

Mindful Families, Schools & Communities: Research-to-Practice Promoting Child Well-being

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Presentation Abstracts

Keynote Address

Adele Diamond, Ph.D., University of British Columbia

Research Insights into Promoting the Well-Being of Children and their Families

The most important predictor of the success of an early childhood program, psychotherapy, or a parent-child relationship is that the child feels that his/her teacher, therapist, or parent really, truly cares about him or her. Your love -- your openness to truly listen; being there for a child when he or she needs you -- is more important than your knowledge or skill or doing the textbook-perfect thing. So relax; you don't need to have read all the books or have the perfect methodology. And, you can do the textbook-perfect thing, but if it doesn't come from the right place, it will not have the desired result. (Consider the musician who plays from the heart versus the musician with absolutely perfect technique but no heart.) Who you are and your ability to care about a child, and be present for that child, is what is most important. Adherence to exactly what you were taught needs to be tempered by the flexibility to adapt to what seems most needed in a given situation. The goal is not to be a champion meditator. The goal is to be a kind, compassionate human being, who is able to appreciate and find joy in the present without worrying about the past or future, and able to give joy to others. If you are stressing about not being a good meditator, then your meditation practice is not achieving its goal. The means for achieving a goal should never become divorced from its goal; the means should not become a goal in and of itself. Almost any activity can probably be the means for disciplining the mind and enhancing focus, calm, resilience, and caring.

There is a bi-directional relationship between the prefrontal cortex of the brain and stress. Stress impairs the functioning of prefrontal cortex but prefrontal cortex can help us handle stress. When you feel stressed, putting feelings into words produces therapeutic effects on the brain – it gets prefrontal cortex more involved. Executive functions depend on prefrontal cortex and include 'thinking outside the box' (cognitive flexibility), mentally relating ideas and facts (working memory), and giving considered responses rather than impulsive ones, resisting temptations and staying focused (inhibitory control, including selective attention). These abilities are critical for creative and flexible problem-solving, meeting unanticipated challenges, self-control, reasoning, and the discipline to persevere) and success in all life's aspects. Health development of executive functions is incredibly important because executive functions in childhood are predictive of achievement, health, wealth, and quality of life throughout one's life.

Evidence shows the fundamental interrelatedness of the different parts of ourselves, and of each of us to one another. Physical, social, emotional, and cognitive health are all fundamentally interconnected. Prefrontal cortex and executive functions are the first to suffer, and suffer disproportionately, if we are sad, stressed, lonely, sleep-deprived, or not physically fit. (You may have noticed that when you are stressed or ill you cannot think as clearly or exercise as good self-control.) Conversely, we show better executive functions when we are happy, feel socially supported, and are physically fit. We need to nurture the whole child; our children need to do things that they are passionately interested in

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and which bring them joy, they need to feel they are in supportive community they can count on, and their bodies need to be strong and healthy. Traditional activities, part of all cultures throughout time (e.g., dance, music-making, play and sports), challenge children's executive functions, give them pride, self-confidence, and joy, provide a sense of belonging, and help their bodies stay fit. Children need such activities in their lives if they are to thrive.

Panel: Cultivating Mindfulness with High Risk Youth

Kevin King, Ph.D., University of Washington

The Effects of Mindfulness Based Relapse Prevention in a Juvenile Justice Setting

Chronic exposure to adversity can lead to broad spectrum deficits in self-regulation and stress-sensitization which produce negative outcomes in children and adolescents (Arens, Gaher, & Simons, 2012). As such, self-regulation represents an important target of intervention for preventing or reducing negative consequences of ACEs. Youth in justice systems have among the highest level of ACE (Falshaw, 2005) histories, and demonstrate a higher prevalence of self-regulation deficits and related disorders compared to non-adjudicated youth (Carroll et al., 2006; Teplin, Abram, McClelland, Dulcan, & Mericle, 2002). Thus they represent a critical population in which ways in which the impact of ACEs on later development might be arrested. Mindfulness has emerged as a promising practice for increasing self-regulation among both adolescents and adults (Himelstein, Hastings, Shapiro, & Heery, 2011, Chambers, Lo, & Allen, 2008), and has been implemented in juvenile justice settings (Himelstein, Hastings, Shapiro, & Heery, 2011).

