and connect with your baby.

Dr. Amy Saltzman says, “Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention here and now, with kindness and curiosity, so that we can change our behavior”. Taking this definition into account, I will provide some ways you can be more present with your baby. One of the most important aspects for a baby’s growth and development is the emotional bond and physical contact they create with their primary caregivers (mom, dad, grandparents, and other relatives). The positive bond will be a foundation for the baby’s emotional and cognitive development.

One way to be mindful with your infant is by giving them a massage. Start by laying the baby on a blanket and then start at the legs and move to the arms. Give light little massages and movements and while massaging, make eye contact, smile, and talk to your baby. You may also put some relaxing baby music in the background.

Another way to be mindful and present in the moment with your baby is while bathing them. Bath time is a great way to use the senses and follow your child’s lead. Together you can explore the warm water, smell bubbles (if using scented bath bombs), hear the splash of the water, and notice the rubber duck floating in the tub. While doing this, talk to your baby about what you are experiencing, it’s a simple experience that can become meaningful when being fully present in that moment.

Yoga poses with your baby are another form of incorporating movement into your mindful practices. The baby boat pose is a great way to feel a close bond with your baby. For this pose follow the steps below:

1. Sit down on your bottom with your knees bent with feet flat on the floor.
2. Lift your chest tall.
3. Reach arms forward (baby is on your chest)
4. Inhale and exhale as you rock slowly back and forth

These are some activities you can do at home to practice mindfulness with your baby. Some of these activities are taken from a kid’s yoga program called Kidding Around Yoga, I am a certified

kid's yoga teacher with this program, if you would like more ideas, you may visit their website: kiddingaroundyoga.com.

If you have any questions or would like more ideas, you may contact me at my office number: 402-821-2151 or my email: ilindalchavarria2@unl.edu. I serve Saline, Gage, Jefferson and the Southeast area.