



# Thank you for joining us!

**Session 3:** Early Childhood Education: Success Through  
Focus: Brain Breaks & Energizers

**Trainer:** Erin Cooney  
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

## Getting Started:

1. You will receive a follow-up email within 24 hours of this session and that will serve as your certificate of completion.
2. If you have any questions, please type them into the Q&A box.
3. Remember to also sign up and register in your respective agency's system in order to earn credit hours.
4. If you'd like, grab a pen/pencil/paper to jot down your thoughts.



Follow us @pureedgeinc  
Website: [www.pureedgeinc.org](http://www.pureedgeinc.org)  
Email: [getmoving@pureedgeinc.org](mailto:getmoving@pureedgeinc.org)



# Introductions

---



Respond to the poll  
to tell us a little  
about yourself.

# Who We Are

---

**Pure Edge, Inc. (PEI)** is a private operating foundation that provides direct service to organizations through professional development & strategy thought partnership.

PEI also provides grants to national organizations that advance the work of whole child development & SEL.



# Introductions

---

Erin Cooney

**erin@pureedgeinc.org**

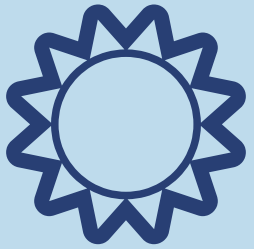
*Director of Curriculum & Instruction,  
National Trainer*

---



# Welcoming Activity

**Describe Your Mood Today**



Sunshine



Rainy



Thundery



Cloudy



Rainbow



# Engaging Activity: Mindful Minute



- Start in Seated Mountain.
- Bring your attention to the present moment. We are going to start by taking a Mindful Minute.
- Start bringing your attention to the breath, noticing its qualities (fast, slow, warm, cool, shallow, deep...).
- Continue to focus your attention on the breath and notice how you are feeling. Just notice.

# Learning Objectives

---

- ❖ Experience Brain Breaks exercises as a participant.
  - ❖ Teach Brain Breaks exercises.
  - ❖ Access Brain Breaks resources.
  - ❖ Plan for implementation.
  - ❖ This is session three of a three part series.
-



# Review



## Leaders Support Systemic SEL



## Welcoming Inclusion Activities

(1-9 minutes)

- Support contribution by all voices
- Set norms for respectful listening
- Create connection and belonging
- i.e. Community building, check-in

(1-9 minutes)

- Support contribution by all voices
- Set norms for respectful listening
- Create connection and belonging
- i.e. Community building, check-in

## Engaging Strategies

(1-15 minutes)

- Sense Making
- Transitions
- Brain Breaks
- Intentionally build adult SEL skills
- i.e. Brain Break, think-ink-pair-share

**(1-15 minutes)**

- Sense Making
- Transitions
- Brain Breaks
- Intentionally build adult SEL skills
- i.e. Brain Break, think-ink-pair-share

## Optimistic Closure

(3-5 minutes)

- Creates momentum towards taking action
- Reflection and looking forward
- Intentional Closure
- Topic reinforcement
- i.e. Reflective questions

**(3-5 minutes)**

- Creates momentum towards taking action
- Reflection and looking forward
- Intentional Closure
- Topic reinforcement
- i.e. Reflective questions

# How is social emotional learning (SEL) connected to self-care?

## Self-Awareness

- Identifying emotions
- Self-perception/Identity
- Recognizing strengths
- Sense of self-confidence
- Self-efficacy



## Self-Management

- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Perseverance
- Goal-setting
- Organizational skills

