

## Gizmo's Pawesome List of Books and Movies That Promote Youth Mental Health and Wellness

### NON-FICTION BOOKS

*The following books are often available through interlibrary loan via a local library.*

**Alderfer, Lauren. *Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda*. Wisdom Publications, 2011**

Panda helps Monkey to calm his thoughts by practicing mindfulness. Grades P-2

**Brian, Rachel. *The Worry Less Book: Feel Strong, Stay Calm and Tame Your Anxiety*. Little, Brown, 2020**

A reassuring guide for young people about anxiety management, including information about the effects of stress on mind and body, and tips for self-care. Grades 2-5

**Duhig, Holly. *Understanding Anxiety*. Poweryouth, 2019**

Straightforward text explains how anxiety affects all of us, and gives ways to cope (part of "Health Matters" series). Grades 3-4

**Emminizer, Theresa. *Keeping Calm and Focused: Stress Management*. Poweryouth, 2020**

Helps youth recognize the signs of stress, identify the causes and develop coping strategies (part of "Spotlight on Social and Emotional Learning" series). Grades 3-5

**Freeland, Claire A.B. *What To Do When You Feel Too Shy: a youth' guide to overcoming social anxiety*. Magination Press, 2016**

Designed for youth and parents, uses activities, examples and step-by-step instructions to help youth deal with social phobias and anxiety. Grades 2-5

**Freeland, Claire A.B. *What To Do When Mistakes Make You Quake: a youth' guide to accepting imperfection*. Magination Press, 2015** Grades 2-5

This interactive self-help book is a resource for educating, motivating, and empowering children to cope with mistakes — so they can explore new territory without fear!

**Gates, Mariam. *Breathe with Me: Using Breath to Feel Calm, Strong and Happy*. Sounds True, 2018**

Breathing practice for youth, and how to use breath to deal with difficult situations. Grades 1 -2

**Gates, Mariam. *Good Morning Yoga*. Sounds True, 2016**

Teaches young youth a morning yoga routine to help them focus and relax. Grades K-2

**Harman, Alice. *Don't Panic*. Crabtree, 2021**

Advice for youth about how to manage worries in creative ways and develop a healthy mindset (part of the "Grow Your Mind" series.) Grades 4-6

**Hoffman, Mary. *Great Big Books of Feelings*. Frances Lincoln Books, 2013.**

Explores the range of emotions that all youth feel. Grades P-2

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**Holmes, Kirsty. *Feeling Sad*. Kidhaven, 2019**

Uses comic book layout and matter-of-fact tone to teach youth emotional awareness and vocabulary (part of the "Youth' Guide to Feelings" series). Grades K-3

**Lewis, Carrie. *All About Anxiety*. Beaming Books, 2020**

Helps youth understand and find words for their feelings, ask for help and learn to manage emotions. Grades 3-6

**Muth, Jon. *Zen Happiness*. Scholastic, 2019**

Resonant sayings pair with Muth's watercolor art to encourage mindfulness and calm. Grades P-2

**Sileo, Frank J. *A World of Pausabilities*. Magination Press, 2017**

Encourages youth to pause and take time for quiet and reflection. Grades K-3

**Stewart, Whitney. *Meditation is an Open Sky*. Albert Whitman, 2015**

Simple mindfulness exercises to help manage stress and emotions. Grades P-3

**Stewart, Whitney. *Mindful Me*. Albert Whitman, 2018**

Introduces youth and preteens to mindfulness through exercises, meditation and writing prompts. Grades 3-7

**Verde, Susan. *I Am Peace: a book of mindfulness*. Abrams Books, 2017**

Brief text and pictures depict a child beginning to get carried away by worry and rushing thoughts before remembering to take a breath and focus. Grades K-2

**Willard, Christopher. *Alphabreaths: the ABCs of Mindful Breathing*. Sounds True, 2019**

Playful breathing exercises for every letter of the alphabet. Grades K-2

**Willey, Kira. *Breathe Like a Bear: 30 mindful moments for youth to feel calm and focused anytime, anywhere*. Rodale Youth, 2017**

Playful and imaginative ideas for helping youth connect with themselves. Grades 2-6  
Also available in DVD and audiobook formats.

### FICTION & PICTURE BOOKS

*All of the following books are available at any Connecticut library via interlibrary loan*

**Chiew, Suzanne. *The Worry Box***

Murray Bear is supposed to go to the waterfall with his sister, Molly, to meet a friend, but Murray is worried. "What if it's too LOUD?" he cries or "Or what if I get swept away!" So Molly tells him about her special worry box. "When I'm worried about something," she says,

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"I write it down, and then put it inside." She offers to help make one for Murray, and he takes it on their journey—but will it really help? Grades Pre-K-2

**Feinberg, Heather Hawk. *Crying is Like the Rain: a story of mindfulness and feelings***

Throughout the book, the message received is that we are safe in our emotional experiences and that feelings, like the weather, come and go. This is an empowering story about navigating and understanding our feelings as a healthy, important, and very natural part of our lives. Grades K-3

