

## 4-H Mindfulness Project Annotated Bibliography

**T**he 4-H Healthy Living Initiative is focused on providing learning opportunities that address physical, social, and emotional health. Mindful practices combine these domains. The 4-H Mindfulness Project focuses on increasing youths' ability to lead a healthy lifestyle and develop the skills needed to be a health advocate in their communities. The project aims to foster mindful practices that lead to improvements in physical health through mindful eating, social health through building positive relationships, and emotional health through emotional regulation and stress management.

The following annotated bibliography of English children's literature was developed by University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources as a resource for 4-H project leaders and families. These books can support primary members' understanding and practice of mindfulness.

### PHYSICAL DOMAIN

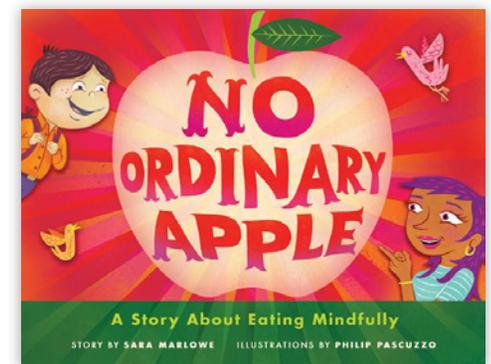
Marlowe, S. 2013.

*No Ordinary Apple: A story about eating mindfully.*

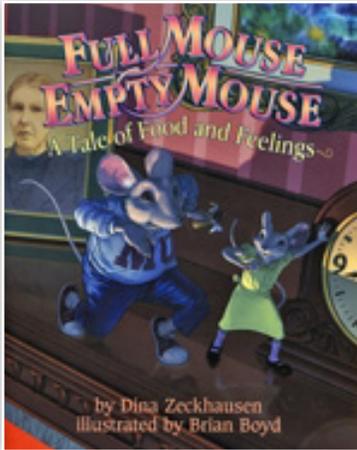
Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.

Age group: 4–8 years

This book is a fun guide for children to think about the food they eat and encourage them to give food they don't like another chance. Its easy-to-follow storyline has colorful illustrations that include ethnic diversity. The story aligns well with 4-H Healthy Living goals by encouraging children to try foods healthier than common processed snack foods and also encourages children to take the time to enjoy their food.



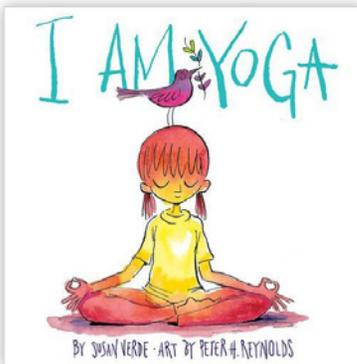
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**Zeckhausen, D. 2007.**

**Washington, DC: Magination Press.  
Age group: 7–12 years**

This rhyming book addresses eating disorder prevention by presenting a story of two mice children who cope with their stress by eating too much or too little. This is very relatable to problems older children or teens may have, and the mice characters help make a serious topic easier to discuss. The text is very creative and easy to read. The subject matter is best for older youth. This book fits with the 4-H Healthy Living goals of mindful eating and regulating emotions.

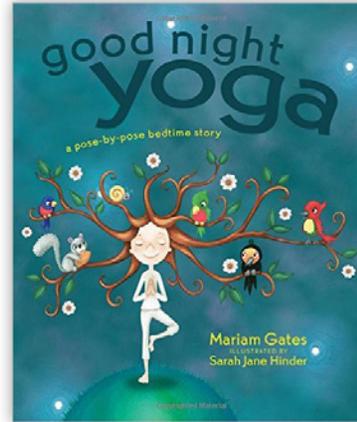


**Verde, S. 2015.**

***I Am Yoga.***

**New York: Abrams Books.  
Age group: 4–8 years**

This beautifully illustrated story outlines visualizations and yoga poses that children (and people of all ages) can perform to relax and manage stress. The short, simple sayings are reinforced by the creative illustrations of the main character posing in colorful settings. A guide for the 16 yoga poses is included at the end of the book. This book would be a fun teaching tool for families and young children. It emphasizes 4-H Healthy Living goals of engaging in healthy behaviors and stress management.



