Mindfulness in Parenting

Liliana J. Lengua
Center for Child & Family Well-being
Department of Psychology
University of Washington
- ABC’s of Parenting
- Mindfulness
- Practices for being present, calm and wise
Paced Breathing
Parenting Behaviors the Promote Well-being

50 years of parenting research:

- **Warmth**
  - Acceptance “I like my child just as s/he is.”
  - Enjoyment “I enjoy spending time with my child.”
  - Positive emotions “I smile often with my child.”

- **Responsiveness**
  - Recognizing cues
  - Sensitive, contingent responding

- **Consistent, Appropriate Control**
  - Clear, reasonable expectations and rules
  - Consistent contingencies

Mindfulness practices enhance these parenting behaviors.
Mindfulness

- Observant of child cues
- Observant of our own reactions
- Engaged and present
- Wise Minded
- Calm, steady and consistent
“Mindful”

Dictionary Definition:
Attentive, aware, careful & intentional
“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way:

On purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.”
Mindfulness is achieved by...

- Daily meditation practice
- Daily “informal” practices?
- “In the moment” practices
Be...

- Present
- Calm
- Wise
Build Warmth and Responsiveness

Child-Led Time

- Child decides what to do
- Follow child’s lead
- Describe, Imitate
- Be consistent, dependable
Be Present

Mindfulness:
- Observing
- Participating

Goals:
- Be in the moment
- Be involved
- Go with the flow