Mindfulness

Jessica Ghislain
Waterford Public Schools
Kingsley Montgomery School
Jessica Ghislain

- Undergraduate from Michigan State University in Elementary Education and Spanish
- Masters from Wayne State University in Special Education: Emotional Impairment
- Educational Specialist from Oakland University
  - 2 year research based project on the effects of mindfulness
- 2018 National Alliance of Mental Illness Teacher of the Year
- 10 Years in the classroom
  - 3.5 years in Charter School grade K-8
  - 1.5 years at Havenwyck Psychiatric Hospital
  - 5 years at Waterford Schools, Kinglsey Montgomery School Self-Contained EI
What is it?

So mindfulness has become kind of a buzz word but what is it?
Mindfulness is definitely NOT:

- Religious based
- Chanting
- Sitting cross legged in a circle
- Going to make you the most chill person ever... right away
But mindfulness is:

- The act of being present and in the moment
- Deliberate, intentional paying attention on purpose
- Focuses on the ordinary events in our lives
- Allows us to have a pause button
- Giving benefit of increased attention. Emotional regulation, resilience, a sense of calm and an ability to have compassion.
Take a minute:

Think about your level of stress **and the stress level of your students.** Try to take yourself back to a week ago when you were in school.

**Do you ever feel like you need a break?**
**Do they?**
**Do you need a break from each other?**
**Do you want to fix it?**
So why does this matter? And why do I do it?
Healthy stress is a natural part of life, including childhood. Children and adults alike need to be challenged in order to grow and develop. However, in the modern education system, healthy stress is frequently displaced by toxic stress. Toxic stress occurs when life’s demands consistently outpace our ability to cope with those demands.
68.6% DECREASE

This percentage is the decrease in behaviors in ONE year.

I spent two years implementing, examining and collecting evidence on the difference it made into EI kids. Let's dive in to what I found.
Kingsley Montgomery School has been providing educational programs for students since 1979. Kingsley Montgomery School is located in Waterford and is staffed by Waterford School District teachers, social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language therapists, and support staff. We provide a center based program on behalf of Oakland Intermediate School District for students in northern Oakland County with severe cognitive impairments (SCI), severe multiple impairments (SXI) and significant behavioral challenges. At Kingsley Montgomery School, students with IEPs are provided services by experienced professionals who support them in achieving their educational goals (Waterford Public Schools).
Seven Students have been evaluated in this program. The classroom has a max capacity of ten students and has been full during the duration of the evaluation. However, only the seven students that were present for both the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school year were tracked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IEP label of Disability</th>
<th>% of students in case study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Impairment (EI)</td>
<td>57.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otherwise Health Impairment (OHI)</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Impairment (CI)</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An estimated 45% of children have one or more ACEs; approximately 10% have three or more. Yet, only about 20% of children with mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders actually receive care from a specialized mental health care provider, like a psychiatrist or psychologist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Number</th>
<th>ACE’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mental Illness, Neglect, Physical Abuse, Broken Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incarcerated Parent, Homeless, Mental Illness, Drug Abuse, Broken Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Broken Home, Mental Illness, Alcohol Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Broken Home, Mental Illness, Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Homeless, Incarcerated Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mental Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Broken Home, Mental Illness, Physical Abuse,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Broken Home, Mental Illness, Incarcerated Parent, English Language Learner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Has the mindfulness program been effective in decreasing emotional outbursts?

The evaluation of this program showed that the students in the 2018-2019 classroom that included embedded Mindfulness curriculum had a significant decrease in emotional disturbances that removed them from the classroom environment. In this study all the removals all of them include physical violence to staff or students.

Let’s look at the data.....
Has there been an increase in the students’ positive feelings towards educational institutions?

Students who have difficulties with emotional regulation issues typically have a tougher time in school as well as having negative feelings toward schools and the staff that work in schools.

The students in this specific classroom are placed in the program through Oakland Schools and the students typically have at least three previous classroom moves before entering center based. Imagine moving three classrooms at 7 years of age?