**Gates, M. 2015.**

***Good Night Yoga: A Pose-by-Pose Bedtime Story.***

**Louisville, CO: Sounds True Publishing.  
Age group: 4–8 years**

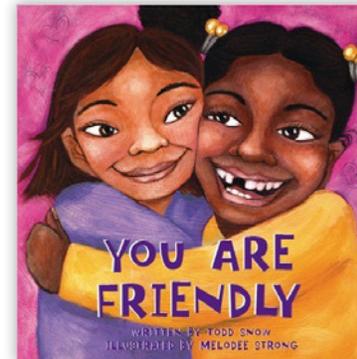
This book takes children through a flow of yoga poses and a colorful, short bedtime story about animals and bugs preparing to go to sleep. The book is aimed at young children but would be effective read out loud by an adult who can also lead with the poses. The book is aimed at yoga before bed and may not be appropriate in group activities. This book promotes 4-H Healthy Living goals of improved physical activity.

## **SOCIAL DOMAIN**

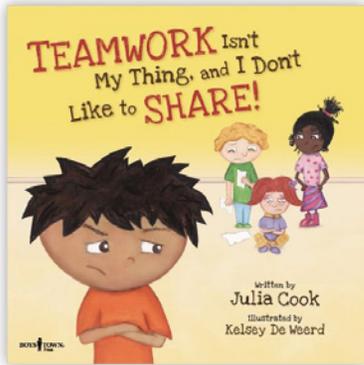
**Snow, T. 2007.**

***You Are Friendly.***

**Lake Elmo, MN: Maren Green Publishing.  
Age group: 4–12 years**



This vibrant book teaches children how to be friendly and build important social skills. It is engaging, short, and easy to read for children four years and older. Children may find themselves in this book, as the characters represent many ethnic and racial groups. The suggestions on how to be friendly are situations children regularly encounter in daily life, such as giving someone a hug when they are sad or including others in a game. This story focuses on practicing kindness and thoughtfulness and aligns well with the 4-H Healthy Living goal of building healthy relationships.

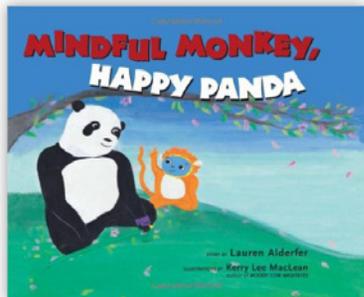


Cook, J. 2012.

***Teamwork Isn't My Thing, and I Don't Like to Share!***

Boys Town, NE: Boys Town Press.  
Age group: 5–12 years

RJ doesn't want to work with a group on his school project or share food with his sister, but he finds out that he can accomplish more when he shares responsibilities and everyone is happier when he shares generously. This book is straight-forward in its messaging and gives children ideas about how and why to work together and share. The key points are presented in rhymes, making them more salient for youth. The book focuses specifically on working together and sharing as part of relationship building and maintenance. This book aligns with the 4-H Healthy Living goal of building and encourage positive relationships.

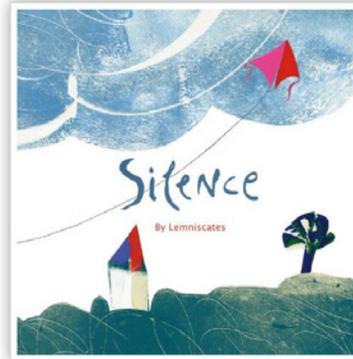


Alderfer, L. 2011.

***Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda.***

Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.  
Age group: 4–8 years

In this easy read, Happy Panda teaches Monkey how to focus on the present and keep his “mindful,” which leads Monkey to peace and happiness. The book is great for young children because of its colorful imagery and short passages. Throughout the book, Mindful Monkey faces many situations every reader may recognize (for example, he can't stop thinking when he tries to fall asleep), and his enthusiasm to practice mindfulness is infectious. This book promotes 4-H Healthy Living goals of well-being and focus, and stress management.

