

# PEDIATRIC RESPIRATORY RATES & HEART RATE SESSIONS

Age	Normal Rate (breaths per minute)
<b>Toddler</b> (1 – 3 years)	24 – 40
<b>Preschooler</b> (3 – 6 years)	22 – 34
<b>School-age</b> (6 – 12 years)	18 – 30
<b>Adolescent</b> (12 – 18 years)	12 – 16

Adolescents are more or less like adults:  
male average is 12 – 14 and female average is 14 – 16

You should always just set pacer at 7.5 seconds per breath for children.



Heart rate feedback sessions are relevant for ages 6 and above:

1. Start a session with a physical exercise or by having the child tense and release his fists with rubber balls. This is to help build a familiarity with letting go, which is much easier to do after tensing and releasing the muscles (see Progressive Muscle Relaxation).
2. After that, use the great visualization abilities that children have. Ask the child or teen to imagine lying on the couch like a rag doll or feeling like well-cooked spaghetti...no tension in the muscles.
3. At this point, you can start teaching effortless breathing in a playful way, using soap bubbles. Allow them to first blow bubbles without your guidance.
4. Then begin blowing big bubbles and small ones, differentiating them. Note that this is done by changing the speed of the exhale.
5. After that, talking about abdominal breathing vs. chest breathing is helpful. Direct the child or teen to blow gently, filling the abdomen on the inhale.
6. Continue determining the child's natural breathing pace. Expect anything between 6 – 10 breaths per minute, depending upon the child's age and fitness level.
7. During the last part of the session, you can have your child or teen play any Alive Mini-Game.
8. Here is a useful homework assignment to reinforce this heart rate feedback session:



During the following days, ask your child to take some time at home to blow bubbles effortlessly – at the natural breathing rate for that child.

## TIP

*Have you felt dizzy while breathing with Alive?*

Breathing with too much effort can make us feel dizzy. Sometimes dizziness means inhalation is too deep, or that air intake is directed into the chest rather than into the abdomen.

Breathing should be wavelike, without unnatural pauses, effortless.

- ✓ Try pursed-lip and abdominal breathing again, focusing on effortlessness.
- For additional help, go to *Part F: Troubleshooting*, or try the *Alive Workshop: Remedial Clinic*.



## Alive Training

### *Alive Environment* Breath Spirals

As your optimal breathing begins to smooth your heart rate, the music will get louder and the particle wave will expand, change size, and move through a spectrum of color. Enjoy the expansiveness of the movement and note the color variations. When you successfully make the beautiful images and lovely music come alive, continue smoothing your heart rate and maintain this for a period of time.

Breathing techniques are natural gateways to stress management and to feeling more relaxed. Practice breathing with the pacer or let your breath lead your heart rate graph.

- ✓ Once prepared, click **Breath Spirals** in **Alive Environments**.
- ✓ Enjoy doing **Breath Spirals** for 3 – 5 minutes.

**Reflect** on what occurred during **Breath Spirals**.

**In your Notebook** on page 15

What were your key experiences during this training?



## Alive Training

### *Alive Game* Night Flight or Green Thumb

- ✓ Choose one of the following two mini-games to play next.

If you are in the mood for something fast-paced, play **Night Flight**. If you want a slower and more soothing game, then **Green Thumb** may be right for you. Choose what suits you in this moment. Of course, you can also play both of them.

**Night Flight:** As you smooth your heart rate while touring this nightscape, you will fly swiftly forward. If your heart rate smoothness begins to reduce, your tour of the nightscape will temporarily pause for a short period of time or reverse its motion. Note whether enjoying the details of this scene affect your stress level and your progress.

**Green Thumb:** Observe each change of the leaves and petals as this virtual hyacinth blooms.



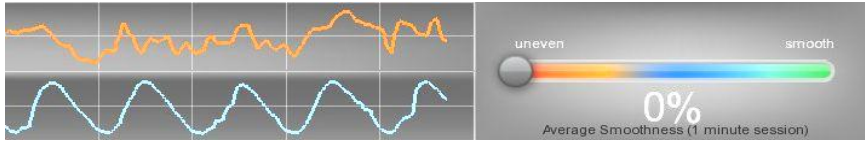
Feeling joyful when the flower bursts into bloom may raise your average smoothness. Once it is fully open and moves gracefully as if blown by a wind, it will vanish from the screen and a new closed hyacinth will appear for the next Play Count.

