Mindfulness in Schools

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Mindfulness is paying attention without judgment.
History of mindfulness practice and research

- First Frontier – Healthcare (MBSR)
- Second Frontier – Mental Health (MBCT)
- Third Frontier – Education
Mindful Schools™

- Evidence-based, Jon Kabat-Zinn model of 8 weeks
- Includes 16 core lessons, 15 minutes each
- Topics include: Mindful bodies, mindful listening, mindful breathing, body awareness, mindful eating, generosity/kindness, mindful test taking and more
Mindfulness helps to create space and replace impulsive reactions with thoughtful responses.
Mindfulness in the Classroom

Main outcomes
- Improved attention
- Improved impulse control/self-regulation

Additional outcomes
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Increased compassionate attitudes and behavior

Mindfulness is a bridge that connects to SEL
Mindfulness Isn’t

- a disciplinary tactic
- only calmness and happiness
- a silver bullet for everything that ails
- the absence of thought
- religious
Teacher Feedback
After the 8-week instructional lessons

95% teachers ranked the program at a 4 or higher on a 5 point scale.
Student Feedback
After the 8-week instructional lessons

- Using mindfulness to fall asleep
- “Mindfulness helps me with 1) calming down 2) not being scared 3) not being sad 4) makes me me!” –1st grader
- “…mindfulness has helped me a lot with strategies to control my anger issues…” –5th grader
- “Mindfulness has helped me with my worry brain. Thank you very much.”—3rd grader
- “I think mindfulness is a life-skill that all people should have. Everybody needs to at least try it.”—5th grader
Stories from parents and school staff

- Cafeteria
- Orthodontist
- Scary movie
- Video games
- Allergist for weekly shots
- Parents arguing
- Sibling antagonizing
- Bad dreams
- Situational anxiety
- Traumatic Situations
- Anger management
Mindfulness…

You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn how to ride them.