HOKIE WELLNESS Parenting Series: Mindful Parenting

Julie C. Dunsmore
Associate Professor of Psychology
jdunsmor@vt.edu
Five senses exercise
Agenda

- Introductions
  - Name
  - Age of your child(ren)
  - What brought you here today
- Explain concept of “mindful parenting”
- Briefly describe research showing benefits of mindful parenting
- Apply mindful parenting to your daily schedule
What is mindful parenting?

- Mindfulness = non-judgmental awareness of moment-to-moment experience (Kabat-Zinn, 2003)
- Video of Jon Kabat-Zinn from the Greater Good Science Center: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoLQ3qkhowo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoLQ3qkhowo)

  **Mindfulness = presence of heart**

- Mindful parenting = using mindful awareness when parenting (Duncan et al., 2009)
Three foundations of mindful parenting

- Sovereignty
  - Holistic view of your child as a person
  - Your child is not defined by her behavior
- Acceptance
  - Not taking things personally
  - Recognizing that people and situations are always changing
- Empathy
  - Seeing your child’s perspective from his developmental vantage point
  - Feeling WITH your child

## Five dimensions of mindful parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Effective parenting behaviors promoted</th>
<th>Detrimental parenting behaviors decreased</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening with full attention</td>
<td>Noticing &amp; correctly identifying child’s verbal &amp; behavioral cues</td>
<td>Reduced reliance on expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonjudgmental acceptance of self &amp; child</td>
<td>Healthy balance of goals, parenting self-efficacy, appreciation for child’s traits</td>
<td>Fewer unrealistic expectations of self &amp; child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional awareness of self &amp; child</td>
<td>Responsiveness to child’s needs &amp; emotions</td>
<td>Less dismissal of child’s emotions, less reactive discipline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-regulation when parenting</td>
<td>Modeling effective regulation, parenting in line with values &amp; goals</td>
<td>Less reactive discipline, less dependence on child’s emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compassion for self &amp; child</td>
<td>More forgiving view of self, more warmth &amp; affection with child</td>
<td>Less self-blame, less negativity in parent-child relationship</td>
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Mini-mindfulness exercise
Benefits of mindful parenting

- Better responsiveness and lower reactivity to child’s behavior
- Better awareness of child’s needs
- Better monitoring of child’s behavior
- Greater consistency in discipline
- More use of effective discipline practices
- Better parent-child communication
- Warmer, more positive, higher quality parent-child relationship

Coatsworth et al., 2010; 2015; Duncan et al., 2009, 2015; Lippold et al., 2015
Applying mindful parenting to your daily schedule

- Video of Christine Carter from the Greater Good Science Center: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIryQI2m_oE
- Think through your daily schedule – what are some of the “trouble” spots?
- How could you apply mindful parenting to get through the trouble spots? Could you apply mindful parenting to head them off altogether?
Tips for using mindful parenting

• Remember that simply BEING with your child is actually doing something
• Predictable routines are your friend
• Rhythmic physical activity can promote mindfulness
• Make a physical reminder, such as a sticky note or refrigerator magnet with a phrase like “Stop, Be Calm, Be Present” or “Notice, Label, Accept, Breathe”
• Remember that mindful parenting doesn’t take the place of limit-setting or discipline – rather, by using mindful parenting, you can make more effective choices about whether & how to set limits
Intention setting