

Self Care: Using Mindfulness to Improve Our Relationships, Daily Interactions and Reactions to Trauma

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose in the present moment and non-judgmentally” and “...shows us what is happening in our bodies, our emotions, our minds, and in the world. Through mindfulness, we avoid harming ourselves and others.” –Jon Kabat-Zinn and Thich Nhat Hanh

Practicing mindfulness improves

- Psychological well-being
- Emotional regulation
- Life satisfaction
- Physical health
- Stress

Your Brain

The Amygdala is responsible for the flight-fight-freeze response and errs on the side of over activation to keep us safe. The prefrontal cortex is responsible for slowing us down and reasoning. Mindfulness engages the prefrontal cortex dialing down our response when it is not needed.

Activities to Influence Your Response

Hand-to-Heart

Begin by placing your hand on your heart, feeling the gentle pressure and warmth of your hand. Feel your chest rising and falling as you breathe in and out. While a simple activity, gentle touch instantly generates physiological relaxation in our bodies as it activates the vagus nerve in the parasympathetic nervous system, releases oxytocin, and activates the prefrontal cortex.

Emotional Labeling

Self-care starts with self-awareness: understanding your feelings and needs, so that you can make adaptations and shifts to take care of yourself. Labeling your emotions, or putting words to how you feel, shifts brain activity from the amygdala to the prefrontal cortex, allowing you to calm and access all of your resources for problem solving. This simple activity helps your brain to regulate and work more efficiently.

The Power of Two

When we combine strategies for calming our brain and bodies, we put ourselves in the very best position to respond with calm and care within our relationships and daily experiences. This has the power to change interactions, and the youth in your care have the opportunity to learn from you.

- Published by National Child Welfare Workforce Institute:

<https://ncwwi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Trauma-Informed-Yoga-Mindfulness.pdf>



Refer Foster Parents and Receive Rewards

All types of people make good foster parents as we all have our own special talents. As a foster parent you know better than anyone what it takes to answer this call. So we need your help.

Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois has updated our foster parent referral program. If you refer someone new to become an LCFS foster family, you can receive:

\$100 if the referred individual/family submits an application to LCFS and gets fingerprinted.

\$150 more if the referred individual/family then becomes licensed.

Be sure the prospective foster parent lists your name on their application under who referred them.

Questions? Contact your LCFS licensing worker.

2024 Board Payments

Below are LCFS Board Payment Mailing Dates. Payment is made for the prior month's service. For example, the payment received in January is for the month of December.

February 16	March 18
April 16	May 16
June 18	July 17
August 16	September 18
October 16	November 18
December 17	

Announcing Monthly Foster Parent FAQ Sessions

Hosted by LCFS' Associate VP of Child Welfare and Licensing Manager
Sessions will be held virtually from 10 AM to 12 PM on the following dates:

Thursday, Feb 29	Friday, Mar 29	Tuesday, Apr 30
Friday, May 31	Friday, Jun 28	Friday, Jul 31
Friday, Aug 30	Monday, Sep 30	Thursday, Oct 31
	Friday, Nov 29	Monday, Dec 30



Your participation is highly encouraged as these sessions are an excellent opportunity to stay informed, engaged and ask questions. Scan the QR code to join a meeting or follow the information below to join on Teams:

Web Link to Join: <https://qrcodes.pro/0nTmvO>

ID: 282 866 431 041

Passcode: JPd4n



Sign Up for Email

LCFS desires to provide timely, consistent and relevant communication with all of our foster parents. If you'd like to receive electronic communications from LCFS in regards to your role as a foster parent, please scan the QR code above and complete the opt-in form. Thank you.

The Balance:

Taking care of yourself to care for children

**Saturday,
April 20,
2024**



Save the Date

LCFS Statewide Foster Parent Conference

Holiday Inn Bloomington-Normal
8 Traders Circle, Normal, IL 61761
9:50 AM - 4:00 PM

More info coming soon!