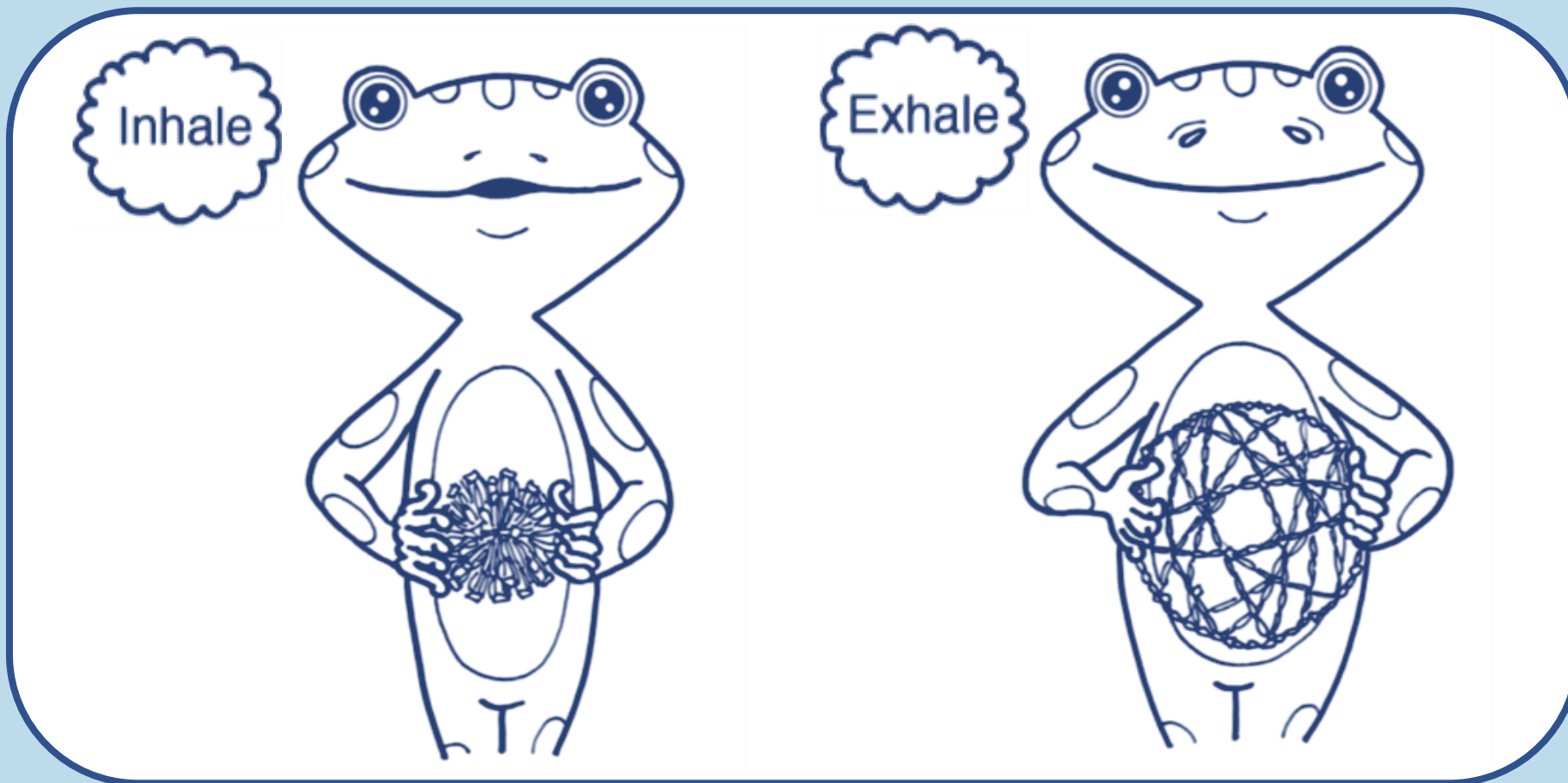
## Green Zone



Image source: <https://happykids.hu>



# Engaging Activity: Breathing Ball



---

# What is mindfulness?

---



# Mindfulness

---

Mindfulness means noticing what is happening as it is happening. Mindfulness is about paying attention on purpose, with a sense of kindness and curiosity.

---



Mindfulness is kind  
awareness.

There is no right or  
wrong way to feel,  
nor right or wrong  
way to notice.