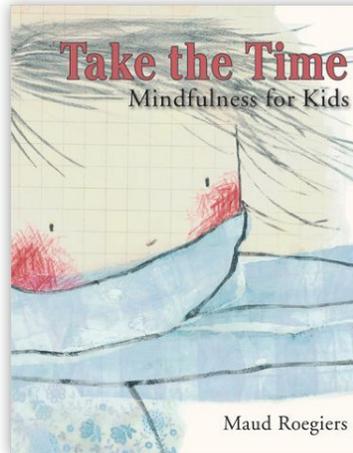


Lemniscates. 2012.

***Silence.***

Washington, DC: Magination Press.  
Age group 4–8 years

This book invites children to “be still” and listen to their own bodies and the world around them. By listening and focusing, mindfulness is invited into their day. The book is sparsely illustrated but has textures and soothing colors that evoke natural landscapes. Though this book's message of mindfulness may not be obvious to young children, its promotion of awareness is a key component of a mindfulness practice. This book address 4-H Healthy Living goals of well-being and focus, and stress management.

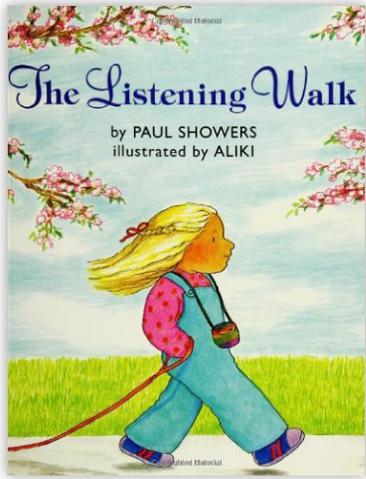


Roegiers, M. 2010.

***Take the Time: Mindfulness for Kids.***

Washington, DC: Magination Press.  
Age group 4–8 years

This short read encourages self-reflection and slowing down when emotions or daily life get out of control. The narrator describes the different things she likes to do when everything is “topsy-turvy,” including spending time with friends, thinking before speaking, and spending time to heal hurt feelings. This book offers advice and mindfulness strategies to cope with stress or anger. This fits well with the 4-H Healthy Living goal to manage emotions through awareness.

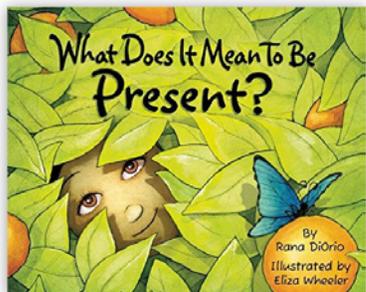


Showers, P. 1993.

***The Listening Walk.***

**New York: Harper Collins Publishing.  
Age group: 4–8 years**

This calm-inducing book describes what a little girl hears while out with her father and dog on a listening walk. Cute illustrations of everyday sights are accentuated with the sounds they make as experienced by the little girl. This book is effective in improving 4-H Healthy Living goals of increased children's awareness and mindfulness skills.

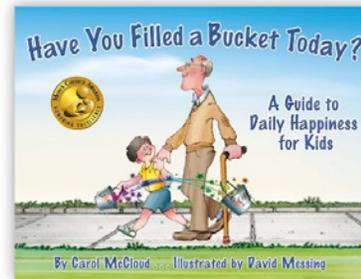


Diorio, R. 2010.

***What Does It Mean to be Present?***

**San Francisco: Little Pickle Press.  
Age group: 5–12 years**

This book tells and shows children what it means to “be present” through thought and action and encourages them to share with their friends the idea that “today is a gift.” It features ethnic diversity and vivid illustrations of children in various settings like school, home, the beach, and more. These thoughtful illustrations will help a variety of children connect to the content. The book has won four awards, including the Mom's Choice Award and Living Now: Books for Better Living Award. The main message of the story is that being present and grateful will help you feel happy and at peace. This book aligns with 4-H Healthy Living goals to improve awareness and mindfulness skills.