The current study aimed to adapt and test the feasibility and efficacy of Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) in a sample of incarcerated adolescents, and to obtain preliminary data on changes in self-regulation across the course of treatment. Adolescent males ($n = 21$) in a juvenile justice treatment center participated in 2 separate 6-week MBRP course (Group 1 $n = 8$, Group 2 $n = 13$) and were assessed weekly and 1 month following the last group session. At baseline, all participants reported exposure to community violence, and most participants reported some exposure to family violence, peer victimization or crime. Participants reported mean increases in all facets of mindfulness from 1-week pre-treatment to 1-month post-treatment (Cohen's $d = .29 - 1.89$), although due to small sample size only non-reactivity reached significance, $t(df = 13) = -3.37, p < .01$. Moreover, they reported average decreases in depressive symptoms (Cohen's $d = -1.10, p = .08$), but increases in social anxiety (Cohen's $d = 1.17, p = .09$). Participants reported satisfaction with the treatment and moderate weekly use of mindfulness practices. Barriers to effective treatment implementation include coordinating and integrating with existing programming, building engagement and collaboration with onsite staff, and collecting high quality data from adjudicated adolescents in a group setting. Further analyses will examine changes in self-regulation, and whether these changes co-varied with weekly changes in mindfulness.

Jacinda Dariotis, Ph.D., University of Cincinnati, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Student and Teacher Qualitative Perspectives on a School-Based Mindfulness and Yoga Program

Background: This presentation addresses two limitations of previous studies of school-based mindfulness and yoga programs: (1) heavy reliance on program developer and implementer reports and (2) primary focus on quantitative measurement of program outcomes. The perspectives of two key stakeholders – students and their classroom teachers – critical for identifying implementation barriers and facilitators, merit attention. And, qualitative methods reveal processes and outcomes that quantitative methods may not adequately capture. Combining findings from three studies, this presentation reports qualitative perspectives of fifth and sixth grade participants in a 16-week school-based mindfulness and yoga program in three highly disadvantaged urban schools and their classroom teachers on three related topics: (1) mindful yoga program skills youth recall and use in their daily lives, (2) urban youths' and teachers' perspectives on stress and stress responses following a mindful yoga program, and (3) students' and teachers' implementation recommendations to ensure that programs have the intended impact on participants.

Methods: Six focus group discussions were conducted among 22 fifth ($n=14$) and sixth ($n=8$) grade students (age range: 10 to 13; median age = 11) across three intervention schools. Students' classroom teachers ($n=9$) – who did not participate in the program – participated in focus groups and interviews; only two classroom teachers were not available during data collection times. Focus groups and interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. All transcripts were independently inductively coded, using thematic analysis, by three team members.

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Results: Themes are reported for (1) skills youth recalled and used; (2) perspectives on stress; and (3) lessons learned regarding program implementation barriers and facilitators. First, four major themes related to skills learning and application emerged: youth retained and utilized program skills involving breath work and poses; knowledge about health benefits of these techniques promoted self-utilization and sharing of skills; youth developed keener emotional appraisal that, coupled with new and improved coping skills, helped de-escalate negative emotions, promote calm, and reduce stress; and youth and teachers reported realistic and optimistic expectations for future impact of acquired program skills. Second, four themes emerged related to students' and teachers' perspectives on stress and program implications: youth conflated stress with negative emotions; peer and family conflicts were common youth stressors; youth reported improved impulse control and emotional regulation following the program; and teachers reported mindfulness may reduce youth behavior problems. Third, four themes related to program implementation barriers and facilitators emerged: program delivery factors, program buy-in, implementer communication with teachers, and instructor qualities.

Discussion: We discuss implications of these findings for guiding future research and practice in terms of what skills students learned, retained, and utilized outside the program as well as what changes classroom teachers expect and observe among program recipients. Qualitative findings related to stress have potential to augment quantitative measures, identify additional outcomes of interest, and clarify intervention mechanisms. And, feedback from students and teachers about implementation is discussed in the context of informing implementation, adaption, and future development of successful school-based programming in urban settings.

Amy Eva, Ph.D., Seattle University

Learning to Breathe: A Mindfulness-Based Curriculum to Support At-Risk Youth

Transition planning for at-risk youth traditionally focuses on practical skill development for independent living; however, recent research looks more broadly at interventions supporting self-advocacy skills that are grounded in emotional intelligence and social emotional learning (Greenberg et al., 2003; Durlak et al., 2011). We hypothesized that participation in a six-week mindfulness-based curricular intervention would lower students perceived stress while increasing their reported self-esteem. High school juniors and senior participants (n = 23) ranged in age (17-20 years) while the majority were male (65%) students of color (75%). The *Learning to BREATHE* curriculum (Broderick, 2013), designed for an adolescent audience, was delivered over six 45-minute weekly lessons in Winter 2014. A t-test comparing pre- and post-survey mean responses revealed statistically significant differences on the Single Item Self Esteem Scale and three items on the Perceived Stress Scale. Students (n = 8) participating in focus group interviews indicated that the most valued and sustainable daily practice was the body scan technique. The most memorable class concepts included positive self-talk, control of emotions, and methods for maintaining calm and relieving stress. This evidence-based curriculum has the potential to empower students who are academically at risk of school failure with greater self-esteem while also enhancing stress management skills. These tools can potentially serve as scaffolds in the challenging transition from high school into young adulthood.