# Engaging Activity: Chair Pose

1. Stand in Mountain Pose with feet together.
2. Inhale and bend both knees. Reach arms overhead and look up at thumbs. Squeeze your knees together and feel your thigh muscles working.
3. Take 3-5 relaxed breaths.
4. If it is comfortable, you can press your palms together overhead.
5. Exhale, return to Mountain Pose.

***\*Variation: Kangaroo Pose:** Hands in front of body, elbows bent. Have learners take little hops, trying to land feet in same place. This will be VERY activating.*





# pureedgeinc.org

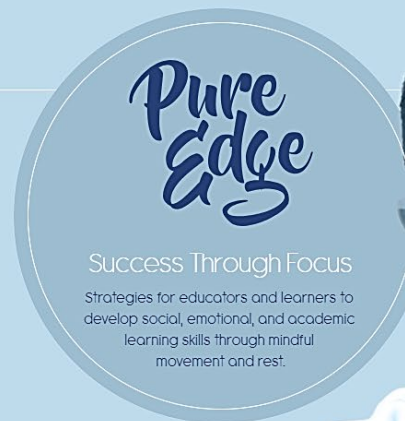
Evidence-Based Approach  
Thoughtful Partnerships  
Curriculum & Training



Online Curriculum

Log Out

+ MENU



●  
breathe

●  
move


●  
rest



## Training Manuals

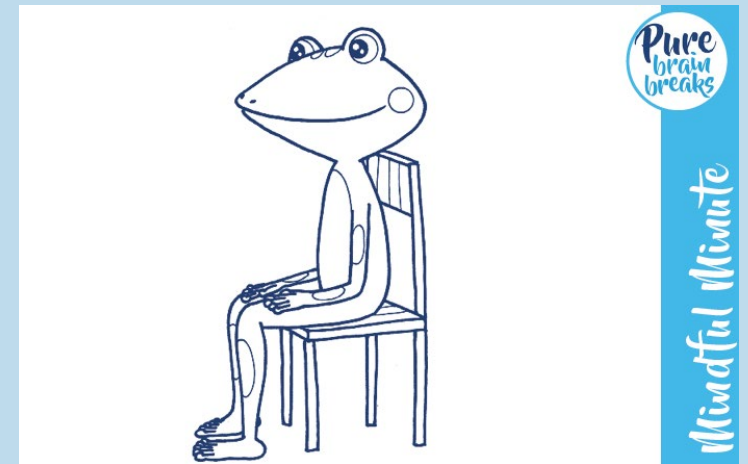


## Implementation Guides

Grade Pre-K	
 <p>Here are a few suggestions for when to implement Brain Breaks for Pre-K. The suggested exercises are meant to support the educator in getting started with Brain Breaks. Once the learners are familiar, other exercises from the manual can be incorporated. Check our website, <a href="http://www.pureedgeinc.org">www.pureedgeinc.org</a>, for video tutorials and access to the Brain Breaks manual.</p>	
Arrival/Departure	Attitude of Gratitude is a nice way to start off or wrap up the day, by remembering something or someone that makes us feel thankful.
Large Group/ Circle Time	Simple breathing exercises and exercises that engage learners visually will hold attention in the large group setting. Try <b>Breathing Ball</b> , <b>Animal Arms</b> , and <b>Listen to the Chime</b> . When learners are comfortable, adding in some balance postures like <b>Tree</b> can bring focus and fun.
Small Group	Small group offers time to give feedback and answer questions. Try <b>Anchor Breathing</b> to build breath awareness and focus. Introduce <b>Move</b> exercises like <b>Sunrise/Sunset</b> , <b>Chair</b> and <b>Brain Balance Sequence</b> . Give each learner a turn to shake the <b>Mind Jar</b> .
Free Choice	Have <b>Mind Jar</b> and <b>Breathing Ball</b> available for learners to access in a quiet area. Have posture cards printed (available on <a href="http://www.pureedgeinc.org">www.pureedgeinc.org</a> ) for learners to practice postures on their own.
Outdoor Time	Use <b>Mountain</b> and <b>Tree</b> postures to help learners stay calm during transition from inside to outside. Remember to focus on breathing! <b>Buzzing Bee</b> is a good way to help calm down and focus if learners have a lot of energy after they have played outside.
Rest Time	Practice <b>Balloon Breathing</b> while learners are lying on their cots. If you have small stuffed animals, students can place on their belly. We call these "Breathing Buddies" and they help young children focus on the breath as it moves their Breathing Buddy up and down. <b>Guided Rest</b> is also helpful at rest time.
Meals/ Snacks	<b>Starfish Breathing</b> is a great way to do some breathing, and make sure hands are clean! <b>Chair Twist</b> is a good exercise to help calm down and get ready to eat.

