



# All about... Mindfulness



## Did you know that...

- **Mindfulness** means paying full attention to something. It means slowing down to really notice what you're doing. Being mindful is the opposite of rushing or multitasking. When you're mindful, you're taking your time. You're focusing in a relaxed, easy way.
- **Mindfulness improves attention** Children's mindfulness training starts with learning focusing skills. When we learn to focus on just one thing our mind calms down and grows stronger. We can always do better when we're able to pay attention to what we're doing.
- **Mindfulness Improves Self-Regulation** When children practice focusing skills, they become aware of what their minds are really up to. Mindfulness practice helps children deal with tough emotions and even improves impulse control. It replaces impulsive reactions with thoughtful responses. Without mindfulness we tend to be reactive, whereas with mindfulness we can respond in a balanced, rational way. Ultimately children can learn to steady themselves under sympathetic arousal to access cognitive skills.
- **Mindfulness** gives children the tools to focus their minds, calm down and reflect on a situation when they need to make a choice. When we're aware of our inner life and are able to observe it, emotions and thoughts can lose their control over us, and we get more time to respond.



## Activity - Balloon Belly Breathing

Lie down somewhere comfy and imagine there is a balloon in your tummy. As you breathe in, imagine the balloon slowly inflates, as you breathe out, the balloon effortlessly deflates. Children can rest their favourite toy on their tummy and let them go for a calming ride.

## Techniques to try at home..

- **S**top... Just take a pause, no matter what you are doing
- **T**ake a breath....
- **O**bserve.....Acknowledge what is happening
- **P**roceed..... Continue with whatever it was you were doing