

## Benefits of Mindfulness for Children



Literacy, math, and other academic skills are essential for children's lifelong success. But without intentional social-emotional development, children may not learn how to process their emotions and connect with others in healthy ways. That's where mindfulness can come in.

Mindfulness involves both an awareness and acceptance of the world around us and our internal experiences. Mindful people tend to focus more on the present instead of ruminating on the past or future, and they cultivate a curiosity towards their thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations.

### Why Mindfulness? Consider the Social-Emotional Benefits

Why teach mindfulness to our children? The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has linked mindfulness to two core social-emotional skills: self-regulation and self-awareness. Skills in these areas teach students not only how to recognize their thoughts, emotions, and actions, but also how to react to them in positive ways.

According to brain imaging research, practicing mindfulness can alter brain structure in a way that can improve a student's reaction to stress. It thickens the cerebral cortex, which is responsible for perception and reasoning, and increases blood flow in the brain. Not only does mindfulness training reduce stress levels, it can also help alleviate anxiety or depression.

Mindfulness training might be a great option for bullying issues. Research suggests that bullying rates are significantly lower in schools that teach lessons on mindfulness. As students learn to recognize and respond to their feelings in healthier ways, they're less likely to lash out at their peers.

Mindfulness can be especially helpful for children with learning disabilities, particularly attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). One study found that children with learning disabilities who received mindfulness training earned better grades and had lower instances of emotional disruption in comparison to before they started the program. Children with special needs can also learn social-emotional skills through mindfulness that can help them connect with their peers.

Overall, mindfulness has something to offer for every child. It can relieve children's stress, reduce bullying rates, and help children with learning disabilities or special needs develop stronger social and emotional learning skills. If you haven't tried mindfulness activities with your child, now may be the time to see just how much they can benefit. *For more information:* <https://www.waterford.org/resources/mindfulness-activities-for-kids/>

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### In this issue:

- ❖ Teaching Camping Safety to Children
- ❖ Do Pets Make Us Happier People? The Mood-Boosting Benefits of Having a Pet
- ❖ OHCE MEMBERSHIP FORM
- ❖ OHCE News & Updates

If you receive the monthly newsletter by mail and would like to receive it by email, please call Roxanne at 918-746-3706. Receiving it by email would greatly reduce our printing and postage expenses.

Thank you!

# Teaching Camping Safety to Children

## Easy as A B C



Camping trips with the family provide priceless memories you will cherish for a lifetime. It is a time to disconnect from your busy life, slow down and enjoy quality time with family. One of the biggest perks of camping is being in the great outdoors. Mother Nature has so much beauty to offer, yet the wilderness can also be dangerous. To teach your children camping safety basics, group these main wilderness risks into three simple, easy-to-remember categories: ***Animals (and plants), Beyond (the campsite) and Climate.***

### *Animals* (and Plants)

**Teach your kids to respect plants and animals and be aware of possible danger.**



Here are a few pointers that will help instruct your kids in what is safe and what is not:

- Remember you're in animals' backyard and natural habitat. Give them space.
- Don't pet or feed the wild animals.
- Don't pick any flowers or leaves from the trees or bushes.
- Don't eat any berries or mushrooms.
- Don't leave food or garbage in the tent or an open area.

Tell your children to keep a healthy distance from all animals. No need to scare the kids, but let them know the animals like space and privacy, just like humans do. If you do see a mountain lion or bear, make noises and walk away. Teach your kids this is one time it's okay to be loud and yell.

### *Beyond* The Campsite

**Each campground and RV park comes with its own unique terrain.**

Some campgrounds are in the mountains, others in the desert. You'll want to teach your children a few vital lessons about campground safety:

- Don't wander off alone.
- Always have a buddy and tell someone which direction you are going.
- Carry a whistle with you at all times.
- Stay away from water (lakes, rivers, ponds).
- Watch out for other campers and RVers and respect their space.
- Never go outside without shoes and socks.



### *Climate*

**Weather is often unpredictable and can turn on a dime.**



**Wind:** Strong winds can pose a threat by upturning tents and canopies and wreaking havoc on a campsite.

Teach your children how to thoroughly plant stakes to secure the tent. If the wind is extreme, teach your children to get to an open area so an unruly branch doesn't fall on anyone.