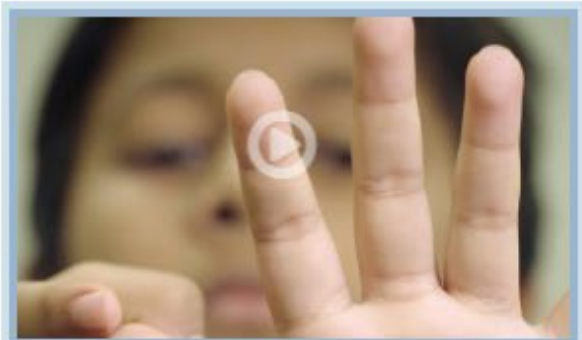
©2019 Pure Edge, Inc.

## Card Decks



# Video Library: English

Videos en Español ▶



## Featured Video

Our Breathe Library takes you through breathing techniques that will help with focus, feeling emotions and a sense of calm. Each breathing technique is modeled in 1 to 2 minute video tutorials.



# schoolguide.casel.org



PRACTICAL WAYS TO  
INTRODUCE AND BROADEN  
THE USE OF SEL PRACTICES  
IN CLASSROOMS, SCHOOLS,  
AND WORKPLACES

# Breathe



- Breathing effects change in the nervous system
- Sit up tall so lungs can fully expand
- Use props to make breath concrete
- Use nasal breathing (unless otherwise instructed)