Session Objectives:

- Articulate the mindfulness-based practices and curricular concepts that students at-risk for academic failure found most useful and beneficial.
- Understand the benefits and challenges of implementing mindfulness-based curricula in alternative high school settings.
- Discuss the ways in which school systems can create and foster sustainable daily practices for their students.

Panel: Mindfulness in Parenting

Jessica Sommerville, Ph.D., University of Washington

The Impact of Parental Mindfulness Training on Infant Prosociality

In this talk, I will discuss the results of a study that we recently completed in my lab that investigated the impact of a mindfulness-based intervention on parental empathy and infant prosociality. Parents took part in a mindfulness-based

intervention, either starting when their infants were 9 months of age (intervention group) or 12 months of age (wait-list control group). Parents also visited the lab with their infants when their infants were 9 and 12 months of age to take part in a battery of tasks designed to measure infants' prosociality, and to complete questionnaires on trait mindfulness and dispositional empathy. Parents in the intervention group showed significant increases in both trait mindfulness and dispositional empathy whereas those in the wait-list control group did not; infants of parents in the intervention group demonstrated greater persistence in prosocial behavior than infants in the wait-list control group. Moreover, frequency of mindfulness practice was positively related to infants' prosocial behavior. Together, these results show that mindfulness-based interventions can increase parental empathy, which in turn has implications for the development of prosocial behavior in infancy and perhaps beyond.

Larissa Duncan, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco

The Role of Self-Compassion in Mindful Parenting: A Pilot RCT of the Listening Mothers Program

A growing body of empirical evidence indicates that maternal stress and depression during early infancy poses a risk to healthy child development and family well-being. Mindfulness approaches to stress reduction may hold great potential for impacting the psychological and physiological mechanisms of action that link maternal stress and negative mood with poor child developmental outcomes. Mindful parenting interventions bring together intra-personally-focused secular contemplative practices, such as mindfulness and self-compassion, to promote self-regulation and self-care, with interpersonally-oriented practices, such as lovingkindness meditation, that may support the quality of parenting interactions. We carried out a project with two main objectives: (1) to develop self-compassion, lovingkindness, and mindfulness curriculum components for inclusion in an existing 8-week psychoeducational program for mothers and their young infants: Listening Mothers; and (2) to conduct a series of small studies to determine feasibility and preliminary effects of the enhanced program on mother self-compassion, parenting, and infant developmental outcomes. This presentation will include a description of the curriculum enhancements and their implementation, as well as preliminary results from quantitative and qualitative self-report assessment of program effects among participating mothers.

Session Objectives:

- Identify the links between maternal stress, negative mood, and child developmental outcomes.
- Describe three forms of secular contemplative practices (mindfulness, self-compassion, and lovingkindness) and the evidence-base supporting their use.
- List ways in which new mothers can employ self-compassion in their parenting and the benefits they perceive from doing so.

Barbara Burns, Ph.D., Santa Clara University

Promoting Resilience in Young Children through Parenting: A Pilot Study

The Resilient Families Program (RFP) is a community-based parent education program that aims to promote psychological strengths in preschoolers that buffer the impact of adverse childhood experiences. The overall goal of RFP is to increase parents' mindful resilience such that parents can better provide their children with sensitive and responsive caregiving. The core objectives of RFP include the promotion of strong parent-child attachment through family activities, a recognition of the 'teachability' of self-regulation skills important for school readiness, and better management of parenting stress using mindful breathing and self-compassion exercises. In six (two-hour) workshops, parents learn about resilience and their own inner strengths through discussion and participation in RFP family games, crafts, children's books, and mindful breathing/self-compassion exercises. A parallel RFP program for preschoolers is also available as a separate set of workshops, which includes extension activities that can be integrated into a preschool curriculum. The RFP manuals for facilitators and materials (games, crafts, books) have been organized to support implementation and leadership by communities. Following a research-community partnership phase, community agencies can take leadership of RFP and can champion the implementation and expansion of scale within their community. Preliminary findings and lessons learned from implementing RFP using this novel research-community partnership model will be shared.

Panel: Mindfulness in Communities Experiencing Trauma

Rony Berger, Ph.D., Ben Gurion University, Tel Aviv University

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Enhancing Resiliency and Cultivating Compassion in Youth

This lecture starts by briefly defining the concepts of a resiliency and compassion from both an individual and collective perspectives. Thereafter, I will summarize studies that demonstrate the link between exposure to stressful and traumatic conditions, post traumatic symptomatology, threat perception and a variety of anti-social phenomena such as exclusionist attitudes, ethnocentrism, and hostility toward minorities.