**Frame, Jeron Ashford. *Yesterday I Had the Blues***

Moods change from day to day, and you never know what tomorrow will bring. But one thing's for sure: when you've got love around you, the blues won't stick around long. Grades K-4

**Galliez, Roxanne Marie. *Thank You, Miyuki***

Miyuki's curiosity is piqued by her grandfather's morning meditation routine, and she is eager to learn this new skill. Her wise and patient grandfather first takes her on a walk in the garden. Miyuki comes to understand that in the small acts of mindfulness throughout her day, she learned how to meditate. Grades K-3

**Henkes, Kevin. *Wemberly Worried***

Wemberly worried about everything. Big things. Little things. And things in between. Then it was time for school to start. And Wemberly worried even more. If you ever worry (or know someone who does), this is the book for you. Grades Pre K-4

**Jones, Stella J. *The Very Grumpy Day***

There's a big bad mood spreading through the woods! It starts with Bear, who upsets Mole, who snaps at Hedgehog, who's prickly with Fox. Soon Bear's bad mood has made everyone grumpy! Can a little bit of love make them happy again? Grades Pre K-2

**Lasser, Jon. *Grow Happy***

Kiko is a gardener. She takes care of her garden with seeds, soil, water, and sunshine. In *Grow Happy*, Kiko also demonstrates how she cultivates happiness, just like she does in her garden. Using positive psychology and choice theory, this book shows children that they have the tools to nurture their own happiness and live resiliently. Grades Pre K- 3

**Milgrim, David. *Wild Feelings***

In this lighthearted look at feelings, David Milgrim tenderly and humorously sketches the emotional range—from awkward to unnoticed, to really, rrrreally mad. Ultimately reassuring, this is a loving look at the normal, natural feelings we all have. Grades Pre K – 3

**Muth, Jon. *Zen Shorts***

"Michael," said Karl. "There's a really big bear in the backyard." This is how three children meet Stillwater, a giant panda who moves into the neighborhood and tells amazing tales. To

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Addy he tells a story about the value of material goods. To Michael he pushes the boundaries of good and bad. And to Karl he demonstrates what it means to hold on to frustration. Grades Pre K – 5

### **Parr, Todd. *Be Who You Are***

Who better than Todd Parr to remind kids that their unique traits are what make them so special? With his signature silly and accessible style, Parr encourages readers to embrace all their unique qualities. Grades Pre-K – 2

### **Parr, Todd. *It's OK to Make Mistakes***

From coloring outside the lines and creating a unique piece of art to forgetting an umbrella but making a new friend, each page offers a kid-friendly take on the importance of taking chances, trying new things, and embracing life, mistakes and all. Grades Pre-K – 2

### **Percival, Tom. *Ruby Finds a Worry***

This perceptive and poignant story is the perfect springboard for talking to children about emotional intelligence and sharing hidden anxieties. Grades Pre-K – 2

## MOVIES

### ***Home***

Buirgy, S., Jenkins, C., & Soria, M. (Producers), & Johnson, T. (2015). *Home*. [Motion Picture]. United States: DreamWorks Animation.

When Oh, a loveable misfit from another planet, lands on Earth and finds himself on the run from his own people, he forms an unlikely friendship with an adventurous girl named Tip who is on a quest of her own. Through a series of comic adventures with Tip, Oh comes to understand that being different and making mistakes is all part of being human. Rated: PG

### ***Inside Out***

Rivera, J. (Producer), & Docter, P., & Del Carmen, R. (2015). *Inside Out* [Motion Picture]. United States: Pixar Animation Studios distributed by Walt Disney Pictures.

After young Riley is uprooted from her Midwest life and moved to San Francisco, her emotions - Joy, Fear, Anger, Disgust and Sadness - conflict on how best to navigate a new city, house, and school. Rated: PG

### ***Trolls***

Shay, G. (Producer) & Mitchell, M. (Director). (2016). *Trolls* [Motion Picture]. United States: DreamWorks Animation.

After the Bergens invade Troll Village, Poppy, the happiest Troll ever born, and the curmudgeonly Branch set off on a journey to rescue her friends. Rated PG

### ***Wonder***

Hoberman, D., Lieberman, T. (Producer), & Chboskey, S. (Director). (2017). *Wonder* [Motion

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Picture]. United States: Lionsgate, Madeville Films, Participant Media, Walden Media, & Tik Films.

Based on the New York Times bestseller, this movie tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences who enters the fifth grade, attending a mainstream elementary school for the first time. Rated PG

### ***Zootopia***

Spencer, C. (Producer), & Howard, B., Moore, R. (Directors). (2016). *Zootopia* [Motion Picture]. United States: Walt Disney Pictures & Walt Disney Animation Studios.

In a city of anthropomorphic animals, a rookie bunny cop and a cynical con artist fox must work together to uncover a conspiracy. Rated PG