If you're staying in an RV, reposition it to face the wind. Teach your children what you're doing along the way. The kids can help put the slides in, if necessary. Let your children know that the RV stabilizers are securely in place to give them peace of mind. *Tip: Always pack a windbreaker to keep your body protected from the elements!*



**Rain:** Rain can make camping uncomfortable and extremely wet. Teach your children how to dig trenches around the tent to prevent water from soaking through.

*Tip: Always bring a rainproof or waterproof jacket and extra clothes to change into should you get wet.*



**Sun:** Sun can cause problems quickly if campers aren't careful. Campers can get heat stroke or become dehydrated quickly when exposed to too much heat. Teach your children to drink water regularly, play in the shade and apply sunscreen regularly.

*Tip: Wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Dress in layers, bring extra clothes and plan accordingly based on the weather forecast. Never underestimate the power of Mother Nature!*



## Do Pets Make Us Happier People? The Mood-Boosting Benefits of Having a Pet



The benefits of having a pet date all the way to at least 15,000 years ago, when the concept of affectionately caring for a domesticated animal first got its start. Of course, owning a vigilant canine or sly cat served a utilitarian need; dogs helped protect homes, herd other animals and hunt prey, while cats kept homes free of pests and rodents. Over time, animals were bred to be more compatible with the human lifestyle, and true bonds between animal and human formed. Today, our domesticated pets still help us out in some of the ways mentioned above, but they also serve another vital role: They make us incredibly happy, and here's the data to prove it.

### Pets Can Actually Make You Stress Less

"Pets certainly make people happier. They help people relieve stress, have more of a purpose in life, and keep themselves in a routine," says Natalie Buchwald, LMHC, founder and clinical director of Manhattan Mental Health Counseling in New York. "In a 2019 Washington State University study, researchers discovered that 10 minutes of cuddling or stroking a pet led to a significant decrease in cortisol, the stress hormone."

Banfield Pet Hospital released a May 2020 study on how recent weeks of increased time at home with pets impacted owners. One of the key findings was that 45 percent of those surveyed said their household's happiness had increased while spending more time with their pet during their region's stay-at-home orders, with 39 percent revealing their pet helped lower their anxiety and uncertainty caused by the global pandemic.

### Let's Get Physical

We know that a reduction in stress can make us feel better mentally, but it also has an incredible impact on our physical well-being. High levels of cortisol (that stress hormone we've talked about) have been linked to heart disease, weight gain, sleep issues and even memory impairment. Keeping these levels in check can potentially help prevent such health hazards.

Furthermore, having a special fur baby in your life can result in an uptick of physical activity. As Buchwald previously mentioned, pets can create more consistency in our daily routines, spurring us to get up earlier, get outside and MOVE.

"Pets often need to be brought outside or walked, which has a positive impact on [their parent's] well-being, if only for the additional steps and sun-derived vitamin D received from being outside," she says.

### Looking for Puppy Love? Read This First

Adopting a pet is not a decision to take lightly—it requires some mental and physical preparation, and it often comes with at least a decade-long commitment.

"It's important to be prepared with the time and resources to make your new pet feel comfortable," says Buchwald, who recommends potential adopters ask themselves the following questions before taking the pet plunge:

- How much room do I have in my house and outdoor area?
- How often will I be home to take care of my new pet?
- Do I have the budget to provide healthcare and training classes for my new pet?

A pet can bring you joy and fulfillment, but it's also necessary to consider your future pet's needs, as well. But once you're sure that you'll be able to meet those needs, you just might find yourself on a journey to a more fulfilled and happy life—with plenty of cuddles and ear scratches along the way!

Source: <https://petcentral.chewy.com/mental-health-benefits-of-pets/>

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Placed on Computer Roster \_\_\_\_\_  
Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Return membership form with  
dues to county OHCE Treasurer

## Oklahoma Home and Community Education COUNTY MEMBERSHIP FORM \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ New Member:  (or) Changes:

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: Female  Male \_\_\_\_\_

Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Member Since: \_\_\_\_\_  
(year)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Age Range: (1) 19 Years & Under  (2) 20-34  (3) 35-44  (4) 45-64  (5) 65-79  (6)  
80 & Over

Send Outreach Newsletter by email  YES

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### VOLUNTARY INFORMATION REQUEST *(Equal Employment Opportunity Information Request)*

#### Ethnic Data *(select only one):*

- White** (not of Hispanic origin. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East).
- Black** (not of Hispanic origin. A person having origins in any of the black racial groups).
- Asian or Pacific Islander** (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka [formerly Ceylon], Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Afghanistan, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa).
- American Indian or Alaskan Native** (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition).
- Hispanic** (A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race).

Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**County Use Only**



## SHOUT OUT FROM SHARI



Dear OHCE Members,

DID YOU KNOW...that OHCE is uniquely positioned to be able to help individual members and their families and communities to develop a higher level of living through education?

DID YOU KNOW...that NO OTHER ORGANIZATION is poised to develop Community Leaders and Informed Citizens through our Research-based educational programs?

The ultimate purpose of OHCE is to educate our members to be well-informed and able to handle changes in our homes and our communities.

I don't know about you, but I for one am so excited to be part of this great organization! We learn so much!

We need to be "Sharing" OHCE to everyone. Who do you know that likes to sew, or likes history, or that has children and grandchildren that could benefit from OHCE? We need to really reach out to as many people and groups as possible and invite them to join us!

A special "Shout Out" to the Membership Committee for their hard work on our FALL "Fun and Fellowship" Membership event! This is our opportunity to invite someone and tell them about OHCE! It's going to be so much fun! "THANK YOU" Kathy Erwin for being in charge of the "LaFortune Park" Day! "THANK YOU" Jean Parks for helping get the letters ready to go out!

And a very special "Shout Out" to Ashlee Overall for designing our Flyer to go on FaceBook! Also, a "Shout Out" to Roxanne in helping us prepare all the mailing labels! You Rock!

Nuts about OHCE! *Shari*

**Membership DUES  
and FORMS are  
due October 15<sup>th</sup>!**

### WHAT'S HAPPENING

#### **OHCE FALL "Fun & Fellowship"**

**OCTOBER 6<sup>th</sup> – LaFortune Park – Southwest Shelter:** 10am – 12pm or 1 – 3 pm (24-Person Maximum) This is OUTSIDE! Rain date will be Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>

**OCTOBER 6<sup>th</sup> – OSU Extension – Auditorium:** 6 – 8 pm (16-Person Maximum)

**OCTOBER 7<sup>th</sup> – OSU Extension – Auditorium:** 10am – 12pm (22-Person Maximum) or 1 – 3 pm (16-Person Maximum) or 4 – 5pm for "Take Home Kit"

**RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 30<sup>th</sup> TO SHARI MUNROE**

#### **From Membership Committee:**

2021 Membership Renewals Due: Everyone should have received a Membership Renewal Form, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope addressed to your Local Group Treasurer! Renewals are due to your Group Treasurer before October 15<sup>th</sup>.

**MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!** Even if you can't attend the meetings, you can join as a "Silent Member" and still receive the FCS Monthly Newsletter and the Leader Lesson...plus you can always come to any of our fun "Membership Events".

**WE WANT YOU TO BE A MEMBER OF OHCE!** \*\*\*Next Year we will be celebrating 11 of our members with their 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25 Year Membership Pin and Certificates!\*\*\*

*~Shari Munroe, Membership Chairman*

Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE), consists of eight groups that meet in and around Tulsa. The groups meet once a month, at various times. The groups meet in at libraries, churches or community centers. To start or join a group in your neighborhood or community, call the Tulsa County OSU Extension Office at 918-746-3706.



# OHCE UPDATES



Since the Holiday Luncheon has been cancelled this year we have been trying to think of a way to still support the Tulsa County Social Services. We came up with two solutions and would like your thoughts. One is to donate via your group then that treasurer would forward to the County Treasurer and one check with a card would be sent to the Tulsa County Social Services. The second is because some of you have or like to create lovely handmade items or just like to go to the store and buy something, Tulsa County Social Services has offered their driver to pick up items from your home. Maybe a date would be set and items could be placed on your porch so there is no personal contact. Please call me Donna Spielman 918-296-9159 if you want to have items picked up.

~*Donna Spielman, Family Issues Committee Chairman*



**Unfortunately,  
the Holiday Luncheon  
that was scheduled for  
December 2, 2020 has  
been cancelled**



~*Glenda Meinheit, Holiday Luncheon Committee Chairman*

**The Healthy Living THRIVE focus this month....** Back to Basics this October. We need to remember proper nutrition during this pandemic so we can THRIVE! <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/features/national-nutrition-month/index.html>  
~*Charline Romine, Healthy Living Committee Chairman*



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*Michelle Bonicelli*

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