This link is served as the theoretical basis for designing EARSE-STRESS- PRO-SOCIAL (ESPS), a comprehensive school-based program geared to enhance students' resiliency and promote tolerance and acceptance of the other. I will describe the program and share empirical evidence that demonstrate its efficacy in reducing post-traumatic symptoms, anxiety and somatization while simultaneously reducing stereotyping, prejudices and discriminatory tendencies toward Arab students.

Next, I will describe a new stereotype reduction program, the Art of Living together (AOLT) that is based on contact theory and compassion mind training. I will discuss the program and outline the specific intergroup processes, tolerant building strategies and contemplative practices that were utilized in it. The program has shown its efficacy in reducing stereotyping, prejudices and discriminatory tendencies in Arab and Jewish elementary school students. A short movie that was done on the program will be screened.

I will then describe a new and exciting international project which was initiated by the Dali Lama in order to promote civil ethics among youth. I will discuss the principles of "Call To Care", a teachers delivered program that combines skill-training, social-emotional learning and contemplative practices geared to develop compassion in teachers and students in schools. I will share some preliminary data from the Israeli version of the program.

Finally, I will end by talking about the future trends in creating resilient and caring communities around the globe.

Molly Cevasco, M.Ed., BCBA, University of Washington

Promoting Mindfulness for Diverse Populations

This presentation will center around the adaptation of mindfulness practices for culturally and socioeconomically diverse populations. Qualitative and quantitative data from two studies will provide insights into the value of a culturally-relevant approach to introducing and cultivating mindfulness to a wide array of individuals and communities. Participants will receive resources for implementing a culturally-relevant approach to mindfulness that will aid in successfully growing this practice within diverse communities.

Bonnie Duran, Dr.P.H., University of Washington

Mindfulness in Indian Country – Working with the Legacy of Colonization

This presentation will review a 20-year history and some current applications of Mindfulness in US Tribal, Urban Indian and other Communities of Color. We will also describe the successes, barriers and challenges of adapting an intervention based on a "spiritual" tradition into communities traumatized by cultural genocide and historical trauma.

Learning Objectives: After attending this presentation, participants will:

1. Understand the history and outcomes of early efforts to bring mindfulness approaches to "Indian Country"
2. Define and describe the impact of "historical trauma" on the uptake of health and medical interventions;
3. Recognize the importance of cultural adaptation of evidence based intervention in Tribal Communities

Practice Workshop

Sharon Stanley, Ph.D., Somatic Transformation

Healing Trauma through Relationship: Mindfulness of Neural and Emotional Cues

The practice of mindfulness, with its skills in intention and attention to specific phenomena, is a solid foundation for healing the residue of trauma. Trauma affects us all, whether it is in our early relationships, aversive life events or

passed down from ancestors. With the intention of compassion and empathy, somatic practices can help to regulate the arousal states from trauma and transform chaotic inner states into meaning and purpose. In this presentation we will explore the primacy of right hemispheric processing for reconsolidating traumatic states and six somatic practices that utilize meditative expertise and competency.

Closing Insights

Robert Roeser, Ph.D., Portland State University

Reflections on the Research on Mindfulness and Compassion

The field of research on mindfulness and compassion training for children, adolescents and their parents and teachers is growing rapidly. Based on the cutting edge talks of this symposium, I offer some reflections on the current state of the field, on the implications of the findings presented for supporting healthy human development, and for future directions in research and practice to address systems of care.

Poster Abstracts

Presenter: Pat Brown

Affiliation: University of Washington, Nursing

Title: Mindfulness and Mental Illness: Reflections on Feasibility

Authors: Helen Buckland, University of Washington; Christine Allen, NAMI Greater Seattle; Jonathan Buckland, NAMI Greater Seattle; Helen Jones, University of Washington, Psychology, Neurobiology and Behavior; Karl Marrett, University of Washington, Neurobiology and Behavior

Since autumn of 2013 a Mindfulness Education Group has existed for young adults, aged 18-35, in an Appreciative Living Learning Circle (ALLC). The ALLC is a social support group for young adults with mental illness, specifically schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder and anyone having the experience of psychosis. In addition, young adults without these diagnoses who were interested in reducing the stigma of mental illness and promoting inclusion were invited participants. Two pilot ALLCs were created in 2010 with funding from National Institutes of Health; results indicated decreases in loneliness and fear, barriers to developing the social relationships these young adults wanted. With these results and the desire of the young adults to meet, the groups continued. Participants indicated interest in also being able to learn ways to deal with disturbing symptoms, side effects of medications, and distressing experiences related to mental illness and related to life in general. Mindfulness meditation became an option of interest. Support was sought from the professional community, but with no one able to make the weekly commitment to the ALLC, group facilitators decided to design an educational experience for the ALLC members which would provide group members with information about mindfulness meditation along with opportunities to practice the skills and reflect on that practice. Two mental health professionals with experience in mindfulness meditation provided consultation and support for this effort through e-mail, phone calls and visits to the group. Each weekly meeting is structured in the form of a discussion-based and experiential course on aspects of the mindfulness-based treatment, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). As an alternative to traditional group based therapy, the objective of weekly meetings is to develop skills of meditation, mindfulness and mindful communication through group discussions and exercises. This experience provides an inner look into how an education based group focused on mindfulness can effectively help young adults with and without mental illness learn strategies together to manage stress present in their lives. Reflections of group members who have participated in the experience for the last year and a half inform how this practice might be further explored to use with families and friends of these young adults and other community members.

