

66TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The Mindful Educator

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SELF-ASSESSMENT: A Journey of Change

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
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Mind Full, or Mindful?

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Stress: the #1 enemy of learning
25% of teenagers suffer from anxiety disorders
6.5 million children struggle from disabilities that impair their ability to learn
One in four high school students has been offered, sold or given illegal drugs on school property
One in three children are either overweight or obese
Nearly 3 million children receive medication for ADHD
Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers
High stress levels also damage teachers and educators, resulting in extremely high burnout rates.

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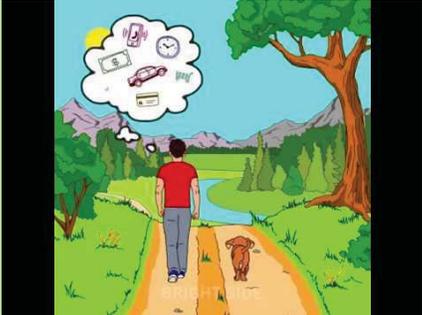
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Why is this important:

- "The data shows that stress and poverty result in lower executive function and working memory in kids. ... Over 30 years of research with adults has shown that Mindfulness decreases stress, depression, anxiety, and hostility, and enhances executive function, compassion and empathy."
- Saltman, Amy.
Mindfulness: A Teacher's Guide.

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When something upsetting happens...

...it's easy to find ourselves heading down an extreme path.

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Worry, fear, guilt, blaming...

When something upsetting happens, it's easy to get caught up in negative thoughts or painful feelings. We can be overwhelmed by these thoughts and feelings coming too strong and fast... they may not help, but they just keep coming.

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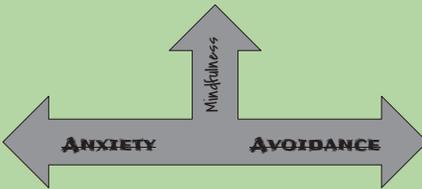
Or, we shut down, space out, run away, act out...

The other extreme is avoidance... When upsetting thoughts and feelings are too strong, we may find ourselves just shutting down and checking out. It's like blowing a fuse.

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Mindfulness is the center path...

... a way to regulate our thoughts and feelings in a different way.



Mindfulness is a way to manage your thoughts and feelings so they don't manage you.

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Mindfulness

- Is a way to stay in the present and just observe, without getting overwhelmed.
- Is a way to control your attention.
- Gives you a way to decide how to RESPOND, rather than your emotions controlling your REACTION.
- Takes practice.

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We Asked Our Students...What is Mindfulness?

"Living in the moment"
"Being aware and relaxed"
"Knowing how to breathe"
"Listening to your mind"
"Breathing"
"Being quiet"

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How to be Mindful - Three Simple Steps

1. Observe without judgement
2. Stay in the present moment
3. Act in this moment

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Teaching Our Students to be Mindful Through QUIET TIME

- Purpose: to provide students a regular, peaceful, restful period so that they are less stressed, healthier, and more ready to learn.
- Teacher's role: to create a safe, quiet environment for the students during QT
- Activity options may include: guided meditation, drawing, painting, sitting quietly.
- Participant expectations:
 - Remain quiet (no talking, whispering, moving around, etc.)
 - Do not disturb or interact with others

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Quiet Time strategies

- Teach expectations
- Teach strategies
- Model

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Don't just look, observe.
Don't just swallow, taste.
Don't just sleep, dream.
Don't just think, feel.
Don't just exist, live.

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*If every eight year old in the world
is taught meditation, we will
eliminate violence from the world
within one generation.*
- Dalai Lama

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Meditation

Meditation is a framework for familiarizing yourself with the present moment.

When meditation is incorporated into the learning process, kids can find perspective, embrace simplicity, and be more compassionate.

Meditation can be a tool for helping kids regulate their emotions.

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How to Get Kids to Meditate

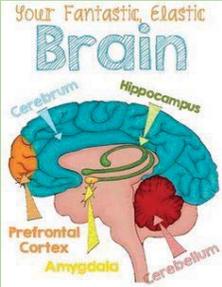
- Visualizations
- Sing and Chant together
- Yoga
- Breathing exercises



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Brain Science

Your Fantastic, Elastic Brain



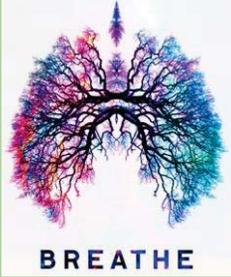
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Just Breathe

- Breath gives life to your body
- Breath controls the body, mind, and emotions
- Connecting with your breath is a method for being present



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Emotional Regulation and Mindfulness Action Research Project

- Mindup Curriculum
- Zones of Regulation



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Introduction

Students with ASD and EBD struggle with emotional regulation as it is manifested through behavior. These students have problems staying on task, relating to peers and adults and display disruptive behavior as it relates to emotion.