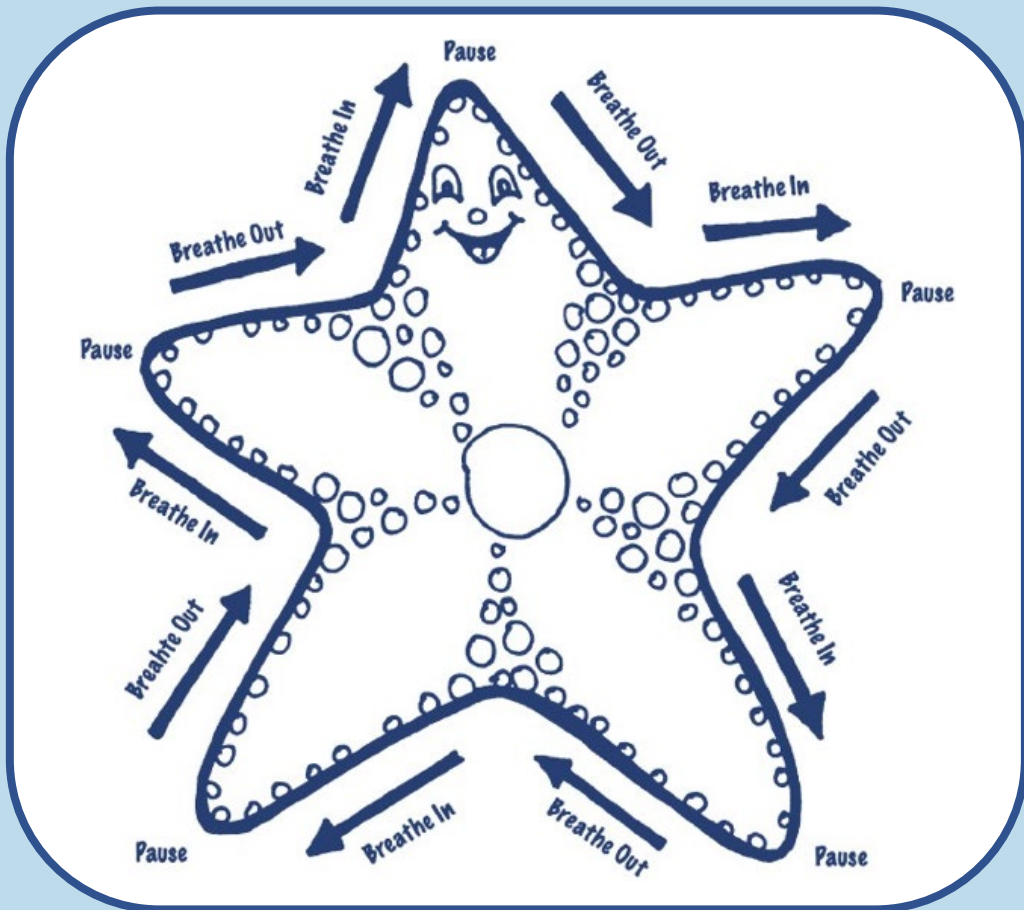
# Benefits of Nasal Breathing

- **Filters dust and impurities** from the air
- Warms the air to body temperature
- The diaphragm is more easily controlled, which supports the development of **internal core strength**
- More control over lengthening the breath (extended exhalations help activate the parasympathetic nervous system)
- Increased oxygen from nasal breath **increases energy** and vitality





# Engaging Activity: Starfish Breathing



1. Make a starfish with one hand, fingers spread wide.
2. Put the index finger from the other hand on the outer base of the thumb.
3. We are going to trace the outline of our starfish hand. Keep looking at your pointer finger while you do your breathing.
4. Inhale (finger traces to top of thumb).
5. Exhale (finger traces down the other side of thumb).
6. Repeat until you have traced the outline of the starfish hand.

*\*Learners are synchronizing their movement, breath, and gaze. On the inhale, index finger and eyes trace upward along a finger; on the exhale, index finger and eyes trace downward along a finger. Each upward movement is coupled with an inhale, whereas each downward movement is coupled with an exhale.*

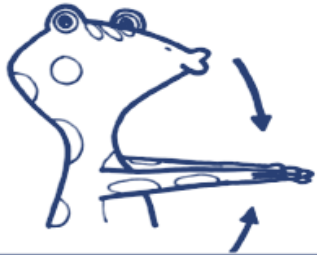
*\*After Starfish Breathing, you can have learners rest their hands on their chest, continuing to breathe mindfully, as they silently recall three things for which they are thankful.*