Presenter(s): Emily Fayram, Misja Ilcisin, Alejandra Ruiz, and Katherine Strong

Affiliation: Santa Clara University

Title: Resilient Families Program: Parents

Authors: Mikaela Ilcisin, Victoria Cruz, Katherine Strong, Brenda Arellano, Alejandra Ruiz, Adriana Meza Gutierrez, Emily Fayram, Stephanie Dong, Molly Schuller, Aneka Khilnani, Dylan Agelson and Barbara Burns (all Santa Clara University)

The Resilient Families Program (RFP) for Parents is designed to promote children's self regulation through parent education. RFP for Parents employs games, books, and mindful breathing and compassion activities, to promote education about the significance of attachment, attention regulation and family stress management. In this poster, the details and rationale of the program are described.

Presenter(s): Emily Fayram, Misja Ilcisin, Alejandra Ruiz, and Katherine Strong

Affiliation: Santa Clara University

Title: Resilient Families Program: Preschoolers

Authors: Emily Fayram, Molly Schuller, Alejandra Ruiz, Aneka Khilnani, Dylan Agelson, Stephanie Dong, Mikaela Ilcisin, Victoria Cruz, Brenda Arellano, Katherine Strong, and Barbara Burns (all Santa Clara University)

The Resilient Families Program (RFP) for preschoolers focuses on promoting self-regulation through games, books and mindful breathing activities. RFP for preschoolers is a companion curriculum for RFP for parents which focuses on parent-child attachment, attention regulation skills, and stress reduction using mindfulness. In this poster the details and rationale of the program are described.

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Presenter: Laura L. Feuerborn, PhD, NCSP

Affiliation: University of Washington, Tacoma

Title: Integrating Mindfulness in a Framework of Social and Emotional Learning

Authors: Laura L. Feuerborn, PhD, NCSP

The implementation of social and emotional learning (SEL) programs in the school setting is an effective and viable means to promote social, emotional, and academic development in K-12 students. SEL is based on the principle that interpersonal (social) and intrapersonal (emotional) skills can be taught and learned through strategic and systematic instruction, modeling, and practice. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has identified five core and interrelated competency areas essential to SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Mindfulness-based practices can be integrated within this school-based SEL framework and can be used as a prevention and intervention strategy to strengthen assets and mitigate risks. This session provides an overview of the theoretical frameworks of both SEL and mindfulness-based practices, and through a case example, illustrates the infusion of mindfulness-based practices into an existing SEL program. This session also addresses issues important to program adoption, implementation, and sustainability. This session may be especially helpful for researchers and practitioners who are using mindfulness, but are unsure of how they might promote the practices in schools or integrate the practices into an existing SEL framework of prevention and early intervention.

Presenter: Elizabeth L. Frias

Affiliation: Arizona State University

Title: Mindful Teachers and Their Classroom Experiences

Authors: Elizabeth L. Frias, Arizona State University, Clinical Instructor, and PhD Candidate in Curriculum & Instruction

Teachers experience high levels of occupational stress (Dunham & Varma, 1998; International Labour Office, 1993; Kyriacou, 2000; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Practicing mindfulness, it appears, is as healthy for the mind and brain as physical exercise is for the body. However, "Quiet sessions on a meditation cushion can contrast sharply with the complex dynamics of the classroom" (Brown, 2011, p. 75). Several organizations have documented their efforts to educate and train teachers in secular mindfulness practices to help them cope with the demands of teaching (e.g. MindUP, Mindful Schools, Inner Resilience Program, CARE for Teachers). Although these programs exhibit a record of success in helping teachers cope with stress and even show improved relationships with students and colleagues, the programs are expensive and not widely available. Unfortunately, little is known about teachers who have not gone through such programs yet have a personal mindfulness practice. This qualitative study explores the phenomena of being a teacher who self-identifies as a mindfulness practitioner. In-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted with four K-12 teachers who self-identified as mindfulness practitioners. Each of the four participants teaches in a low-income school working with students who are identified as "high risk." The results of this study reveal the how the skills learned through mindfulness practices transfer to the contexts of working in the classroom and factors that inhibit or facilitate such a transfer.