A sense of belonging is diminished, the feeling of being misunderstood and left out becomes increasingly evident.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>I have to come</td>
<td>Calming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bored</td>
<td>Hate</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>Calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sleepy</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>Boring</td>
<td>Cool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Boring</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Were there positive outcomes that occurred that were not indicated in the statement goals?

“The students help each other out like when STUDENT tells another friend to take a deep breathe. They seem to really understand what it is and why it is important as they are teaching it to others in really appropriate times. They have become wise.”

Classroom Assistant

This section was completed through a survey. The staff that were examined for this program have all worked at the school for at least two years, having knowledge of the before and after.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE GROWTH</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.5 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.33 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student # 3 increased his RIT reading scores from 179 in the fall to 218 in the winter. Similar was seen in his math scores as well when there was an increase in RIT scores of 196 in the fall to 203 in the winter.
Giving students, especially students with prior trauma, the skills to self regulate and feel safe in school is a proven method to reach them not only at an emotional level but at an academic level as well.
The big question... HOW do you do it?
As easily as possible

But as often as possible.

I am a busy teacher and what I have included are the practices I use daily, but not all at once. My goal is to make kinder, more mindful students then they were when they walked into my classroom.
Giving credit where credit is due.

The kids have the option to flexible seating options that include, chairs, standing tables, meditation chairs, stools, lap desks, etc.

The room has light covers, string lights and a lighted diffuser.

The classroom is based upon kindness from the adult's perspective with restorative practice and NVCI de escalation techniques.
Morning Meeting
Morning Meeting

05/29/2019
PLEDGE
Think about it.....

What would you like to buy at the school store?
“TREAT EVERYBODY LIKE IT’S their birthday.”

KID PRESIDENT
Fun fact:

French author Michael Thayer published a 233-page novel which has no verbs.
Pun of the DAY
Inspiration

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07d2dXHYb94
Activity #1: Mindfulness Coloring

Mindful Colouring asks us to focus on how we choose and apply color in a design to bring our awareness to the present moment. This process is similar to meditation, we let go of any thoughts about tomorrow or yesterday, or what we are going to do when we finish.

If we catch ourselves thinking about the past or the future, we can gently bring our awareness back to what we are doing in the present moment by describing what we are doing.

Taken from “How to explain Mindful Colouring to Kids” Written by Carolyn Fitzgibbon and Nickole Webb
How did this make you feel?

How could you incorporate this into your classroom?
Activity # 2: Guided Relaxation

This fully researched program is used across the country by teachers, counselors, parents, and medical professionals as a preventive tool and intervention strategy. Easy to use and includes follow-up activities and discussion questions.

*Ready, Set, R.E.L.A.X.* is based on a two year research project teaching children 5 to 12 years old positive self-talk, relaxation and cognitive coping strategies.
How did this make you feel?

How could you incorporate this into your classroom?
Activity # 3: Mindful Minute

One of the quickest ways to check in and become mindful.
A Mindful Minute

What can I hear?
What can I smell?
What can I feel?
What can I see?
What can I taste?

Take one minute, concentrate and fill your mind with what is happening right now. All your worries will disappear and you will feel calm and relaxed.
How did this make you feel?

How could you incorporate this into your classroom?
Activity # 4: Guided Meditation

There are so many different apps, and websites and youtube channels that are dedicated to guided meditation.

This is a great tool when you, yourself needs a quick break too.

Do your research know where to go and what is safe. Build a library of go to meditations. You can use the same ones more then once.
How did this make you feel?

How could you incorporate this into your classroom?
Activity # 5: GoNoodle

For secondary teachers you may not have dabbled too much in this website, but I encourage you to explore. Today we will be looking at the mindfulness section of Go Noodle and will complete a practice.
How did this make you feel?

How could you incorporate this into your classroom?
Mind Full, or Mindful?
Questions?

For more information please contact Jessica Ghislain at ghislj01@wsdmi.org