

Supporting Parents in Promoting Children's Social, Emotional and Academic Competence

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- Parenting that Promotes Child Well-being
- Breakdowns in Parenting
- Mindfulness & Compassion for Parents and in Parenting
- Practices for Being Present, Calm and Wise



Well-being & Resilience



- **Physical Health/
Nutrition**
- **Physiological Stress
Responses**
- **Social-Emotional Competence**
- **Academic Achievement**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Perceived Control
and Agency**
- **Coping**

Parenting Behaviors that Promote Well-being

50 years of parenting research :

■ Warmth - Affection

- Acceptance “I like my child just as s/he is.”
- Enjoyment and delight “I enjoy spending time with my child.”
- Positive emotions “I smile often with my child.”

■ Responsiveness

- Recognizing cues
- Sensitive, contingent responding (serve and return)

■ Consistent, Appropriate Control

- Clear, reasonable expectations and rules
- Consistent contingencies, natural and logical consequences

■ Scaffolding or Coaching

- Balancing guidance/structuring with independence/autonomy
- Opportunities for learning and building skills

**Mindfulness practices enhance
effective parenting behaviors.**

Breakdowns in parenting

- Family Transitions (births, moves, work, illness)
- Separation, Divorce
- Death in Family
- Family Conflict
- Economic Strain
- Family History Problems
- Mental Health
- Child Temperament
- Daily Hassles and Strains
- Others

Why mindfulness in parenting...

- Effects of stress and adversity on children's and parents' well-being
- Stress and distress can interfere with parenting how we want
- Parenting advice and approaches don't work in all situations or with all children



Mindfulness...

Is attained through

- Meditation or contemplative practice
 - Daily “informal” practices
 - “In the moment” practices

Short moments of awareness repeated
many times

Cultivates a way of **Being** with

- Compassion
 - Wisdom

Mindfulness in Parenting

Be Present

- Observant of child cues
- Observant of our own reactions
- Engaged and authentic

Be Calm

- Receptive of child's thoughts and emotions
- Responsive v. reactive to child's behavior
- Clear and consistent
- Caring towards ourselves

Be Wise

- Wise minded and effective



Be...

- Present
- Calm
- Wise



Active Listening

Look
people in
the eye

Show
interest -
lean in!

Don't
interrupt

Don't
anticipate
or plan

When appropriate, encourage them to continue...

Nod your
head

Say "ok",
"uh huh", "I
see"

Ask them to
tell you
more

Be present, tune in!

Be Warm

Build Warmth and Responsiveness

Child-Led Time

- Child decides what to do
- Follow child's lead (playing, imagining, listening, etc.)
- Describe, Imitate, Reflect
- Be consistent, dependable



Be Present in Child-Led Time

Mindfulness:

- Observing
- Participating

Goals:

- Be in the moment
- Be engaged, connected
- Go with the flow



Child Led Time: Take a Moment

What to do:

- Clear the slate - Set aside a short time that you have child-led time every day – BE CONSISTENT
- **Notice** - observe eyes, facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, ideas
- **“Go with the flow”** – Respond to and go with each thing your child says, does
- **Enjoy** - your child’s lead, comments, ideas, skills, and joy – Connect with your love for your child

