



Tips for Creating a Mindful Classroom

Week 1

Awareness and presence to ourselves and others is a critical life skill. Reinforce this practice often to create a higher sense of awareness and mindful interactions.

1. Mindful Bodies - Being mindful is the practice of being aware of your own experience with an attitude of non-reactivity. The more mindful you are, the better you'll be able to connect with, listen, and respond to your students.

- Practice being mindful by taking 10 mindful breaths before you start each day with your students.
- Notice if your mind wanders away from the breath, and if it does, simply return your awareness to your breathing.
- While you are waiting for students to process the question you just asked, notice your feet on the floor and notice how you are feeling as you wait.

2. What Does It Mean to Be Present? Students often feel like adults aren't interested in their lives; that they just want to tell them what they can and can't do. Practice being present in their life. Be curious to let youth know you're actually interested in them.

- Ask youth about their hobbies and how they best like to spend their time, the music they like, the movies they're into, etc.
- Become interested in youth culture.
- We know that little ones love to share and there isn't always enough time in the day for all the stories. Provide paper and pencils (and maybe a story box) for the students to write down their stories for you to read later.
- While listening to a child, keep your awareness in the present moment. Use curiosity to keep your intention authentic, and body language (eye contact, body posture) to let the child know you are listening undividedly).
- Notice the body language and especially facial expressions of the children you work with as they talk to you. Try not to assume what they're feeling, but rather become curious about their body language as a window to investigate further: "I notice your brow is scrunched up right now, what are you feeling?"