Presenter: Heidemarie Laurent

Affiliation: University of Oregon

Title: Not Making It Harder Than It Needs to Be: How Mindfulness During Relationship Stress Relates to Well-Being

Authors: Heidemarie Laurent, Sean Larurent, April Lightcap, Benjamin Nelson (all University of Oregon)

Although mindfulness appears to reliably reduce negative psychological states, evidence for positive impacts on well-being is weaker (see Goyal et al., 2014). This may reflect limitations in measurement approaches, which typically rely on trait mindfulness levels or intervention effects, but do not address mindfulness during stressful situations. In addition, there is a paucity of research addressing mindfulness effects on stress regulation in a close relationship context. This study examined the effects of state mindfulness during interpersonal conflict on romantic partners' positive/negative affect surrounding the stressor and on their global well-being.

Adult heterosexual couples (103 dyads) participated in two laboratory sessions, the second involving a conflict resolution task. During session 1, participants completed the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney 2006) to assess trait mindfulness, and during session 2 (immediately following the conflict task) they completed the Toronto Mindfulness Scale (Lau et al., 2006) to assess state mindfulness during the conflict itself. They also rated positive and negative affect following the conflict task using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (Watson et al. 1988), and later completed the World Health Organization Well-Being Scale (Bech, Olsen, Kjoller, & Rasmussen, 2003).

Path modeling in Mplus revealed that the attitudinal component of state mindfulness (curiosity) predicted partners' well-being via increased positive affect surrounding the conflict. These effects emerged while controlling for trait mindfulness, highlighting a unique effect of state mindfulness during stress. No effects for the attentional component of mindfulness (decentering) or for negative affect were found. These results lend credence to the idea that mindfulness doesn't just reduce negative functional indices such as depression and anxiety, but it also increases positive functioning during daily challenges. By demonstrating unique effects of state mindfulness, independent of dispositional mindfulness, this work further supports the value of going beyond commonly used decontextualized mindfulness metrics (i.e., participation in a mindfulness intervention, trait mindfulness) to investigate mindfulness during acute interpersonal stress. Implications for family functioning will be discussed.

Presenter: Thao Le

Affiliation: University of Hawaii Manoa

Title: Mindfulness in Two Cultural Contexts: Hawaii & Vietnam

Authors: Thao Le, University of Hawaii Manoa; Don Trieu, University of Hawaii Manoa, Kim Le

The presentation is a feasibility study of a mindfulness-based youth intervention program that was delivered in two different cultural contexts. In Vietnam, the concept of mindfulness has deep roots, with more than 60 percent of the population practicing some form of Buddhism. Many cultural stories, metaphors, and aphorism reflect Buddhist ethics, the nature of suffering, and overcoming suffering. The first half of the presentation discusses the results of the program with 120 at-risk and handicapped youth in Central Vietnam. In Hawaii, the concept of "aloha" has much resonance with mindfulness in that the spiritual definition of "aloha" means presence in the breath. The second half of the presentation discusses implementation and results of the program with 34 incarcerated mixed-ethnic/native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander youth, using self-report surveys, cortisol, SlgA, and personal reflections. Results reveal strong acceptance and trends in expected directions on all indicators.

Presenter: Ahmed Dahir Mohamed

Affiliation: The School of Psychology, Cognitive and Sensory Systems Group, Faculty of Science, University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, Selangor, Malaysia; Department of Psychiatry, School of Clinical Medicine, University of Cambridge

Title: The Efficacy of Loving Kindness Meditation on Measures of Subjective Well-Being in Healthy Young Adults: Preliminary Data

Authors: A. D. Mohamed (1,2), N. Zulkifli (1), D. Seal (1), and C. R. Lewis (3)

1 The School of Psychology, Cognitive and Sensory Systems Group, Faculty of Science, University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, Selangor, Malaysia

2 Department of Psychiatry, School of Clinical Medicine, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom

3 Department of Psychology, Towson University, 8000 York Road, Towson, Maryland, 21252-0001, United States of America

Background: Some theorists have suggested that subjective well-being (SWB), while influenced by life events, is relatively stable and consistent within individuals, possibly due to biologically determined "set points" with a substantial genetic component. Although there has been much research on personality and environmental correlates of SWB, there is a relative paucity of information on the efficacy of interventions to enhance SWB. The present study was designed to explore the potential efficacy of one form of meditation practice, referred to as Loving Kindness Meditation (LKM), which is a form of meditation that is intended to foster acceptance of oneself and others, while also increasing

mindfulness and concentration. This type of meditation is practiced through direct well-wishing, typically by the repetition of phrases such as, “May (I/someone else) be happy”. Although LKM has been suggested to build and broaden positive psychological resources, including SWB, how this practice achieves these effects is not well understood.

