

Mindfulness Games For the Family

Jenga	Simon Says	Balance Relay	Whose Pennies	One Foot Balance
<p>Have you ever played Jenga? If so, you know that it can be a lot of fun but that it also requires concentrated attention and awareness. Take advantage of that fact and use Jenga to build your child's mindfulness.</p> <p>To make the game into an exercise, play two ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play the game while your child is distracted. Allow his mind to wander and engage him in conversation or activities that take away from his focus on the game. 2. Help your child cultivate a calm and clear mind through mindful breathing, and play again. <p>After you play the distracted version, engage your child in a discussion</p>	<p>Children practice mindfully seeing, listening, and have a greater awareness. It's good for children 4 and up and all you need is some space to move around in.</p> <p>Here's how to play Simon Says:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designate a "Simon" to lead everyone (it might be best for an adult to play Simon first). 2. Simon stands in front of the other players and instructs them to do physical movements (e.g., touch your nose, balance on one foot). 3. The players should only do what Simon instructs them to do if he or she says "Simon says" at the beginning. 	<p>The balancing relay game is good for children 5 and older. If you've ever seen or participated in an egg and spoon race, you'll recognize this game.</p> <p>You will need a spoon and some water or a potato for each team playing.</p> <p>Split your group into teams (two teams might work best, but you can always do a few smaller teams) and give a spoon full of water to each team. Challenge them to carry their spoon to the next person on their team without spilling any of the water.</p> <p>To make it even more difficult for older children, have them walk</p>	<p>This game is good for children 3 and up and can be played one-on-one or with a group. All you'll need to play is a penny for each player and a basket.</p> <p>Here's how to play:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give everyone a penny and allow them one minute to study it, focusing on the details. 2. Put all the pennies in the basket. 3. Have each player pick their penny out of the basket. 4. Once a player chooses their penny from the basket, have them explain how they knew it was their penny. <p>The penny game can be played with other objects too; the important part is that the children playing are</p>	<p>This exercise is for children 3 and up, and all you need for it is your body!</p> <p>Here's what to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell your child to focus her gaze slightly below eye level. 2. Tell her to stand on one leg and keep her gaze fixed on that focal point. 3. Challenge her to see how long she can stand on one leg like this. 4. Tell her to try the other leg. 5. Challenge her to stay focused while you engage her in conversation, ask her to

<p>about it; does he know what made him lose focus? Did certain thoughts or emotions distract him and ruin his concentration?</p> <p>After you play the calm and clear-minded version, discuss again; did he have an easier time paying attention? Did the mindful breathing contribute to better focus?</p> <p>This game will help your child see the advantages of being mindful and encourage him to work on his own mindfulness.</p>	<p>4. If a player follows one of Simon’s instructions that is not prefaced by “Simon says,” he or she is eliminated from the game.</p> <p>5. The last player standing wins.</p> <p>Once you finish the game, talk to your child(ren) about how hard or easy it was to follow the instructions and pay attention to the “Simon Says” at the beginning. Discuss the importance of paying attention and being present.</p>	<p>backward or sideways instead of forward.</p> <p>This game will encourage your children to develop greater awareness, enhance their focus, and stay grounded in the present moment and in their own bodies.</p>	<p>able to focus on something and pay attention to detail.</p>	<p>sing a song, or tell her to close her eyes.</p> <p>This is a simple game that can help your child develop her focus and improve her body awareness as well as giving her a chance to practice mindfulness.</p>
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