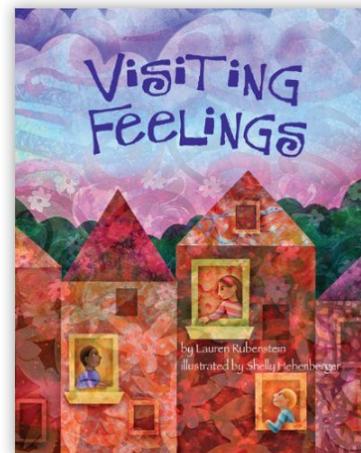
**EMOTIONAL DOMAIN**

McCloud, C. 2006.

***Have You Filled a Bucket Today?***

**A guide to daily happiness for kids.  
Northville, MI: Nelson Publishing & Marketing.  
Age group 4–8 years**

This cute book teaches children aged four years and up that being kind and generous is a great way to fill your “bucket” of happiness. The story features a diverse cast of characters, making it more appealing to more children, and it focuses on being a kind person and spreading joy. This book supports 4-H Healthy Living goals of maintaining positive relationships and community connection.

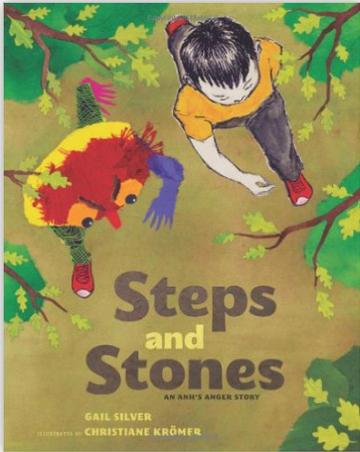


Rubenstein, L. 2014.

***Visiting Feelings.***

**Washington, DC: Magination Press.  
Age group: 4–10 years**

This story invites readers to reflect on their feelings and embrace their emotions by understanding that they are in control and all feelings are temporary. It aligns well with the 4-H Healthy Living goal to help youth reach their full potential by serving as an excellent tool for managing emotions and stress.

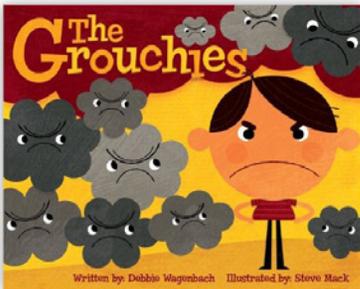


Silver, G. 2011.

***Steps and Stones: An Anh's anger story.***

Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.  
Age group: 4–10 years

This book is a colorful guide to managing anger through mindfulness and breathing practices. It is relatable to situations children may go through at school or with their friends. Several children may find themselves in this book, as the characters represent many ethnic and racial groups. This book reflects the 4-H Healthy Living goals of managing emotions and maintaining positive relationships.



Wagenbach, D. 2009.

***The Grouchies.***

Washington, DC: Magination Press.  
Age group 4–8 years

This book teaches children that sometimes we are just grouchy without reason and gives tips for fending off the “grouchies” to have a better day. The story is full of fun illustrations of family life. The book presents actions kids may take when feeling gloomy, mad, or mean. The rhyming text is aimed at younger children, but the book may be more powerful when read out loud by an adult. The book’s message addresses the 4-H Healthy Living goal of building capacity to regulate emotions.

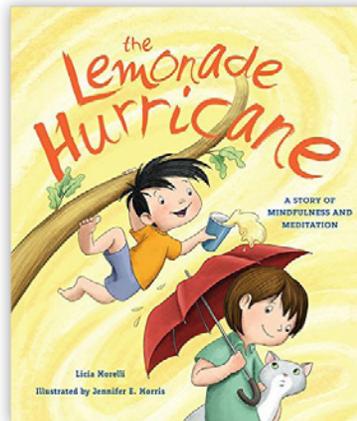


Sosin, D. 2015.

