

## MindUP™ Family Activity Ideas:

### Ages 4-6: Conquering the Amygdala Hijack- Feeling Factory

- Help young children identify what they are feeling and how to describe it. Very often, behavior difficulties (amygdala hijacks) are a result of a young child not having the words to describe what they are feeling and being overwhelmed.
- Practice by acting out faces and guessing each other's feelings so that when the situation is charged with emotion, identifying feelings seems more familiar.
- Move beyond happy, sad and mad. Try frustrated, embarrassed, overwhelmed, jealous, cranky, silly, loving, excited, surprised, and joyful.

### Ages 7-10: Conquering the Amygdala Hijack- Settle Your Glitter

- Take a small jar with a screw on lid and fill it almost to the top with water. Add 1 tablespoon of glitter glue. Add another tablespoon or two of fine glitter. Screw the lid on tight and shake!
- Talk with your child about how the jar is like your brain. Notice how hard it is to see clearly when the glitter is spinning. Compare it to when her amygdala is in charge and it's hard to think clearly and make good decisions. When the glitter has settled, compare it to what it's like when her amygdala is calm and she can access her pre-frontal cortex to make good decisions.

### Ages 11-14: Conquering the Amygdala Hijack

- Have your teenager get familiar with the things they can do to counter the flood of emotion that is so common during this developmental period. Talk about it when he is feeling calm and centered in his pre-frontal cortex.

Some ideas that might surface, include:

- Exercise
- Journaling
- Being outside
- Spending time with certain friends or relatives . . .



Parent Workbook Activity 1 :

## Further Reading and Resources

### Learn More . . .

The brain never loses its potential to develop and make more neural pathways through new experiences.

The key to thriving is to have the distinct parts of your brain working well together in an integrated manner.

How we parent can encourage our kids' brains to seek challenges or to avoid them.

Great brain books for kids  
Ages 4-6

Great brain books for kids  
Ages 7-10

Great brain book for teens  
Ages 11-14

### Good Books . . .

**Smart Parenting, Smarter Kids**  
*By David Walsh, Ph.D.*

**The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind**  
*By Dan Siegel, M.D.*

**Mindset: The New Psychology of Success**  
*By Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D.*

**A Walk in the Rain with a Brain**  
*By Edward M. Hallowell, MD*

**Think, Think, Think**  
*By Pamela Nettleton and Becky Shipe*

**Your Fantastic Elastic Brain**  
*By JoAnn Deak, Ph.D.*

**How Does Your Brain Work?**  
*By Don Curry*

**The Teen Brain Book: Who and What Are You?**  
*By Dale Carlson*

## PARENT WORKBOOK ACTIVITY 2: The “Core Practice”

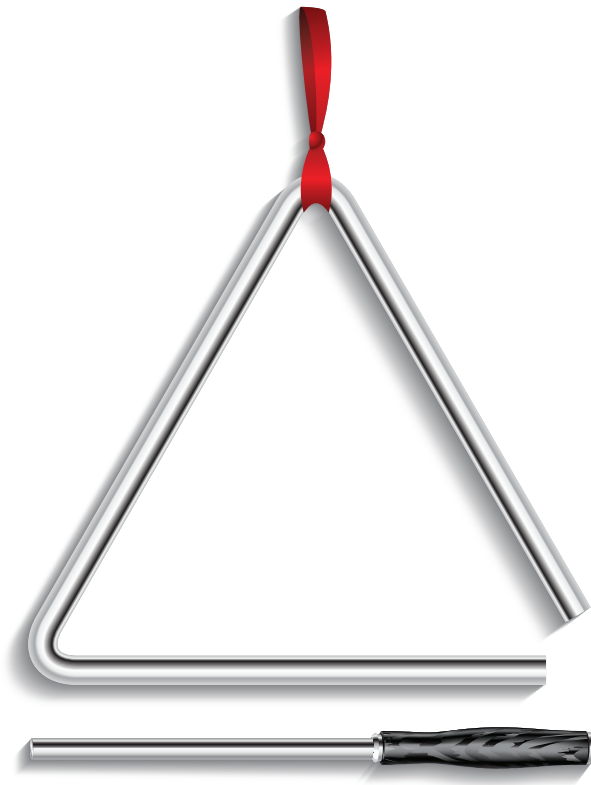
Mindful awareness through focused attention is a valuable skill for both children and caregivers to learn and master. Children and adults who learn that mindful breathing helps to calm them down, which in turn allows them to think more clearly and act in a reflective manner, will be better able to regulate their emotions, reduce stress, and make better decisions. **We highly recommend the MindUP™ Core Practice be done three times each day.**

### The MindUP™ “Core Practice”

Learn how to take a “brain break”! Now let’s practice together the simple steps of the MindUP™ core practice:

- 1) Sit up tall, eyes down turned or closed
- 2) Listen for the chime (if using one)
- 3) Inhale through your nose and out your mouth
- 4) Fill the lungs fully, extending the breath to your abdomen.
- 5) Focus your attention on your breath (this could be as little as 3 breaths!)
- 6) Notice thoughts, return your attention to your breath
- 7) Listen for the chime a second time, and follow the resonant sound as long as you can

**Reduce stress, calm the amygdala, access the PFC, and increase focus!**



Parent Workbook Activity 2 :

## MindUP™ For Parents

### Parent Personal Reflection

After the workshop, take a few quiet and focused minutes to reflect and thoughtfully respond to the following:

- When are the best times during the day for my own “brain break”?
- When are the best times during the day for me to help my children with the core practice?
- How am I most comfortable teaching the core practice?
- What other ways can I help increase my child’s awareness of his or her breath?

