Incorporating Mindfulness in Staff and Family Spaces

Ideas for modeling mindfulness to our interactions with staff and families

Staff to Staff

Day to day interactions
- Ask questions such as – “how are you feeling?”
- Model mindful habits, including
  - Take deep breaths to refresh or steady
  - Recognize and verbalize emotions
- Take the time to slow down and process intense days/moments

One on one check-ins
- Offer spaces to slow down during check-ins, opening the chance for the staff member to share if they want/need to
- Observe co-worker behavior to recognize their efforts and how they are showing up in program
- Share mindfulness resources for their personal or professional use, as a preventative or solution-based approach

Group meetings
- Offer time to stretch during program or a meeting, either giving someone a chance to lead the group or letting each do what they prefer!
- Start program or staff meetings with a brief internal awareness practice - such as a 3-minute breathing exercise, a 2-minute gratitude practice, or a 10-minute game involving movement. Any of these are grounding and help us feel refreshed for program or a meeting!
- Seek mindfulness resources and training for yourself, program staff, and families!

Staff to Families

- Ask questions such as – “how are you and your family doing?”
- Model mindful habits, including deep breaths, verbalizing emotions, recognizing and processing intense days/moments
- Recognize and praise families when they set boundaries and prioritize family wellbeing

Day to day interactions
- Use more private family check-in meetings to slow down and hold space for what they may be going through
- Invite family members (kids too!) to try a mindfulness exercise (like deep breaths or a silly, movement-based game)
- Narrate child’s behavior to adult family members, whether in this meeting or in the past few days/weeks since the last check-in

One on one check-ins
- Use videos, guides, or guest presenters to offer family mindfulness activities - such as this 2-minute guided breathing video from Sesame Street in Communities “Count, Breath, Relax” or yoga or meditation. Having a guest or video can set a fun and special tone for the opportunity.
- Start family meetings with a brief internal awareness practice – such as a 3-minute breathing exercise, a 2-minute gratitude practice, or a 10-minute game involving movement. Any of these can be grounding and may help families recenter!

Virtual options
- Virtual events can incorporate these same exercises with certain adaptations – such as having participants turn off their cameras to comfortably stretch or following breathing exercises. Videos can also serve as a visual guide for staff and/or families to follow along or use on their own.