# Engaging Activity: Animal Arms



Inhale the  
jaws open



Exhale the  
jaws close

Crocodile

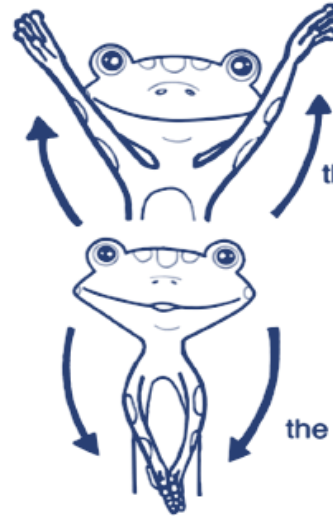


Inhale the dolphin  
jumps up



Exhale the dolphin  
dives down

Dolphin



Inhale  
the wings open



Exhale  
the wings close

Butterfly



Inhale the tummy  
puffs up



Exhale the tummy  
sinks down

Pufferfish



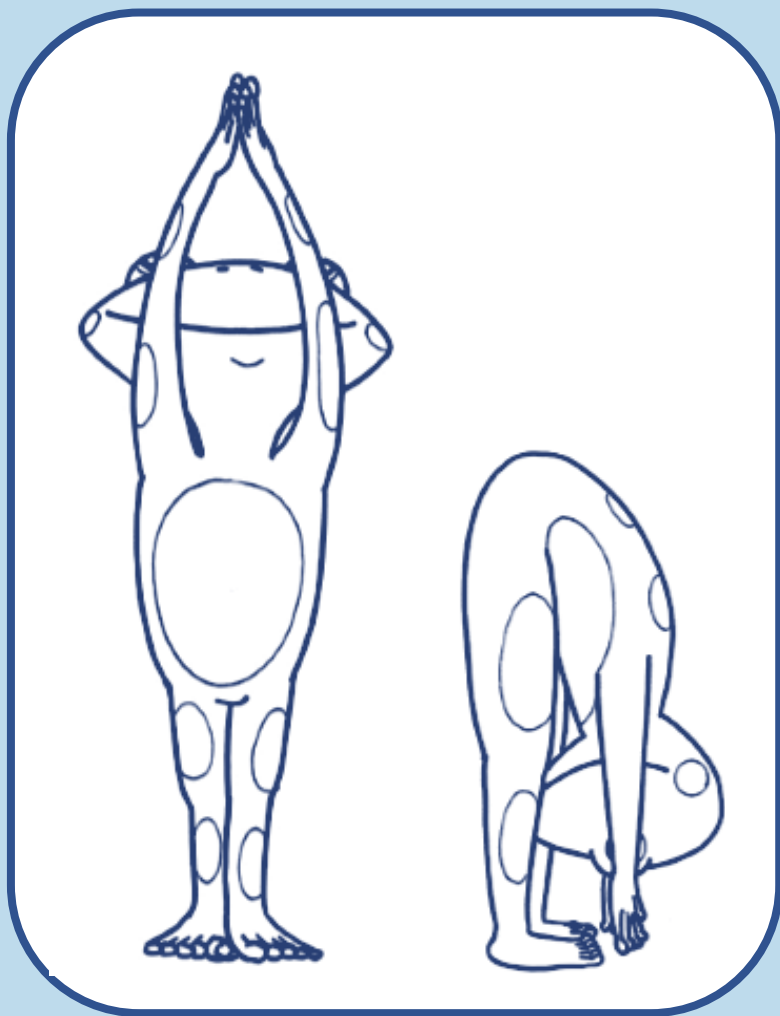
# Move



- Break down poses step by step (the manual does this).
- Provide physical modeling and visual supports.
- Activities that cross the midline are beneficial, and need to be taught step by step.
- Link the movement to the breath.



# Engaging Activity: Sunrise/Sunset



1. Start in Mountain Pose. Take a few breaths here.
2. Inhale, reach your arms up overhead (this is Sunrise Pose).
3. As you exhale, fold forward. Put your hands on your shins, or your ankles, or maybe the floor (this is Sunset Pose).
4. Inhale all the way back up to Sunrise.
5. Exhale hands down for Mountain.
6. Repeat a few times. Notice how you feel.

# Crossing the Midline

---

**Crossing the midline** is the ability to move one's hands, feet, or gaze across and to the other side of the body. It requires:



- body awareness
- hand-eye coordination
- muscular strength
- brain communication

