FREE PRINTABLE ACTIVITY PACK FOR KIDS

Mental Health Activities for Kids That Actually Work

Real activities that support an anxious, low, or overwhelmed child's mood and resilience, plus honest guidance on when to seek professional help.

FREE • NO SIGNUP **17 PAGES** **PRINTABLE TOOLS INSIDE**

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About this resource

Real activities that support an anxious, low, or overwhelmed child's mood and resilience, plus honest guidance on when to seek professional help.

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How to Start the Conversation When Your Kid Won't Talk

4 items

1

Ages 3 to 6, Talk Beside the Activity

Young children process feelings through play, not conversation. Sit down to color or build blocks alongside your child and narrate feelings out loud as they come up ("that block tower looks frustrated it keeps falling"). Kids this age will often answer through the play before they'll answer a direct question.

2

Ages 7 to 10, Use Side-by-Side Time

Car rides, walks, and chores together remove the pressure of eye contact. A simple opener works better than a big question: "What was the best part of today, and what was the worst part?" gives an easy exit and a real opening, without it feeling like an interrogation.

3

Ages 11 to 13, Offer a Written Option

Preteens often find writing or drawing easier than saying something out loud. A shared notebook, or a single question left on a sticky note, gives a kid this age a way in that doesn't require performing composure while talking.

4

Build the Vocabulary Before You Need It

A kid can't point to a feeling they don't have a word for. Emotion charades, where one person silently acts out a feeling word using only face and body while everyone else guesses, is a fast, low-pressure way to build that vocabulary before a hard moment ever arrives.

A Is for Anxiety: Worry Time, a Feelings Thermometer, and Breathing Games

9 items

1

The Worry Time Container

Give worry a container instead of trying to erase it. Set aside a specific 10-minute worry time each day and keep a small jar or notebook nearby. When a worry pops up outside that window, write or draw it on a slip of paper, drop it in the jar, and return to whatever you were doing. During worry time, open the jar together and talk through what's still bothering them.

2

The Feelings Thermometer

Draw a simple thermometer from 1 (totally calm) to 10 (overwhelmed) and keep it visible. Ask your child to point to their number instead of explaining in words, a much lower bar for a kid who is anxious or too flooded to talk. Follow up with one concrete question: "What's one thing that would move you down one number right now?"

3 **Breathing Games Framed as Play, Not Therapy**

Most kids tune out "take a deep breath," but they'll happily play a breathing game framed as a game, not a coping skill:

4 Pinwheel breathing: blow on a real pinwheel and keep it spinning as long and slow as possible

5 Bubble breathing: blow bubbles and try to make one giant bubble instead of many small fast ones

6 Balloon belly: put a stuffed animal on the belly and try to make it rise as high as possible on the inhale

7 Dragon breath: take a big breath in, then exhale hard through the mouth like blowing out fire

8 **The Calm-Down Jar**

A calm-down jar (also called a glitter jar or mind jar) is a clear jar filled with water, glitter glue, and loose glitter, sealed shut.

9 **Kids' Yoga for Stress and Anxiety**

Yoga shows up on nearly every major mental-health-activities list for a reason: it pairs movement with breath in a way that is easy to teach without turning it into a lecture on coping skills.

B Is for Blues: Movement, Gratitude Noticing, and Connection

3 items

1 **Movement-Based Mood Boosters**

Telling a low-energy kid to "go play outside" rarely works, since low mood often shows up as low motivation to move. Remove the decision instead of adding pressure: a 3-minute dance-off to one song, a backyard scavenger hunt, or a jumping-jacks race against a timer.

Gratitude Noticing Games

2

Asking a low-mood kid to list what they're grateful for can backfire, it can feel like a demand to perform positivity they don't feel. Noticing works better than listing. At dinner or bedtime, play a quick round of "one good, one small": one good thing that happened today, and one small thing they noticed. This keeps the tone playful instead of turning gratitude into another task to get right.

