

## Know Your Brain

Knowledge of the brain is a powerful tool that can help our children become more self-aware and able to regulate their emotions and actions and learn more effectively. Learning to manage our own stress and find calm benefits ourselves and our children.



## The Brain Break:

MindUP's core mindful breathing practice, can be used to help develop our ability for focused attention.

Think of the breath as an anchor for your attention that you can always come back to. Try taking a Brain Break together with your child!

Try it at home with this  
guided Brain Break Script

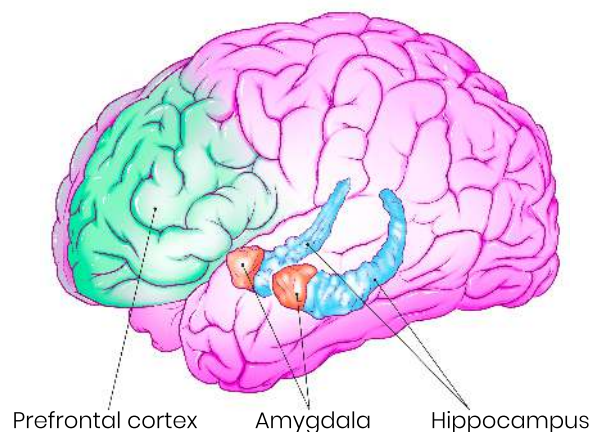


## The three parts of the brain that we learned about include:

**Prefrontal cortex (the Wise Owl):** The prefrontal cortex (the PFC) is the executive functioning part of the brain, responsible for helping us learn, think, plan, make good decisions, and interpret our experiences.

**Hippocampus (the Elephant):** The hippocampus is important for remembering information and storing memories.

**Amygdala (the Guard Dog):** The amygdala controls the "fight, flight, or freeze" response. Its job is to keep us safe! These responses are useful when dealing with real threats (for example, reacting to a fire alarm, running away from danger) but less useful for "perceived threats", (for example, tests or public speaking).



Disclaimer: These are simplified explanations designed to make it more accessible to conceptualize the impact of the brain on our behaviour. The reality is, of course, far more complex!

## Brain Builders

Together, you and your child can embark on a journey toward building a more mindful brain. Below are some fun and easy activities to infuse into your daily routine!

## Practices for YOU:



### Develop your Own Self-Awareness

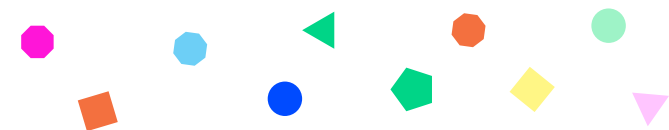
Become aware of your emotions. What parts of your day bring you calm? What parts of your day create stress? Are there patterns?

### Recognise Your Own Stress Triggers

Make a list of your top five stress triggers. Being aware of these triggers is the first step to managing them.

### Build Your Own Strategies

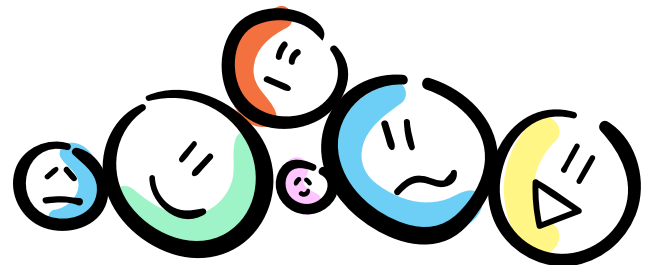
Set aside time for yourself. Take walks, spend time with friends, and take regular Brain Breaks to help manage stress and promote well-being.



## Practices with your child:

### Understanding Emotions

When your child has been overwhelmed with emotions **take a Brain Break!** Once they are calm, discuss how they felt and talk about what's happening in their brain. When your child is calm, focused, happy, or enjoying a quiet moment with you, explore and discuss how their emotions are linked to these experiences.



### Empathy Builder

Read books together with your child, and ask them to share and talk about why they think characters did what they did and how they might be feeling. Talk about what part of the character's brain might be active in different parts of the story.

### Memory Games

Place 10 small objects on a tray. Next, ask your child to use their Wise Owl (prefrontal cortex) to focus their attention on the objects on the tray and use their Elephant (hippocampus) to remember them. Then, remove one or two objects at a time and ask "Which ones have gone?"