

Benefits of being Spiritually active



While the term spirituality means different things to different people, engaging in some form of spiritual activity contributes to mental wellbeing.

Having a sense of spirituality can help people keep things in perspective, provide hope in times of need, relieve stress and can also have social benefits.

There are many ways for schools to support students to express spirituality such as spending time in nature, meditation and mindfulness or creative practices. The benefits of spirituality are greater if practised on a regular basis, particularly daily!

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is awareness of one's internal states and surroundings. It is the practice of learning to observe our thoughts, emotions, and other present moment experiences without judging or reacting to them. We can practise mindfulness through colouring, showing gratitude, spending time connecting with nature and meditating.

Connecting with nature

Spending time in nature connects us to something bigger. We can reflect on the beauty of nature and our existence in it. Benefits are more pronounced

when we not only spend time in nature but we actively connect with it, such as smelling a flower or listening to birds.

Creativity

Creative practices are a way to express ourselves. When we are acting creatively our minds are focused on being productive. Working towards something can take our mind off stressors and worries and help us regulate our emotions. Creative practices can also improve social cohesion and increase a sense of belonging.



Here are some suggestions on how to be spiritually active at school:

In the classroom

- Practise gratitude - fill in our gratitude activity:



actbelongcommit.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Act_Belong_Commit_gratitude_primary.pdf

- Offer colouring options in class. Our mindful colouring templates are available here:



actbelongcommit.org.au/programs-initiatives/mentally-healthy-schools

- Teach students about respecting others' spiritual beliefs.
- Reflect on how students feel before and after a creative activity.
- Run regular mindfulness/meditation sessions during the week.

During break times

- Offer lunch time mindful meditation sessions. Smiling Mind has some great YouTube videos:



youtube.com/@SmilingMindTV

- Offer lunch time nature walks.

Whole of school

- Offer a collaborative colouring activity. Ours is available here:



actbelongcommit.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Act_Belong_Commit_mindful_collaborative_colouring.pdf

- Offer creative outlets (band, theatre groups, photography etc.)
- Provide a space for students to be mindful, e.g. a calm corner or room.
- Provide space(s) for students to pray.

Outside of school

- Attend a religious service if this aligns with your values.
- Connect with nature. Smell a flower, listen to the birds.
- Promote local theatre, music and art groups around the school.

