

## Wellness Programming for Teens

This is a useful resource for teen and YA librarians looking for wellness craft, program, and workshop ideas. Each programming idea contains a brief description of the craft or workshop, a list of materials required, instructions for facilitating the program, and a link to further resources. Many of the crafts and workshops described can be easily facilitated from home through craft boxes or through online programming platforms. These wellness programs can be catered to varying ages groups, interests, and patron needs.

### Crafts:

DIY Stress balls

Description:

Stress Balls are hand size ductile balls that can be used as manipulative therapy objects. There are many benefits of using Stress Balls including stress and tension relief, improving muscle strength and tone, sensory input, as a fidget toy to improve focus, or as a distraction toy. Stress Balls can be particularly useful for teens who feel anxious or stressed and can serve as a distraction from or an output of these emotions and feelings. This craft takes less than three minutes and offers a unique and creative outlet for teens.

Time Needed:

- 10-20 minute Prep
- 30-45 minute Program

How to make Stress Balls:

Materials needed:

- Balloons
- Flour or rice
- Plastic bottle
- Scissors
- Funnel

Instructions:

1. Inflate the balloon, twist the top and hold it closed so that the air doesn't come out
2. Fill the plastic bottle with flour or rice using a funnel
3. Attach the balloon neck to the bottle neck
4. Turn the bottle upside-down and let the flour fill the balloon
5. Carefully let the air come out of the balloon
6. Cut off the neck of the balloon
7. Take another balloon and cut the neck off too
8. Push the first balloon inside the second one, making sure you cover the hole in the first balloon
9. Tie the second balloon top and enjoy your new stress ball

Further Resources:

Muriel, C. (2020, June 17). *How to make stress balls for your kids in just 3 minutes*. Very Special Talents. <https://veryspecialtales.com/diy-stress-balls-kids/>

## Sensory Bottles

### Description:

Sometimes we need a moment to calm ourselves down and gather our thoughts. Deep breathing accompanied with a visual experience can help teens regain their focus and create a sense of calm. Sensory Bottles have many benefits for teens including creating calming effects, distractions from anxiety and worries, creating a visual representation of taking a break, and when paired with breathing exercises can have meditative like effects.

### Time Needed:

- 10-20 minute Prep
- 20-30 minute Program

### How to make Sensory Bottles:

#### Materials needed:

- Bottle
- Water
- Glitter glue
- Glitter

#### Instructions:

1. Fill a bottle  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way full with water
2. Add glitter glue and glitter to bottle
3. When needing a timeout shake bottle up and then set down on a flat surface
4. Watch the bottle as the glitter floats in the bottle
5. Once the glittered has settle the 'timeout' is over

#### Further Resources:

*Make a Mindfulness Jar*. (n.d.). PBS For Parents. <https://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-and-experiments/make-a-mindfulness-jar-or-calming-timeout-timer>

## Bullet & Feeling Journals

### Description:

Bullet journaling and feeling journals are a great way for teens to track their emotions as well as express them in a safe and calming way. Journaling can involve journal prompts in which the teen will respond to a prompt provided, free hand where the teen writes whatever they are thinking or feeling at the time, or can be a mixture of art, prompts, and free handwriting. Journaling is one way for teens to keep

their thoughts and feelings organized, it provides an opportunity for teens to set and achieve goals, relieves stress, teaches teens to schedule time for themselves, inspires creativity, and allows teens to practice self-reflection.

Time Needed:

- 40-60 minute Program

How to make Bullet & Feeling Journals:

Materials needed

- Notebook or journal
- Colorful pens and markers
- Stickers
- Stamps
- Journal prompts

Further Resources:

*The best way to bullet journal for mental well-being and self-care.* (2018, December 20). Elizabeth Journals. <https://elizabethjournals.com/bullet-journal-mental-well-being-self-care/>

Lindholm, J. (2017, October 13). *Writing for wellbeing.* Leuro. <https://www.leuro.com.au/blog/2017/10/9/journaling>

## **Programs:**

Yoga

Description:

Yoga is a great wellness program for teens as it can be facilitated both online and in person depending on COVID-19 restrictions. There are many free yoga tutorials and classes available online, where instructors walk participants through various stretches and breathing exercises. Yoga provides many benefits for people of all ages and does not require a large time commitment. Yoga builds can enhance physical health through the practice of balance, strength, and flexibility, reduces stress and anxiety, improves sleep quality, improves concentration, and builds emotional strength.

