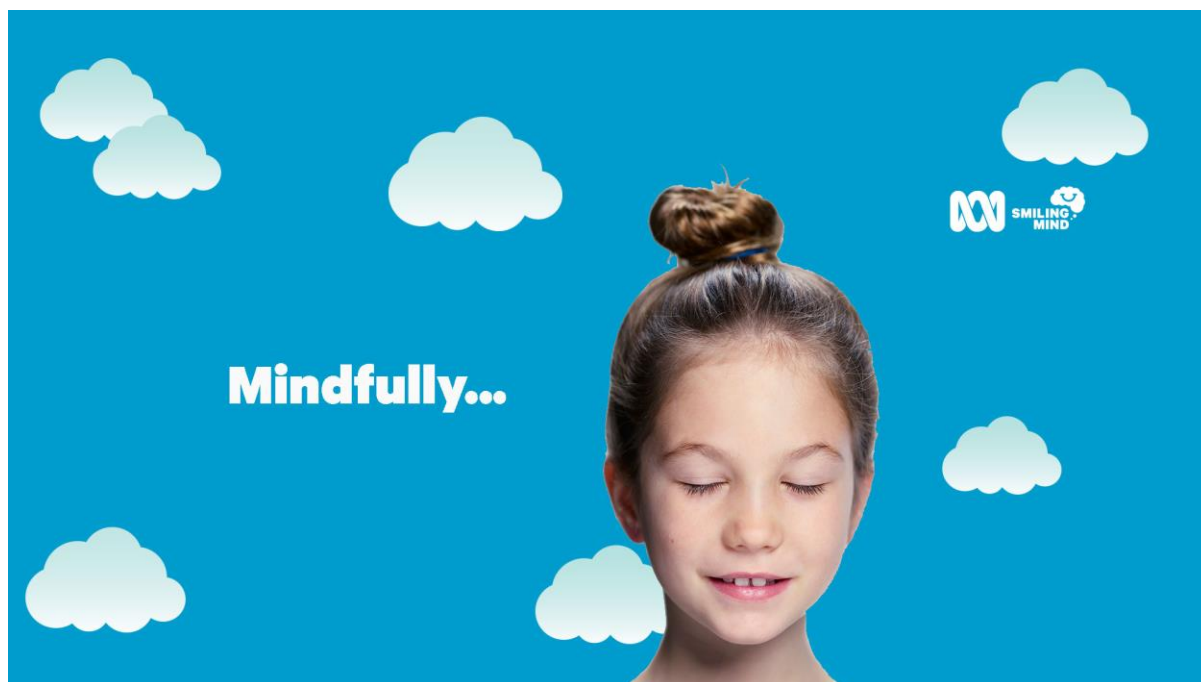


Back to School with mindfulness



MEDIA RELEASE Thursday, February 2

The new school year can be a particularly stressful time for parents and kids alike. Now holidays are over, many families dread the toll of the school bell.

Right across the ABC - on Radio, TV, iView and online - we're showcasing practical tips and tricks to best prepare your kids – and yourselves - for the new school year. From homework tips, to buying new shoes, even choosing the *right* school.

ABC Radio and **Smiling Mind** have partnered to produce a series of guided meditations designed to provide practical tips and tricks to promote calm and clarity.

In a busy world, we're all looking for things that can make our lives simpler and less stressful. Mindfulness meditation is a proven way to improve our health and well-being. And it's for everyone.

A collection of eight short guided meditations tailor-made for parents, kids, students and teachers is available at the ABC's [Mindfully](#) website and on the ABC Radio app.

Andrew Davies, ABC Radio's Executive Producer for Distribution and Partnerships, says the collection is a practical way for the national broadcaster to help parents and students as part of ABC's [Back To School](#) campaign.

"The meditations are intended as a fun and easy introduction to mindfulness and we hope our audience can start to experience the benefits during this busy time.

"Partnering with Smiling Mind and using their expertise meant we could produce content that we normally wouldn't be able to offer."

The series includes a session encouraging primary school aged kids to visualise themselves as a sea creature as a way to disentangle themselves from negative emotions and focus on more positive ones.

There are other sessions for different age groups regarding compassion, gratitude, coping with change, staying focused, breathing and dealing with stress.

The meditations were written in consultation with experts, including Dr Craig Hassed, Associate Professor and Mindfulness Coordinator at Monash University's Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

According to Dr Hassed, the practice of mindfulness is about cultivating awareness.

"Living without awareness is like living with the lights turned off," he explains. "We can't see what's ahead of us. We trip over ourselves and it's hard to plan and move with purpose. Our thinking also becomes vulnerable to worry and rumination."

Dr Hassed says the proven benefits of regular mindfulness meditation includes improved attention and memory, reduced stress and better health.

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