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Purpose:

The purpose of the research was to explore the use of ER curriculum paired with mindfulness practices to enhance the ER skills of students with ASD and EBD.

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The Study

This study was conducted in the self-contained classroom of the Success, Opportunity, Achievement and Resiliency (SOAR) day treatment program. This program is specifically designed for students who have significant behavioral difficulties and mental health diagnosis, three students are also diagnosed with ASD.

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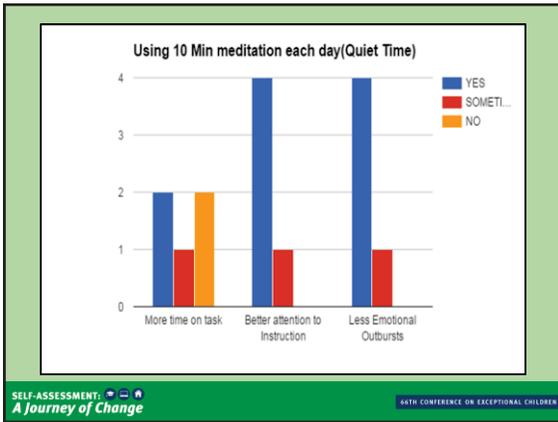
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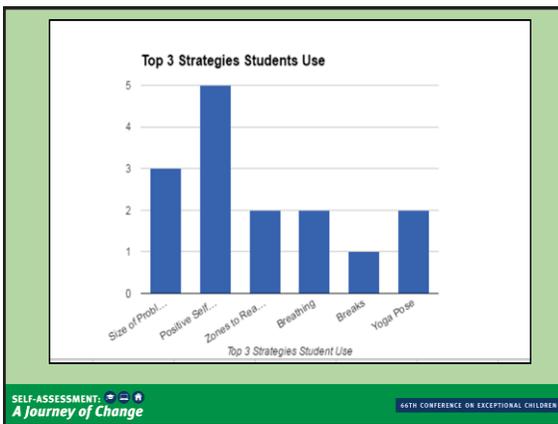
Results and Data

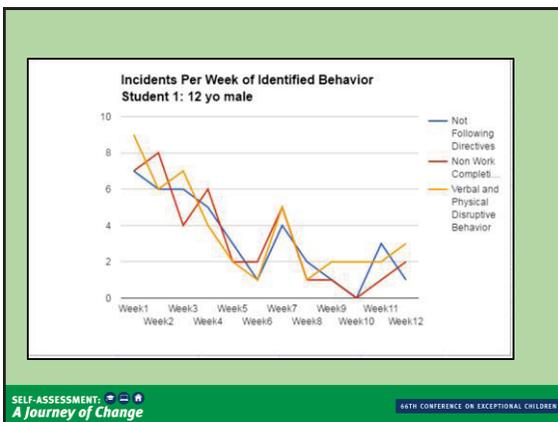
The findings of this study were consistent with the prior research studies. found that there was improved school performance when students were taught ER strategies. Through a weekly ER class paired with a daily 10 minute mindfulness time, the result supported the intervention having a positive impact on classroom behavior, student personal growth and teacher perception. Students were observed using the strategies that were taught to remain on task, follow instructions and stay in control of their emotions without a disruptive behavioral outburst.

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I can do it!
I'm great!
I'm awesome!
I'm amazing!
everything is
going to be okay!

I'm good
at playing
Minecraft!!!

Robbie

Student Work Samples

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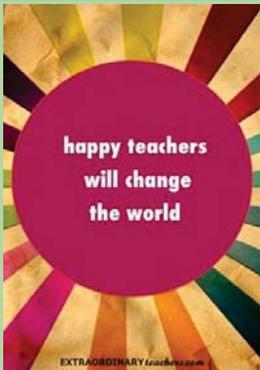


I CAN DO IT

Student Work Samples

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happy teachers
will change
the world

EXTRAORDINARY teachmean.com

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Mindfulness

Put what it's like to breathe

LOOK around

LISTEN

FEEL your body

Pause

This resource is for people who want peace. It was created by Oli Doyle and is licensed under Creative Commons, so please share it, print it, photocopy it and stick it on as many walls as possible. World peace is possible.

<http://peacethroughmindfulness.com.au/mindfulness/>

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Sources:

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