Aims: The aim of this study was to investigate whether LKM builds and broadens psychological well-being by enhancing positive emotions and mindfulness over time in healthy young adults.

Methods: Thirty neurotypical healthy young adults (Mean Age: 19 ± 1.6 years of age) who were naive to meditation and mindfulness training participated in a study that employed a repeated measures design. Participants completed the Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, Subjective Happiness Scale, the Trait Hope Scale, and the Gratitude Questionnaire before (Day 1) and after (14 days later) LKM training, which they practiced for 20 minutes every day. Repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to investigate whether there were significant differences between baseline and post-training scores on each of the psychological measures.

Results: Relative to baseline measures, LKM training of two weeks duration significantly increased the subjective reports of mindfulness, happiness, hopefulness and gratitude in neurotypical healthy young adults. These findings confirm and extend previous reports suggesting that short-term LKM training enhances positive emotional and psychosocial states of well-being in young healthy adults.

Conclusions: In neurotypical healthy young adults, relatively brief (two-week) LKM training enhances positive emotional states of well-being. This experience, extended over longer durations, might enable them to build positive psychological well-being within themselves and broaden this to other individuals, consistent with the principles of the Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions. Hence, LKM intervention may operate through the co-enhancement of positive emotions towards oneself and others, thereby promoting positively reinforcing social interactions that serve to further strengthen subjective well-being. Future studies should investigate how LKM modulates the neural signatures of the brain, particularly the amygdala, and how such modulation is related to subjective reports of positive emotions developed over time through this practice. In addition, the potential utility of LKM training should be assessed in different populations of patients, since SWB has been reported to be associated with reductions in stress-induced cortisol responses and inflammatory biomarkers.

Presenter: Justin Parent

Affiliation: University of Vermont

Title: Mindfulness in Parenting and Coparenting Across Three Developmental Stages

Authors: Justin Parent and Rex Forehand (University of Vermont)

The primary purpose of the current study was to test a model examining the process by which parent dispositional mindfulness relates to positive parenting and coparenting relationship quality through mindful parenting and mindful coparenting. Participants were 485 parents drawn from three community samples of families with youth across three developmental stages: young childhood (3 – 7 yrs.; $n = 164$), middle childhood (8 – 12 yrs.; $n = 161$), and adolescence (13 – 17 yrs.; $n = 160$). Parents reported on their dispositional mindfulness (Mindful Attention and Awareness Scale; Brown & Ryan, 2003), mindful parenting (Interpersonal Mindfulness in Parenting Scale; Duncan, 2007), mindful coparenting (Interpersonal Mindfulness in Coparenting Scale; developed for this study), coparenting relationship quality (Coparenting Relationship Scale – Brief; Feinberg, Brown, & Kan, 2012), and broadband positive parenting practices (Multidimensional Assessment of Parenting Scale; Parent & Forehand, 2014). Path analysis using maximum likelihood estimation was employed to test primary hypotheses. The proposed model demonstrated excellent fit ($\chi^2(21, N = 485) = 19.3, p > .15, RMSEA = .00, 95\% CI .00 - .06, CFI = 1.0, SRMR = .08$). Consistent findings across all three developmental stages indicated that higher levels of parent dispositional mindfulness were related to higher levels of mindful parenting and mindful coparenting. Parent dispositional mindfulness was indirectly related to higher levels of broadband positive parenting through higher levels of mindful parenting. Further, parent dispositional mindfulness was indirectly related to a higher quality coparenting relationship through higher levels of mindful coparenting. Replication of these findings

across families with children at different developmental stages lends support to the generalizability of the model. Implications for intervention and prevention efforts are discussed.

Presenter: Cheri Scarff MS,OTR/L

Affiliation: San Jose State University

Title: The Effect of Mindfulness on Attention in 2nd Grade Boys: A Research Proposal

Authors: Cheri Scarff, San Jose State University MSOT 2012

The purpose of this project is to propose to conduct a research study on the effect of a modified version of the Mindful Schools Curriculum on attention in second grade boys using a pre-test posttest experimental design with a randomized wait-list control group. There are an increasing number of boys with attention deficits in the United States. Treatment approaches are varied with inconsistent results. The aim of this study is twofold: to determine a qualitative difference in perceptions of students, parents and teachers following lessons in mindfulness and to determine a quantitative significance in comparing scores from behavioral rating scales pre- and post-intervention. This will assist occupational therapists and other school specialists in establishing evidence based interventions that will address the individual needs of students to help focus their attention, reduce stress and self-manage impulsive behaviors. Results will contribute to the mindfulness research base, potentially expand the future role of occupational therapy (OT) in the public school setting and improve the health and well-being of elementary school children.