Connection-Based Activities

3

Low mood tends to pull kids toward isolating, which deepens the low mood. Low-pressure connection works better than a big planned outing: cooking one simple recipe together, or a 10-minute board game with no phones nearby. The goal is presence, not a big production. A kid quietly building a puzzle next to you is still connecting.

C Is for Comebacks: Building Resilience After a Setback

2 items

Normalizing Setbacks With Age-Appropriate Language

1

Kids build resilience faster when a setback is framed as expected rather than a sign something has gone wrong with them personally. For younger kids, a simple line works: "Everyone's brain has hard days, this is a hard day, not a hard you." For older kids, name the setback matter-of-factly, without minimizing or dramatizing it: "That test went badly. That's disappointing.

The 'What Helped Last Time' Reflection Habit

2

After the sting has faded a little, not in the moment itself, ask one reflection question: "What's one thing that helped you feel a little better last time something like this happened?" Write the answer down somewhere your child can find it again. Over time, this builds a real, kid-generated list of what actually works for them, instead of relying on an adult to suggest a coping strategy in the moment.

When It's Time to Talk to a Professional, Not Just Try Another Activity

7 items

1 Frequent tantrums or intense irritability that doesn't ease with time or comfort

2 Persistent fear or worry that interferes with school, sleep, or friendships

3. A real decline in grades or a sudden loss of interest in things they used to enjoy
4. Sleeping much more or much less than usual, or seeming sleepy throughout the day
5. Withdrawing more and more from friends and family over time
6. Frequent stomachaches or headaches with no known medical cause
7. Any talk of self-harm, hopelessness, or wanting to die

Try It Yourself

Which activity do you want to try this week? Write or draw your plan.

How to Use These Pages

Small, regular habits help kids feel steadier. Pick two or three pages and make them part of your week.

Ideas

- Do the check-in at the same time each day, like after dinner.
- Sit beside, not across from, your child.
- Keep it light. Colouring while chatting works well.
- Do not force an answer. 'I don't know' is okay.

When to get professional help

If your child seems sad, worried or angry for weeks, avoids school or friends, changes eating or sleeping, or you have safety worries, talk to your child's doctor, school counselor or a licensed child mental health professional. These pages support care. They do not replace it.

Daily Feelings Check-In

Grown-up: ask these out loud. Child: draw or say.

Today I feel...

The best part of my day was...

The hardest part of my day was...

Something I need is...

Weekly Activity Planner

Plan one small helpful thing for each day.

Day	Move my body	Quiet time	Connect with someone
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Gratitude and Kindness Checklist

Tick what you did this week.

Gratitude

- [ ] Said thank you to someone
- [ ] Named three good things
- [ ] Drew something I love
- [ ] Told someone why I am glad they are in my life

Kindness

- [ ] Helped someone without being asked
- [ ] Shared something
- [ ] Said something kind
- [ ] Included someone who was alone
- [ ] Made a card for someone

Draw Box: My Happy Things

Things that make me happy

People who help me

Draw Box: My Feelings Weather

My feelings weather today

Sleep and Screen Routine Checklist

Good rest and breaks from screens help moods. Tick when done.

