Kidcasts: A Mindfulness Podcast Playlist.

Be Calm on Ahway Island "Chain Reaction: a mindful story for kids"

Ages Pre-K–6—This relaxing show, written by a licensed clinical social worker and certified autism specialist, helps young kids practice emotional regulation. Each episode includes mindfulness breathing, visualization practices, and calm storytelling, and alternates between a female and male narrator. In the first part of this episode, kids are guided by a female voice to imagine laying on a beach, where they can feel the sand on their feet as they breathe like a dragon. The guided meditations and breathing practice are followed by a story about a character names Donna Domino. When a new child comes to play with Donna and the other dominos, the show explores the emotions we feel when we encounter something new and unexpected. Kids will either be relaxed or asleep after listening to this incredibly calming show. Grownups can also find mindfulness activities and games on the website and preschool videos on YouTube.

Like You "Bonus: Talking About the Coronavirus"

Ages 5–9—This soothing podcast, created and hosted by Noah Glenn, is geared towards younger children, and "uses breathing, affirmations, music, and imagination to explore feelings, relieve anxiety, encourage self-esteem, and grow empathy, all while having fun." This episode specifically addresses what the coronavirus is and how to incorporate mindfulness into your daily routine. It references other particularly pacifying episodes, such as "Cooling Your Hot Chocolate," "Learning to Relax Head to Toe," or "Give Yourself a Present," and ends with a catchy hand-washing song that will make kids feel happy and in control of a small part of their day.

Peace Out "Humans Being Humans"

Ages 7–10—This well-established podcast features several seasons of calming stories hosted by Chanel Tsang, an SEL teacher and yoga instructor. It covers a myriad of nature topics, such as geodes, trees, sea stars, salmon, cicadas, dinosaurs, and more! This episode focuses on human beings and provides ideas for how to give your brain a break from constant streams of thoughts. It provides useful exercises involving thinking about water and engaging imagery about Roahl Dahl's Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory. Peace Out is ideal for study breaks or bedtime after a day chock-full of learning…or emotions.

Imagine Neighborhood "Blame It On Blurghsday"

Ages 7–10—Imagine Neighborhood is a new podcast hosted by Scotty Iseri based on the social-emotional learning curriculum Second Step. This program is designed to help children process emotions in a mindful and productive way so they can form stronger relationships and work together. In this episode, they talk about how to handle surprises and unexpected events, such as rubber chickens falling from the sky or fire hydrants spewing lava. These really silly

stories, along with great sound design, offer elementary age students strategies they can easily grasp with examples such as Blurghsday, a day where everything goes bonkers. When you have a Blurghsday, they tell listeners, it helps to be calm and kind to yourself. Since 2020 feels like a blurgh year, this is welcome advice that both grownups and kids will appreciate.

Kidevolve Imaginarium Podcast "Course 7.1 - Joy & Energy"

Ages 7–12—Kidevolve is produced by a mindfulness program that uses audio storytelling and videos to bring mindfulness techniques to kids in a fun way. Episodes are called "courses" and cover topics like Joy & Energy, Pain Management, Gratitude, Anxiety Control, and more. Many, including this one, were written and narrated by Jeff Warren, a radio producer, writer, and meditation instructor. The narration is engaging and silly, with easy-to-access and fun imagery. Talking about feelings of boredom, Jeff invites kids to get on an imaginary elevator and use their breath to move it up and down until it lands in Colourland, a happy place where a rainbow can come flying out of your face! With humor and joy, Jeff guides listeners to come up with their own Colourland, a place that will put a smile on their face. Grownups can find more information, research, and resources about mindfulness on the website kidevolve.com.

Wow in the World "Back-to-School: Recess 101"

Ages 7–12—Part of being mindful involves awareness of how our bodies feel during the day. In this episode of the NPR podcast Wow in the World, hosts Guy Raz and Mindy Thomas bring their attention to feeling restless. They ask kids whether they ever get fidgety or can't sit still when they should be reading or focused on a math problem, and share how recess and physical exercise can help you recharge and regroup. Guy and Mindy also explore the positive impact on learning and emotional well-being when kids get more recess time at school. Using fast-paced, wacky audio storytelling, Guy and Mindy also take kids on an adventure of exploration on the effects of play. Researchers found that more play also allows kids to better focus on academics and improve social and emotional skills. Wow in the World has talking prompts so kids and grownups can continue the conversation after the episode.

Short & Curly "Are You the Boss of Your Emotions?"

Ages 8–13—When podcast hosts Karl and Molly get into an argument, it highlights how people handle their emotions in different ways: Karl bottles up his emotions and explodes, while Molly lets all of her emotions out. To get insights on how to make things better, Karl and Molly turn to self-help books and ask the "brain trust" —a group of kids—"What is the best way to deal with big feelings?" They learn lessons from the ancient Greek philosophy of Stoicism, which teaches how to control emotions by listening to the ones that are helpful. This podcast shines when it comes to allowing time for reflection, asking tough questions, and engaging kids in a brainy subject matter.

Meditative Story “Our Tiny Meaningful Lives in the Vast Universe”

Ages 14 Up—Host Rohan Gunatillake is your tranquil guide through the Meditative Story podcast series, told by different voices that span various fields and expertise. The storytellers each hone in on one particular transformative experience and take us through their journey of awakening. In this episode, Michelle Thaller, an astronomer and the assistant director of NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, shares the life lessons she learned while studying and exploring the universe. Many are particularly helpful for understanding our significance and connectedness. This comforting episode includes meditative prompts from host Rohan throughout. While this episode and many others are relevant to the young adult experience, but note that some cover topics more relevant to adults. If you are recommending the podcast to middle school or younger adults, be sure to listen to the episode first before sharing widely.

Summaries of these podcast by Anne Bensfield, the remote learning coordinator at the Oak Park Public Library, and Buttons & Figs podcast creator Pamela Rogers.