Presenter: Catherine A. Spann

Affiliation: University of Texas at Arlington

Title: A Brief Mindfulness Exercise in the College Classroom

Authors: Catherine A. Spann and Anna Park (University of Texas at Arlington)

College students are often required to sustain attention for 50 to 90 minutes in the classroom, but research has shown that this is nearly an impossible task (Farley et al., 2013). Recently, mindfulness practices have been shown to enhance attention (Tang et al., 2007) and executive control (Jha et al., 2007) as well as improve self-regulation (Chambers et al., 2008). Mindfulness means paying attention to the present moment on purpose and without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Mindfulness exercises require individuals to monitor their minds and bring their focus to the present moment (Teper & Inzlicht, 2013). Thus, practicing mindfulness meditation should provide students with skills needed for regulating attention and promoting self-control. The current study, which will take place over the course of three weeks in March 2015, will implement a mindfulness breathing exercise in order to increase student attention and enhance learning outcomes. Two sections of Astronomy (N = 200) will participate—one section will complete mindfulness exercises during each class and the other will serve as the control group. The manipulation will consist of a three-minute mindfulness breathing exercise that will take place during the middle of each class. This exercise, which will require students to focus attention to their breath, will be played on a recording over the sound system. The control classroom will be given a three-minute break during the middle of each class where they will be allowed to engage in any activity they choose. Learning outcomes will be assessed via quizzes given at the end of each class period as well as exam scores taken before and after the intervention. Additionally, a self-report questionnaire will collect both quantitative and qualitative data regarding students' acceptance and perceived benefit of the breathing exercise. Planned analyses include: (1) a one-way between-subjects ANOVA to compare the groups on quiz scores and (2) a 2 X 2 mixed ANOVA to compare the groups on the first and second exams. We hypothesize that students participating in the mindfulness exercise will show larger increases in their scores compared to students in the control group. We also plan to analyze the qualitative data using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) software. This software processes text from each participant and returns the percentage of words used in each of 80 different linguistic categories. Specifically, it is expected that students participating in the mindfulness exercise will use more positive emotion words as well as insight words than students in the control group. Using more positive emotion and insight words would be an indication that they enjoyed and benefitted from the breathing exercise. Additionally, we will examine mean differences between the mindfulness and control condition in ratings of self-reported attention. Positive results will suggest the promise of a simple to administer mindfulness breathing exercise to increase undergraduate attention and learning.

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Presenter: Kishani Townshend

Affiliation: University of Adelaide; James Cook University

Title: A Systematic Review Evaluating the Effectiveness of Mindful Parenting Programs in Promoting Children's and Parent's Wellbeing

Authors: Kishani Townshend (1, 2), Zoe Jordan (1), Micah Peters (1) and Komla Tsey (2)

1 Translational Health Science, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia

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Given the rising health care costs and delayed diagnosis, Mindful Parenting could be a valuable tool in the early detection and prevention of certain mental health disorders. Mindful Parenting has been defined as the ability to pay attention to your child and your parenting in a particular way, that is intentionally, non-judgementally whilst being in the here and now. Despite the growing body of evidence demonstrating the effects of mindfulness practices on child and family well-being, a preliminary search of the major bibliographical databases identified no completed systematic review or protocol. This study aims to synthesize the evidence evaluating the effectiveness of Mindful Parenting programs in promoting children's and parent's wellbeing.

The primary objective of this systematic review is to evaluate the effectiveness of Mindful Parenting programs on children's, adolescents' and parents' wellbeing, particularly in relation to the intensity of the symptoms associated with internalizing (depression, anxiety, stress) and externalizing (conduct) disorders. The secondary objective is to evaluate how effective Mindful Parenting programs are in improving emotional regulation, quality of the parent-child relationship, resilience and mindfulness of the children, adolescents and parents. The comparator was the control or waitlist conditions.

This systematic review only considered studies that evaluated Mindful Parenting interventions completed by parents with children aged 0-18 years old. The search strategy focused on finding published and unpublished studies from 1997 to November 2014. The term "Mindful Parenting" started to appear in the literature from 1997, with Myla and Jon Kabat-Zinn's publication on the topic.¹⁴ Initial keywords were "mindful" and "parenting". A three step search strategy was utilized in this review. An initial search of PubMed, PsycINFO, EMBASE, Scopus, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection, CINAHL, Cochrane Library in addition to ProQuest Theses and Dissertations was followed by an analysis of the text words contained in the title, abstract and index terms used to describe the articles. A second search using all identified keywords and index terms was then undertaken across all included databases. Thirdly, the reference list of all identified reports and articles was searched for additional studies. Studies published in English were considered for inclusion in this review. A meta-analysis was conducted to synthesize the findings from the randomized control trials. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge on the prevention as well as the effective management of internalizing and externalizing disorders.