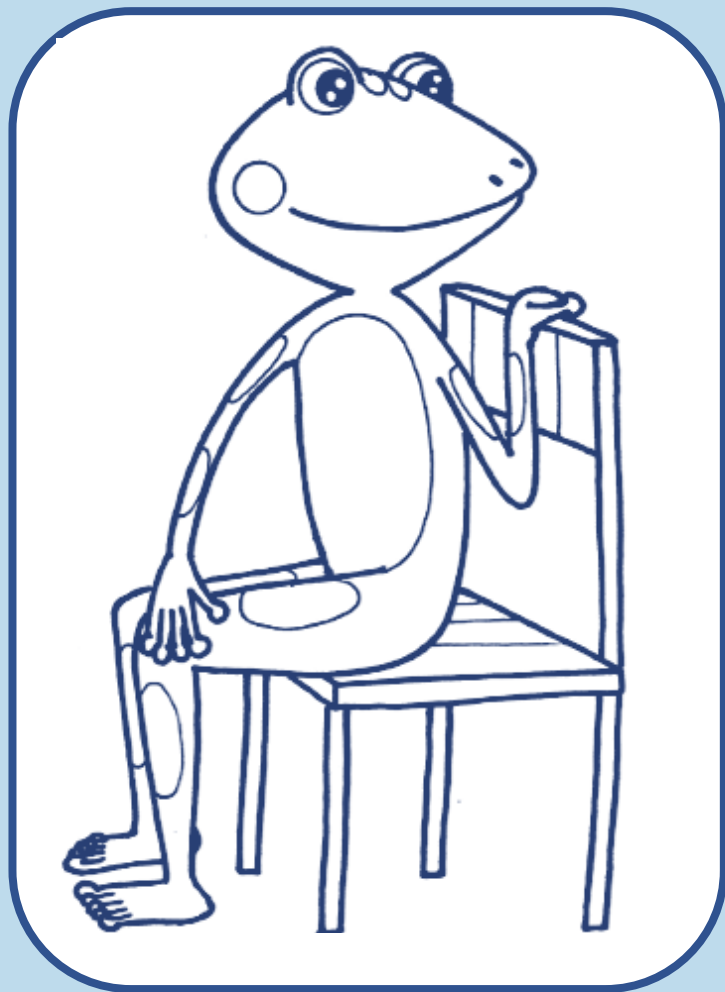
# Benefits of Crossing the Midline

---

- Builds new pathways in the brain
  - The pathways form the foundation for complex motor and cognitive skills, such as:
    - **reading**
    - **writing**
    - **self-care tasks**
    - **physical activity**
-



# Engaging Activity: Chair Twist



1. Sit in Seated Mountain.
2. Inhale, sit up tall.
3. Exhale, touch your right knee with your left hand and put your right hand on your hip (or the back of the chair).
4. Inhale, sit up tall.
5. Exhale, look over your right shoulder.
6. Stay still and take 3 relaxed breaths.
7. Inhale, come back to Seated Mountain.
8. Exhale, repeat to other side.

*\*When teaching learners, if you are facing them make sure you mirror them (e.g., use your right hand when you instruct them to use their left hand).*

*\*If seated on the floor, start from crisscross position and follow the same directions.*



