

Mindfulness-based Kindness Curriculum for Preschool

www.centerhealthyminds.org

Grades and setting: For preschool classrooms

Summary: Investigators brought a 12 week curriculum to schools in the midwest to improve important mental skills that are key to learning executive function (i.e., executive function), including working memory, flexible thinking and self-control, managing emotions and behaviors and paying attention (i.e., self-regulation) and kindness. Children participated twice a week for 20 minutes in stories and activities focused on developing these skills and cultivating kindness. Activities included “Kindness Garden” posters, “Peace Wands” to support conflict resolution, as well as books, songs and movement. Activities were facilitated by the investigators, with active participation by classroom teachers. The curriculum is designed around the following concepts: attention, breath and body, caring, dependence on other people, emotions, forgiveness, and gratitude. (<https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/lessons-from-creating-a-kindness-curriculum>). The curriculum is offered in English and Spanish.

Effectiveness/Outcomes: The group

The students who participated in the Kindness Curriculum showed greater improvements in social competence and earned higher report card grades in domains of learning, health, and social-emotional development, whereas the students who did not participate in the curriculum exhibited more selfish behavior over time. The students participating in the Kindness Curriculum also showed more cognitive flexibility (ability to think about multiple concepts simultaneously) and greater ability to delay of gratification. The students who benefited the most were those who were initially lowest in social competence and executive functioning.

Training: The Center for Healthy Minds does not offer support, training or consultation for use of the curriculum. They refer those interested in training in how to teach the kindness curriculum to: www.mindfulschools.org

Cost: free

Contact information and useful links:

<https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/sign-up-to-receive-the-kindness-curriculum>

research article: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4485612/>