



MindUP Home Activities Unit 3

The activities and ideas in this booklet complement the learning that is happening in school and will enable you to support your child further.

The MindUP programme is split into 4 units of work

Unit 1 - Getting Focussed

Unit 2 - Sharpening your senses

Unit 3 - It's all about attitude

Unit 4 - Taking action mindfully

This handbook will give you tips and ideas of how best to support your child within **Unit 3**. We hope you will find it useful!

This unit is broken down into 3 lessons

Lesson 10 - Perspective Taking

Lesson 11 - Choosing Optimism

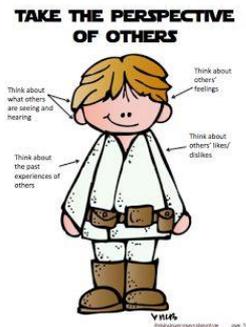
Lesson 12 - Appreciating Happy Experiences

Unit 3 - It's All About Attitude

Cognitive studies have shown that learning that is connected with a happy or positive emotional experience causes the information to get stored in our long-term memories. (Palwak et al 2003) As students learn new ways to cultivate a positive mind-set, they prime their brain for learning and for building healthy relationships.

Lesson 10 - Perspective taking

We are social beings and our brain is a social brain. As parents, we know that our children must be able to connect with others, feel empathy and understand the perspectives of their peers in order to have a fulfilling life. What we now know from science is that in order to do this, they must first be able to self-reflect and understand their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and impact on others. We can help our children develop perspective taking and empathy, while increasing our own perspective taking skills. Like any skill it requires modelling, practice and feedback.



Family Activity Ideas - Perspective Taking	
Ages 3-6	'Who are you hats' - Bring several hats and encourage children to imagine the character that might wear the hat. What would their voice sound like? What would they wear? How would they do their work?
Ages 7-9 Ages 10-11	'Charades' This game invites you to take on the experience of someone else and convey it in an understandable way. Audience members have to take on the perspective of the actor in order to guess correctly.

Further Reading/Resources	
Parents	The Whole Brain Child By Dan Siegel
Children aged 4-6	Edwardo the Horriblest Boy in the Whole Wide World By John Burningham My Happy Life

	By Rose Lagercrantz
Children aged 7-11	One By Kathryn Otoshi The True Story of the Three Little Pigs By Jon Scieszka

Lesson 11 -Choosing Optimism

We all come into this world leaning toward glass half full or glass half empty. While that set point is very real, research shows genetics account for only about 25% of our optimistic tendencies. There are concrete things we can do to shift to a more optimistic outlook, and parents play a key part in making this happen. Children who see the world optimistically experience life as hopeful and full of possibilities.



Family Activity Ideas - Choosing Optimism	
Ages 3-6	'Optimistic I Spy' Have your child pick out their favourite picture book. Play this new I spy game saying things like: "I Spy something that makes me happy," "I Spy something I can do," and "I Spy someone who tried hard."
Ages 7-9	'Positive Pennies' Around the dinner table or at bedtime, reflect on the day's experiences. Help your child think about times when they responded with an optimistic attitude. For each response, have them add a penny to the Positive Penny Jar. When the jar is full, take a trip together to a favourite charity followed by a trip to the ice cream store.
Ages 10-11	'Flash Forward' Consider your most optimistic future. In one, five or ten years, what will you be doing? Create a visual of the dream, (poster, drawing, shoe box, vision board). Post it somewhere and keep the conversation alive. Tie it to daily choices. Is this taking us closer to our preferred future or away from it?

Further Reading/Resources	
Parents	Neural Correlates of Admiration and Compassion By Mary Helen Immordino Yang, Andrea McColl, Hanna Damasio and Antonio Damasio
Children aged 4-6	Hey Little Ant By Phillip M. Hoose
Children aged 7-11	What to Do When You Grumble Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Negativity - By Dawn Hubener

Lesson 12 - Appreciating Happy Experiences

"Focusing on happiness is not a frivolous pursuit; it is one of the emotions that can inform the trajectory of our lives." - Goldie Hawn, 10 Mindful Minutes.

We actually have the ability to train our brains to actively savour happy experiences in order to reap the benefits. Focusing on the positive is not just a "sentimental idea" but is actually grounded in current neuroscience. Our brains release dopamine (a feel good neurotransmitter) when we remember a happy moment in the same way as if we were actually experiencing it. Nurturing this practice overtime actually changes the way our brains are wired and impacts how we feel, think, and behave.



Family Activity Ideas - Appreciating Happy Experiences	
Ages 3-6	'ABC' Glee - Help your child create a book where every page is filled with things that make him happy which start with the respective letter. Use pictures from magazines, take photos or make your own drawings/paintings.
Ages 7-9	'Happy Haikus' The haiku is a short form of Japanese poetry

	that consists of 17 syllables in three lines. Typically 5,7,5. Write Happy Haikus together, collecting them in a book.
Ages 10-11	'Top 5' Help your child begin actively identifying what they need to do to feel good and happy. Have them identify the top 5 things that turn the mood around. It's a lifelong gift for them to understand that it's within their reach to turn the tide in regard to their feelings. Some popular choices for the top 5 include - drawing, running, yoga, music, talking to friends, dancing.

Further Reading/Resources	
Parents	Authentic Happiness By Martin Seligman
Children aged 4-6	If You're Happy and You Know It By Jane Cabrera Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids By Carol McCloud