

## Encouraging Mindful Self-Compassion as the Seasons Change

By [Community of Mindful Parenting](#)



As the days get longer and warmer, and the school year edges toward its close, the idea of [mindful self-compassion](#) (MSC) can be a bit more difficult to grasp for our children and ourselves.

Kids start spending more time outside the classroom and around family, and in more [play-based environments](#) rather than a structured classroom. This allows for new opportunities for children to use their own skills of MSC spontaneously in their day-to-day lives, but can also bring on feelings of anxiety and fatigue.

Despite those difficulties, here are several ways to encourage mindful self-compassion as the seasons change.

### Identify Different Emotions

Help your child recognize that their emotions are never inherently negative things.

[Making charts and lists](#) is a great way to encourage self-reliance and help a child understand and communicate through visual learning. Create a feelings chart by writing down [a list of](#)

[different emotions](#) and talking about what they mean and what situations can cause each feeling. Have your kid choose which listed emotion they're feeling and talk together about what it means and why they feel that way.

After you both positively acknowledge the emotion, see if you can problem-solve why they feel that way and what will make them feel better, or how they can continue to feel positive emotions such as happiness or excitement. Leave the chart up somewhere visible so that your child can easily reference it in the future.

## Be Your Own Best Friend

When it comes to teaching children how to self-soothe when they're going through a cycle of negative or critical thoughts, focusing on kindness and friendship is a great route.

Ask your child what they could do or say to make a friend happier when they're sad. Emphasize treating yourself with kindness and speaking to yourself as if you were that hypothetical friend. When a child realizes how to overcome obstacles and make themselves feel better, they attain a sense of control over their own development and gain confidence.

## Review the Day and Make Goals

Wrap up each day by talking about all the ups and downs.

Share what made you feel happy and what discouraged you, and have your child do the same. Talk together about how you felt and reacted, and what positive things you did or thought to get yourself through any hiccups throughout your day.

Set goals for the next day or the end of the week and motivate with encouragement. You can even start a shared journal or art project to wrap up each evening and look back at in the future for reference.

## Lead by Example

Remember, the most important way to encourage MSC in your child is to lead by example. You might begin to feel more stressed out and pressured in response to the long days and your kid's reactions, but try to be patient, ask for help when you need it, and avoid being overly self-critical.

Be a role model for your child and lead by being kind, thoughtful, and encouraging to yourself and your community. Being surrounded by a positive atmosphere of graciousness, courage, and understanding will undoubtedly boost your child's prosocial behavior, self-motivation, and happiness.

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