

PLAY & LEARN:

WHITE SHEEP AND BLACK SHEEP book



Sing.



Play.



Love.®

The hustle and bustle of today's world can be very stressful for all of us, including our young children. Learning how to manage stress and cultivate mindfulness is a skill that everyone needs, regardless of age. Mindfulness is a routine practice of relaxing, breathing slowly and creating quiet moments. This practice will enhance quality of life and provide a sense of well-being. It is giving oneself permission to "unplug" from the noise and stress of the world. Researchers have discovered that the practice of mindfulness can foster self-confidence, improve mental health, enhance focus, provide a sense of security, and increase connection. Mindfulness is the recipe that includes all of the necessary ingredients to equip children with self-confidence and an inner calm. This recipe is also key for proactively parenting from a place of calm and clarity.

Here are some simple ways that you and your children can develop the practice of mindfulness. Be patient with yourself and celebrate your efforts as you intentionally explore these new ways to add mindfulness to your world.

- **Muscle Mindfulness: Wild Wildebeest, Mellow Moose, Slow Sloth.** While the goal of mindfulness as a state of calm, sometimes you may need a transition from your go-go-go schedule to stillness. This activity is a fun way to work our way from a busy mind to a quiet one. First, complete these relaxation exercises quickly like a "wild wildebeest," then at a medium speed like a "mellow moose," and then again, at an unhurried pace like a "slow sloth." Once you are at the "slow sloth" stage, repeat these muscle stretches two to three times, and then be still as if the sloth fell asleep.
 - ✓ Squeeze your hands open and shut like you are squeezing playdough
 - ✓ Stretch your arms away from your body as if you are reaching for stars
 - ✓ Scrunch your toes like you are standing in sand or squishy mud
 - ✓ Squeeze your shoulders up toward your ears
- **Notice Walks.** Go for a walk with your child. Take deep breaths while you walk and slow down your pace so you can notice your surroundings. When you get to the end of the block, stop and share what you have experienced. Maybe you saw a red bird in a tree, heard a dog bark or a train whistle in the distance, felt the mist from a sprinkler, and smelled the sweet scent of lilacs near the house on the corner. Follow your child's lead as he can be your role model for mindfulness in the moment. Allow him to investigate, discover and take his time.



Together we will help your child learn and grow. **SingPlayLove.com**