

## Take a “Noticing Walk” with Kids

*When we walk in nature and “notice” its magic, we get a deeper connection to the earth and ourselves. Taking a “noticing walk” with kids adds even more magic to the experience and encourages kids to appreciate nature’s wonder.*

How often do we go outside and not even notice what is surrounding us? This activity will help kids better connect with nature by noticing and being mindful of their surroundings. Research shows that connection to nature can improve mental and physical health, and help with brain development.

### Take a “Noticing Walk”

1. Prepare young people for the walk with the following explanation:
  - Today we are going to go on a Noticing Walk. What do you think I might mean when I say, “Noticing Walk?” Let the child(ren) respond with what they think a Noticing Walk is.
  - Describe the area in which you will walk. Ask them what they think they might notice in that place or space.
  - Encourage the child(ren) to pay attention to (notice) their experiences, including what they see, hear, think about and feel during the walk. It’s okay for them to talk to each other about their experiences when walking, but they might be able to notice better if they are mostly quiet.
  - Tell them that at the halfway point, you are going to ask for one minute of silence. During this time, you’ll keep walking but no one should be talking.
2. Go on a short walk (10-20 minutes), preferably outside, but inside is okay too.
3. Every so often, remind them the point of the walk is to pay attention to sights, sounds, thoughts and feelings.
4. Return home and hand out blank sheets of paper and crayons or markers. Ask the child(ren) to draw or write about something they noticed on the walk.
5. After they are done, ask them to share what they drew or wrote with the rest of the group.

Note: Three-year-olds are going to have a very different experience of this activity than eight-year-olds, so adjust your instructions and expectations accordingly.

\*adopted from [healthpoweredkids.org](https://healthpoweredkids.org)

Health Powered Kids™ is a free health and wellness program offered by Allina Health. It provides fun, easy-to-use lessons and activities on nutrition, physical fitness, hygiene and mind-body balance for educators and parents to use in the classroom or at home.