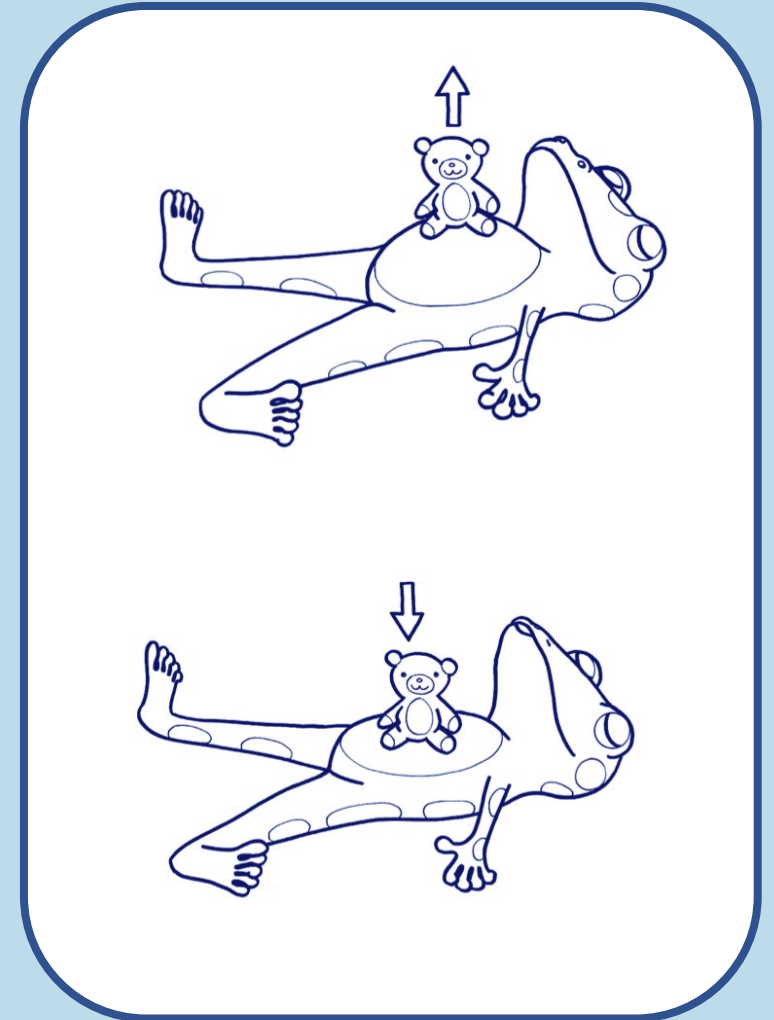
# Rest



- Being still is a skill that requires practice—some movement is okay
- Lower lights and decrease other stimulation as much as possible
- At home, blankets can help

# Engaging Activity: Guided Rest w/ Breathing Buddy

1. Lie down on the floor on your back. Spread your feet apart. Turn your palms up to face the ceiling.
2. Put your breathing buddy on your belly.
3. Inhale, float your breathing buddy up.
4. Exhale, let your buddy sink down.
5. (Lead learners through about 10 breath cycles).
6. The more you practice filling your body with peaceful, calming breaths, the calmer you will be when you need it most.
7. Slowly start to wiggle your fingers and toes. Take a deep breath in and stretch your arms overhead. As you exhale, relax.
8. Open your eyes and slowly return to a seated position.
9. Notice how you are feeling.



# Brain Breaks Implementation Tips

Establish A Consistent Routine

Start of Day/End of Day/Transitions

Start Small, Then Build

Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

Be Comfortable With the Exercises





# Sample Pre-K Calendar

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Breathe	Smell the Rose, Blow out the Candle	Balloon Breathing	Animal Arms	Starfish Breathing
Move	Seated Mountain	Mountain/Sunrise	Tree Pose	Mountain/Chair Strength Sequence
Rest	Breathing Buddies	Breathing Buddies	Breathing Buddies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breathing Buddies</li> <li>Attitude of Gratitude</li> </ul>
Guiding Question	<i>What is Kindness?</i>	<i>How does it feel to focus on your breath?</i>	<i>What do you do to relax?</i>	<i>How do you feel inside when you think about (and express) gratitude?</i>

# Takeaways

## Circle back:

- A key component of mindfulness is kindness and curiosity toward yourself
- You can teach breathe, move and rest strategies.
- Consistency and repetition will pay off.

## Brain Breaks Review:

### ❖ Breathe

- Breathing Ball
- Starfish Breathing
- Animal Arms

### ❖ Move

- Chair Pose
- Sunrise/Sunset
- Chair Twist

### ❖ Rest

- Mindful Minute
- Guided Rest with Breathing Buddy

# Optimistic Closure: Think-Ink-Share

## Brain Breaks Implementation Exploration

What...

When...

Where...



Pure Community

**Please Note:** You will receive a follow-up email within 24 hours of this session. This serves as your confirmation of attendance.

*Thank you for joining us!*

**Session 3: Success Through Focus: Brain Breaks & Energizers**  
**Trainer: Erin Cooney, Director of Curriculum & Instruction**



Follow us @pureedgeinc  
Website: [www.pureedgeinc.org](http://www.pureedgeinc.org)  
Email: [getmoving@pureedgeinc.org](mailto:getmoving@pureedgeinc.org)