- ✓ Note the following 2 **TIPs** so they can be applied, if needed.
- ✓ Then play a game for 5 minutes, for two Play Counts, or until your smoothness average is above 50%.

## TIP

Remember:

It may take a few breaths for the slider to reflect changes.



## TIP

Are your heart rate changes staying choppy and uneven when you're playing an Alive Game?

If so, try really focusing on slowing down your breath. This has many mental and physical benefits. Slowing your exhalation is especially important.

People tend to try to breathe deeper in order to become relaxed. This is not necessary. As long as you lengthen the time you take to exhale, deeper breathing will naturally occur - without effort!

If your heart rate changes are staying choppy & uneven, check for the following problems and apply these solutions:

- *Poor posture — sit up straight; relax your shoulders.*
- *Clothing too tight — wear clothing that lets you fully relax your abdominal muscles. Open a button and lean back, if needed.*
- *Dehydrated — drink water.*
- *Your air passage should be free — breathe through your mouth or nose, whichever is more comfortable.*

## Reflect and Record on page 15



- What did I notice during or after playing a mini-game?
- Did I have any physical sensations? If so, describe them.
- Am I aware of any emotional changes? Compare my current emotions to those I had while playing. Add new emotions to list.
- Did I find either game difficult at times?  
If so, did optimal breathing help?
- Compared to how I felt before I began today's training, do I now feel any difference in my energy level?

## → YOUR SCHEDULE

- ✓ Check your Training Time Log on page 40 of your Notebook to see how well you were able to keep to your schedule. If this is incomplete, or if you haven't been following a schedule, just estimate.
- ✓ Review your Training Enhancement #4 schedule on page 5 of your Notebook.

## Reflect

- Have I been filling in my Training Time Log?  
If I have, give myself a pat on the back.  
If not, compassionately ask myself why?
- What parts of my schedule did I adhere to and which were difficult to stick to? Did I modify the schedule?
- Did I choose more optimal times and locations?

**Don't let your training schedule increase your stress.** It may take a couple of weeks to discover what routine works best for you. Due to a stressful lifestyle, you may not be able to follow your schedule right away. Over time, you will see that the more you train, the easier it will be to manage your stress.

*Remind Yourself: The more consistent your training, the better you will be able to manage your stress.*

## → If it has been difficult to make time for training:

- ✓ Read your Notebook training enhancements 1b & 2.
- ✓ Reminding yourself of the reasons you chose to train will help revitalize and strengthen your intention.
- ✓ Add a goal to your list, or clarify your training commitment statement as needed.



## Section 3

Notebook Page 17

### STRESS SMOOTHER: MINDFULNESS



Notice the parts of your body that you use during this training. As others have found, you may have been straining your neck, shoulders, fingers and/or wrists.

Before each session, remind yourself to gently stretch these areas. Then massage your face.

✓ Did you practice Short PMR in your life? If not, do some now.

### Mindfulness



Mindfulness is an intentional moment-by-moment heightened awareness of your body, feelings, thoughts, consciousness and surroundings. This process of perceiving clearly (without being judgmental) creates a more intimate connection with *the now moment* of your life. When you are mindful, you direct your attention with a *soft focus*. You allow yourself to be in a relaxed state while being productive.

Most relaxation methods are designed to reduce physical reactivity. Mindfulness techniques additionally help you to reduce mental and emotional reactions. With regular practice, they produce a long-lasting sense of calm and clear-headedness.

*When you feel curious and are interested in the fullness of your immediate experience, and accept any resistance you may have, you can discover a vast and profound sense of yourself, others, and your environment.*



### Reflect and Record



- What does mindfulness mean to me?
- What situations in my life call for increased mindfulness?

### Mindfulness as a Stress Smoother

With seemingly endless things to do in this non-stop workaday world, it is easy to get distracted and hard to maintain a clear, focused mind. We get caught up in the pressures of accomplishing tasks and staying busy (the *doing mode*) while ignoring or rejecting the value of mindful presence (the *being mode*).

Since our culture's stress and burnout symptoms are skyrocketing, it is more important than ever to ease our relentless compulsion to act. It may be difficult to refrain from continual activity when our stress reactions put us into a doing mode, but if we do not shift into a mindful being mode our potential for more aliveness in each moment can be thwarted.