



# HEART, BODY, MIND

Barnardos take a holistic mind, body and heart approach to our work with children, an approach which draws on progress in the understanding of human development and how the brain works. From a young age, children are naturally curious about the movement in our body, the thoughts in our head and feelings in our heart. We want to provide you and your children with the opportunity to check in with your Heart, Body and Mind as you take part in your Big Toddle.

The Barnardos Big Toddle encourages movement through your toddling which supports the body; and giving to a cause, which supports the heart. Below are three fun 'mind' exercises you can also include in your Toddle;

## 1. LITTLE HERO POSE!

One easy way for children to dip their toes into mindfulness is through body poses. To get your toddlers excited, tell them that doing fun poses can help them feel **strong**, **brave**, and **happy**. Ensure your toddlers have space and are in an area that is quiet and familiar, a place they feel safe. Next, tell them to try one of the following poses:



### 1. The Superman:

This pose is practiced by standing with the feet just wider than the hips, fists clenched, and arms reached out to the sky, stretching the body as tall as possible.

### 2. The Wonder Woman:

This pose is struck by standing tall with legs wider than hip-width apart and hands or fists placed on the hips.<sup>1</sup>



## 2. SPIDEY SENSES

While on the subject of heroes, this can be a related "next step" to teach kids how to stay present. Instruct your toddlers to turn-on their "Spidey senses," or the super-focused senses of smell, sight, hearing, taste, and touch that Spiderman uses to keep tabs on the world around him. This will encourage them to pause and focus their attention on the present, opening their awareness to the information their senses bring in. This is a classic mindfulness exercise and encourages observation and curiosity – great skills for anyone to practice.



Ask your toddlers how they feel after a few rounds of trying either of these poses.

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### 3. THE MINDFUL JAR

This activity can teach children how strong emotions can take hold, and how to find peace when these strong emotions feel overwhelming.



1.

First, get a clear jar (like a jam jar) and fill it almost all the way with water.



2.

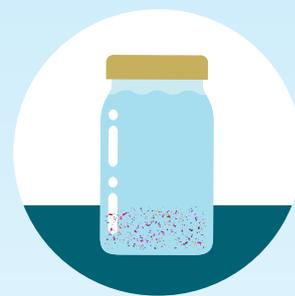
Next, add a big spoonful of glitter glue or glue and dry glitter to the jar. Put the lid back on the jar and shake it to make the glitter swirl.



3.

Next, use the following script or take inspiration from it to form your own narrative:

*"Imagine that the glitter is like your thoughts when you're stressed, mad or upset. See how they whirl around and make it hard to see clearly? That is why it is so easy to do silly things when you're upset – because you're not thinking clearly. Don't worry this is normal and it happens in all of us (even grownups too)."*



4.

Now, put the jar down in front of them.

*"Now watch what happens when you are still for a couple of moments. Keep watching. See how the glitter starts to settle and the water clears? Your mind works the same way. When you are calm for a little while, your thoughts start to settle and you start to see things much clearer. Deep breaths can help us calm down when we feel a lot of emotions."*



We would love to hear your feedback about the introduction of the holistic element of your Barnardos Big Toddle. Let us know what exercises work for your children and tell us about some of your own!

You can also share pictures on social media<sup>2</sup> using **#BigToddleIRL**

2. Usual parental or guardian consent required.