Physical Therapy Activity of the Week

Each and every one of us has the ability to feel calmer, more relaxed, and more alert at any given moment. This ability is called “Conscious Breathing”. When we use it, we are less stressed, more mindful, more creative and just plain cooler and kinder. When we teach it to our students and children, we help give them a life-long tool for managing their stress and cultivating inner peace.

Conscious breathing is simple to learn. Start integrating the 2 different breaths below into your day – at circle time, meal time, transition time, drive time. You can help children practice this by pausing every now and then, taking the time to breathe consciously. Encourage them to notice and maybe even talk how the breathing exercises: how they may feel, think and behave. Remind kids to use conscious breathing to help them manage their feelings and shift their own mind-body state, the same way you would other healthy habits such as teeth brushing, saying “please” and “thank you,” lining up for recess, cleaning up after themselves, etc.

Below are 2 different breathing activities to share with your children.

1. Flower Breath: Imagine smelling a beautiful flower, breathe in through the nose and out the mouth, releasing any tension. Stop and smell the roses, daffodils, daisies or any other flower they like. This is a simple way to connect kids to their breath and how it helps them to feel it, and thereby learn to control it. It can be a fake flower if your child has allergies.

2. Bunny Breath: Just 3 quick sniffs in the nose and one long exhale out the nose. Invite kids to pretend to be bunnies, sniffing the air for other bunnies, carrots to eat, or safety. It can be a lovely cleansing breath when you use it in this way. You can also use it when kids are very upset and can’t find their breath, because it will help them connect to their exhale, so that they breathe instead of becoming more upset and frustrated.

Adapted from article from Move-with-Me.com