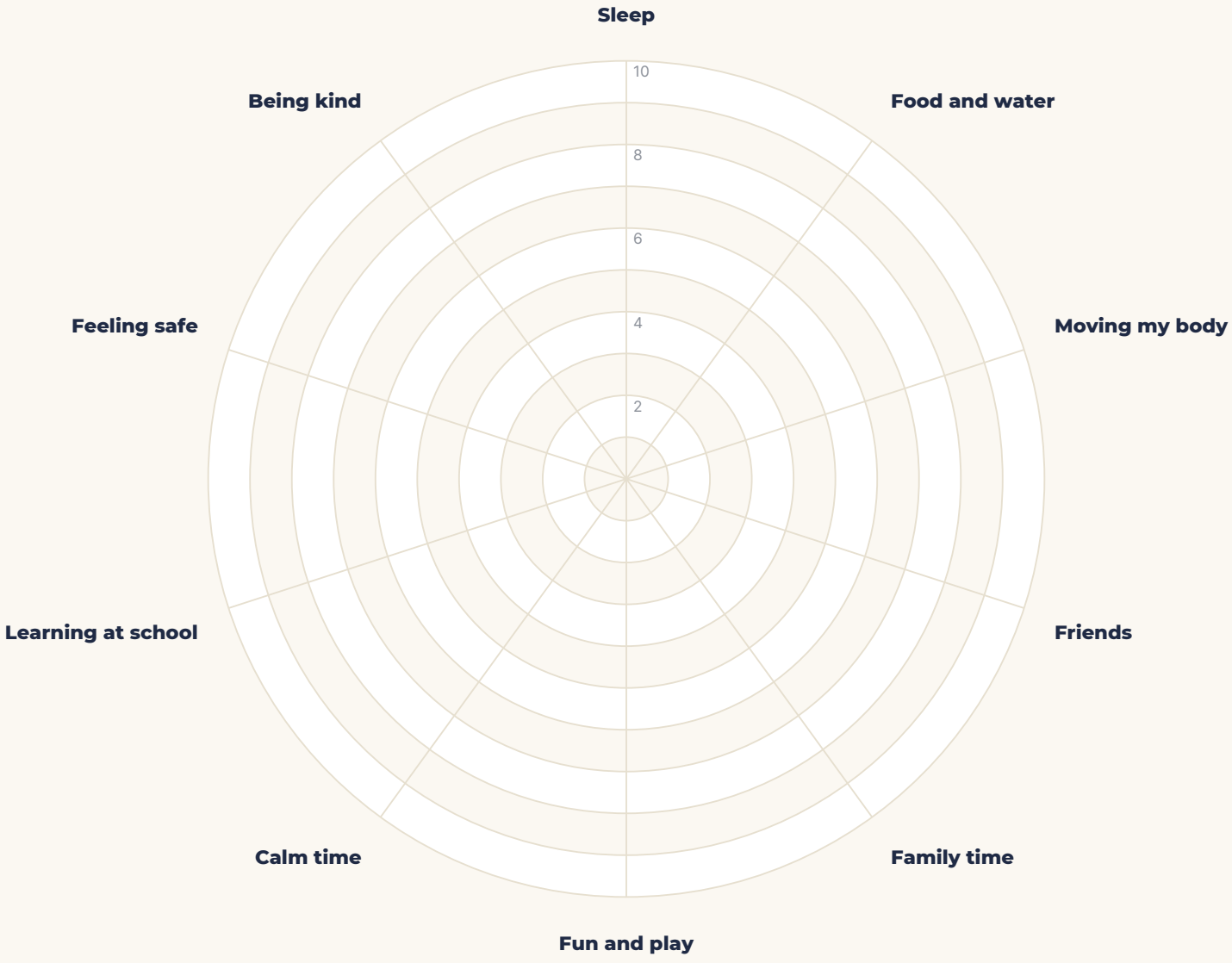
Evening

- [ ] Screens off before bed
- [ ] Bath or wash
- [ ] Pyjamas on
- [ ] Brush teeth
- [ ] Read or listen to a story
- [ ] Lights out at the same time

During the day

- [ ] Played outside or moved my body
- [ ] Had a screen-free meal
- [ ] Took a quiet break

My Wellbeing Wheel



Color in how well each part of your life is going right now, 1 is low and 10 is great. Pick one low area to work on together.

One Small Step

Look at your wheel. Pick one area and make a tiny plan.

The area I want to grow is...

One small thing I can try this week

Who can help me?

How will I know it is working?

CERTIFICATE

Certificate of Caring for Me

Awarded to

_____

for taking good care of my feelings and my body

_____ Date

_____ Signed

Want more like this?

This printable is the companion to our guide "Mental Health Activities for Kids That Actually Work".

Read more at concentratedwisdom.com

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