Time Needed:

- 10 minute Prep
- 45-60 minute Program

Further Resources:

Achanta, R. (2017, October 16). *7 amazing yoga asanas for teenagers.* Style Craze. [https://www.stylecraze.com/articles/amazing-yoga-asanas-for-teens/?utm\\_source=Pinterest&utm\\_medium=Stylecraze+yoga&utm\\_campaign=Yoga+asanas&utm\\_term=Yoga+for+teens&utm\\_content=Yoga](https://www.stylecraze.com/articles/amazing-yoga-asanas-for-teens/?utm_source=Pinterest&utm_medium=Stylecraze+yoga&utm_campaign=Yoga+asanas&utm_term=Yoga+for+teens&utm_content=Yoga)

- provides information on 7 different yoga poses and their benefits
- includes instruction videos
- provides further resources

*Music for teen yoga classes.* (n.d.). Flourish Yoga. <https://flourishyoga.ca/playlists-teen-yoga-classes/>

- provides tips for selecting music for teen yoga classes
- includes recommended songs and playlists

Yoga with Adriene. (2018, October 19). Yoga for teens. <https://yogawithadriene.com/yoga-for-teens/>

- popular yoga series on YouTube
- 20 minute practice aimed towards teens

## Positive Affirmation Workshops

### Description:

Positive affirmations are positive statements that can help teens challenge and overcome negative thoughts and feelings about themselves or their experiences. Positive affirmations can be a useful tool teens use every day to build their self-confidence and create a positive outlook on life.

One positive affirmation workshop for teens is a “Body Tracing Affirmation Exercise”. Body tracing activities provide positive reinforcement and allow teens the chance to practice encouraging other and to see themselves more positively.

### Time Needed

- 10-20 minute Prep
- 60 minute Program

### How to facilitate a Body Tracing Exercise:

#### Materials needed

- Butcher or long sheet paper
- Markers

#### Instructions:

- Have the teen lay down on the paper
- Trace the outline of the teen's body with their choice of marker
- Then have the teen and other participants write positive and affirming words and phrases on the body outline

#### Further Resources:

Kostelyk, S. (n.d.). *Body tracing affirmation exercise*. The Chaos and The Clutter. <https://www.thechaosandtheclutter.com/archives/body-tracing-affirmation-exercise>

## Breathing/Mindfulness Exercises and Emotion Management Workshops

### Description:

Mindfulness can provide teens with tools to prevent them from experiencing automatic negative reactions to their own feelings and experiences around them. Mindfulness allows teens to take a break, come back to the present moment, come back to their breath, and rediscover their inner strength and resilience. Emotion management when paired with mindfulness is a way for teens to reflect on their feelings and behaviours and discover better ways to communicate those feelings to the people around them. During these workshops, teens should be provided with tips and examples of how to alter their thinking to focus on the positive rather than the negative. Emotion management also affirms to teens that their negative feelings and emotions are natural and provide them with ways to express those feelings in a productive and useful manner. There are many practices teens can use to practice mindfulness including breathing activities, colouring, connecting with nature, practicing yoga, using breathing visuals, and guided meditation. Use the resources provided to facilitate some breathing and mindfulness exercises at your next teen program!

### Time Needed:

- 45-60 Minute Program

### Further Resources:

Scully, K. (2018, January 4). *10 mindfulness activities you can try today*. Pathway 2 Success.

<https://www.thepathway2success.com/10-mindfulness-activities-you-can-try-today/>

Mehlomakulu, C. (2017, August 6). *Drawing your breath: A mindful art exercise*. Creativity in Therapy.

<http://creativityintherapy.com/2017/08/drawing-your-breath-a-mindful-art-exercise/>

Laurinavicius, R. & Tymulis, D. (2020). *Neuropsychologist shares important do's and don'ts about mental health*. Bored Panda. [https://www.boredpanda.com/the-brain-coach-nawal-mustafa/?utm\\_source=iosapp&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=iosapp](https://www.boredpanda.com/the-brain-coach-nawal-mustafa/?utm_source=iosapp&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=iosapp)

## Selfcare workshops

### Description:

Selfcare is deliberate actions used to meet our physical, emotional, and mental health needs. It can take many forms and is easy to facilitate without spending large amounts of time or money. When teens practice regular self-care, they are less likely to become overwhelmed by the stresses they face. Some examples of selfcare practices you can teach at your next teen wellness program include cooking a meal, spending time in nature, having an at-home spa day, playing games with friends and loved ones, taking a nap, participating in creative crafts, reading feel-good and wellness books, yoga and meditation, and many more. Please refer to the resource provided for more teen self-care ideas.

### Time Needed:

- 45-60 minute Program

Further Resources:

Chambers, Y.S. (n.d.). *80+ self-care activities for teens*. Kiddie Matters.

<https://www.kiddiematters.com/80-self-care-activities-teens/>