

November 2017 post: Adolescents and Mindfulness (*by Mandakini Sadhir, MD, FAAP*)

17 yr. old female comes to your office for concerns about anxiety. She reports that she worries about her school grades and has test taking anxiety. She mostly gets good grades and has been active in sports. She worries about not being good enough. She has stomach cramps every day in the morning before going to school and feels nauseous, and difficulty in falling asleep even though she puts her phone away. She has some friends that she talks to and states getting along with her family. She reports no recent changes in her personal or family life.

GAD (Generalized Anxiety Disorder) screen confirms a generalized anxiety disorder. You discuss management of anxiety that includes [cognitive-behavioral therapy](#) as well as medication. In addition, you educate her about relaxation exercises to help alleviate some of her anxiety, including [deep breathing](#), [mindfulness meditation](#) as well as [progressive muscle relaxation](#).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in mindfulness-based interventions to address various health conditions. Mindfulness is described as "Paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally (Jon Kabat Zinn). It is considered as a process of doing regular mindful practice to cultivate awareness as well as acceptance of the present moment in a non-judgmental way. Limited research shows that [Mindfulness training and practice in children and young adults](#) helps to improve their emotional regulation, attention, cognition, social interaction, sleep and overall sense of well-being. One well-known mindfulness-based approach is known as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is a derivative of MBSR with greater emphasis on cognitive techniques and is designed for specific mental health conditions such as recurrent depression.

Resources-

[Mindfulness for Teens](#)- Has Mindful breathing, Meditation, Mindful Eating practices and has list of online apps that teen could utilize such as Breathe; Stop, Breathe, and Think; Insight Timer; and MindShift.

[School based Mindfulness Instruction- Randomized Control Trial](#)

[Mind-Body Therapies in Children and Youth](#)

[The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Therapy on Anxiety and Depression: A Meta-Analytic Review](#)

[Mindfulness-based therapy: A comprehensive meta-analysis](#)