Building skills you will use in more difficult moments

Be Wise

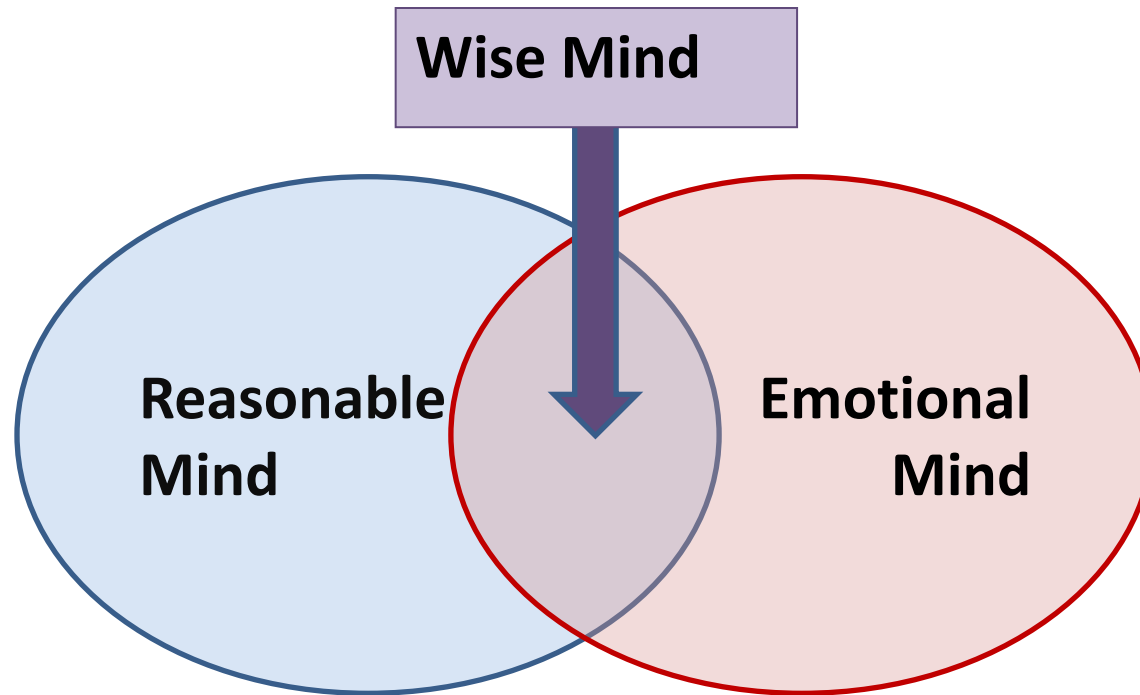
Mindfulness:

- Wise Mind



Goals:

- Be Effective (vs. Right)
- Validate (see and acknowledge all sides; kernel of truth)
- Build child's capacities



Be Wise

Practice being effective vs. being right

- Balance of Rational Mind and Emotional Mind
- Drop in the Pauses; Breath in “Wise,” out “Mind”
- Respond intentionally instead of reacting
 - What is the hope or goal for this interaction?
- Check your inner wisdom:
 - What does my child need right now?
 - What do I need right now?
 - What will be effective?

How can I be warm, responsive and consistent in this moment?

How can this be a learning moment?

Be Consistent and Scaffold: Using Wise-mind to be consistent, validate, provide guidance

- Provide clear expectations
- Create conditions for success
- Coach or scaffold skills
- Provide options or choices
- Reinforce appropriate, desirable behaviors
- Consequences for inappropriate behaviors



Be Calm:

Respond v. React in challenging situations

Mindfulness:

- STOP
- Willing Hands, Soothing Hands
- Parent Time Out

Goal:

- Be calm
- Be effective



Respond v. React

- **STOP**
 - Stop
 - Take 2 or 3 Paced or Wise Mind Breaths
 - Observe, non-judgmentally
 - Observe yourself. Observe your child.
 - Without criticism, expectation, aversion, evaluation
 - Proceed Effectively
- **Willing Hands, Soothing Hands**
- **Parent Time Out**
 - Paced breathing
 - Stress check
 - Willing hands, soothing hands
 - Vigorous activity, drink water, etc.

In the Heat of the Moment: Take a Breath

What to do:

- Paced Breathing. STOP! Parent Time Out. Willing Hands.
- Wise Mind - Practice being effective vs. being right
 - Respond intentionally instead of reacting
 - Check your inner wisdom: What does my child need right now?
 - How can I be warm, responsive, consistent in this moment?
- Validate – Observe, listen, reflect, respond
 - All emotions are ok, not all behaviors are ok
 - Finding the kernel of truth
- Clear, consistent expectations; coaching/learning opportunities; consequences for unacceptable behaviors

Parenting with Mindfulness

Parenting:

Be Warm
Be Responsive
Be Consistent
Scaffold

Mindfulness:

Be Present
Be Calm
Be Wise

Build Warmth & Responsiveness:

Child-led Time
Take a Moment

Practice:

Being Present
Noticing
Participating
Enjoying

Build Calm and Consistency:

In the Heat of the Moment
Take a Breath

Practice:

Paced Breathing
STOP, Parent Time Out
Wise Mind
Consistency, Scaffolding

Books: Laura Kastner, *Getting to Calm & Wise-minded Parenting*

On-line Meditation Guides:

UW Mindfulness Training for Nurses: <http://depts.washington.edu/bmindful/>

UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center: <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

Oxford's *Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World*: <http://franticworld.com/free-meditations-from-mindfulness/>