

Welcome to Self-Compassion for Children and Caregivers

We are glad you and the child(ren) you love are here! Here are a few FAQs and tips to make the most of this program.

Who created this program?

This curriculum was created by Jamie Lynn Tatera in 2020. Jamie Lynn is a former elementary school teacher who is certified in yoga, mindfulness, and self-compassion instruction for children, adolescents and adults. She has a wealth of course offerings for all ages available at whollymindful.com.

Who is this program designed for?

This program includes elements of the adult Mindful Self-Compassion program tailored for children and caregivers. The program is best for groups of children ages 7-10 and their parent(s) or guardian(s). However, it may be adapted for children as young as pre-school, tailored for older tweens, can be taught with groups of children only, and even individually with one caregiver-child pair.

What are the main goals of this program?

The main goals of the program are to help you, children and caregivers alike, to:

- Recognize when you are having a tough time
- Remember that these situations (and the feelings that come with them) are normal and understandable, and
- Offer kindness to yourself through words and actions

“Even when I _____ (mess up, don’t measure up, get ‘in trouble’, feel alone, feel sad, feel worried, feel left out, can’t sit still, don’t move fast enough, am forgetful, wait until the last minute, take too long, forget to be kind, lose my cool, don’t meet my own or other’s expectations of me, etc.)... I am human, I belong, and I deserve kindness.”

Additionally, children and caregivers will learn to increase present moment awareness, open to goodness, be self-responsive, and cultivate good will toward themselves and others.

How is the program structured?

This program has 6 one-hour sessions. Each session will have a combination of movement, group discussions, discussion between caregiver and child, and exercises.

What is my role as the parent/caregiver in the program?

The best way to support your child in this program is to be a co-learner and come with an open mind. The material we discuss in the course is applicable to humans of any age.

What if my child doesn't want to come?

This is normal! Many children start the program with a variety of challenging feelings about the course including boredom and anxiety.

If this happens for your child, you might...

- Acknowledge that these feelings are understandable
- Remind them they don't ever have to share anything that they don't want to
- Offer your child encouragement through favorite activities or mini-celebrations after completing sessions
- Remind *yourself* that it is OK if your child seems disengaged at times, and consider you are "planting seeds" that may bloom at unexpected moments in the future

What if my child gets distracted or has trouble sitting still/with online programs?

This is normal! Many children have this difficulty. If this happens for your child, you might...

- Acknowledge that distraction and trouble learning online is understandable
- Bring paper and pencil, and fidget object to each session. Children can draw, write or fidget throughout. They are still benefiting!
- Remember the course will have movement as part of each session.
- Self-compassion is about noticing what you need and taking care of yourself. Need to stretch? Need a drink? Need a snack? Please do!

Is there homework?

There is not traditional written "homework" for this program. But, many 'practices' learned in class can be used in everyday life, and let's be honest, life gives us many opportunities to practice compassion!

When possible, model the material for your child by talking out loud often about *your* experiences with self-compassion. Talk about the difficult time you had, how you felt, and what you did or said to yourself. This is one of the most powerful ways to facilitate your child's learning.