***Charlotte and the Quiet Place.***

Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.  
Age group: 4–8 years

This book tells the story of a young girl living in a busy city who finds a quiet place in a park one day and then returns to that quiet place in her mind whenever the outside world is too loud. The illustrations are colorful and cute and reflect all the noise of a busy city. The situations Charlotte and her dog Otto encounter in the book, like loud traffic and noisy siblings, are very applicable to a young reader’s experiences. It encourages youth to find their quiet place inside when the life may be loud or stressful. This book promotes 4-H Health Living goals of well-being and focus, and stress management.

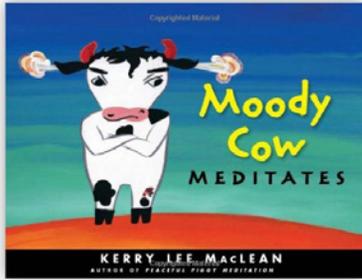


Morelli, L. 2015.

***The Lemonade Hurricane: A story of Mindfulness and Meditation.***

Thomaston, ME: Tilbury House Publishing.  
Age group: 4–8 years

This book invites children to practice meditation or stillness to calm down. The story is from the perspective of a big sister who teaches her wild little brother to meditate so he will relax and play with her instead of running around and wreaking havoc. The book is very easy to read and full of fun illustrations. This is a great book about meditation for children. 4-H Healthy Living goals of positive relationships, focus, and emotional regulation are addressed.



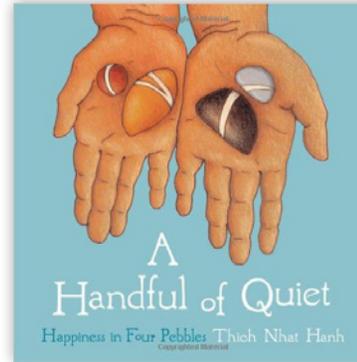
**MacLean, K. L. 2009.**

***Moody Cow Meditates.***

**Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.**

**Age group: 5–8 years**

Peter, nicknamed Moody Cow, had a “stupid, rotten” day and his anger boils over when he throws a baseball through a window. Peter’s grandfather teaches him a meditation technique, the Mind Jar, which helps him settle his mind and let go of his anger. This book helps normalize the feeling of anger while providing suggestions for managing the feeling. This book is an easy read that is very relatable to children and offers up an interesting mindfulness technique that children could replicate at home or at school. There are even instructions for making your own “Moody Cow Mind Jar” at the end of the story. The book emphasizes managing emotions through meditation. The book’s message addresses the 4-H Healthy Living goal of building capacity to regulate emotions.



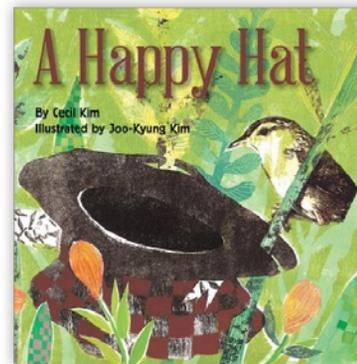
**Hanh, T. N. 2012.**

***A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in four pebbles.***

**Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.**

**Age group: 5+ years**

This book is not a classic children’s book, but rather a fairly in-depth guide for a specific meditation practice for children and parents (or adults in general). The pages aimed at children are full of fill-in blanks and colorful pictures that can be torn out of the book. The book is meant for children ages 5 and up, and while they may grasp the concepts they will probably need assistance reading the long text sections. This story promotes 4-H Healthy Living goals of mindfulness and self-confidence.



**Kim, C. 2014.**

***A Happy Hat.***

**Washington, DC: Magination Press.**

**Age group: 4–8 years**

This story follows the unique life of a hat, from its place on top of a distinguished gentleman’s head to its use as a bird nest in the thick of the woods. Throughout the hat’s tumultuous life it remains optimistic and resilient when faced with disappointment or stressful situations. The story’s illustrations are quirky and engaging, and a fill-in-the-blank question section at the end encourages reader participation. It is a good resource for stress management and handling change. It reflects the 4-H Healthy Living goals of managing emotions and stress.

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