



Mindfulness: A Non-Clinical Approach to Wellbeing

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Identity

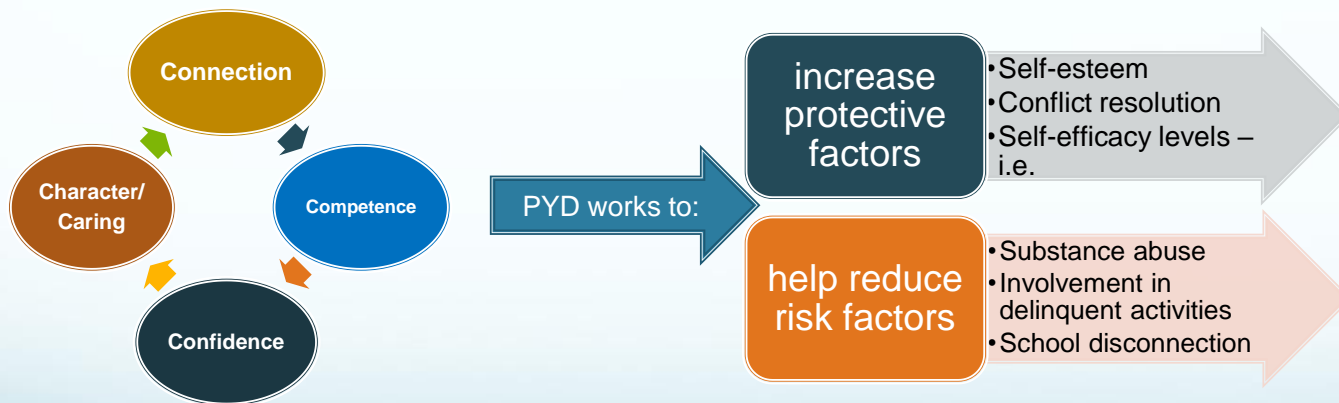
- Founded in 1998, **Identity** is a community-based organization with headquarters in Montgomery County, MD
- Works with other organizations who share our common mission to provide opportunities for youth to believe in themselves and realize their full potential
- Provide trauma and healing informed social, emotional and support services to vulnerable youth and families at three, School-Based Health and Wellness Centers and two Youth Opportunity Centers in Montgomery County.

Our Wellness Center Programs

- Served over 1,300 youth in FY17



All programs are based on the Positive Youth Development Model (PYD):



Reflection...

- What trends do we see among the youth that we serve?
- What concerns do you have about the wellbeing of the youth we serve?



Identity's Mindfulness Initiative: Goals

- Promote awareness and self-care to improve wellbeing
- Teach valuable coping and life skills including social/emotional learning, conflict resolution, communication, mindfulness
- Help students channel stress and learn to reduce their own stress levels
- Cultivate ability to make healthy choices
- Utilize restorative practices to build relationships
- Provide opportunities for youth and school staff to connect
- Reinforce the importance of strong support systems for health and wellbeing

What Is Mindfulness?

“Paying attention in a particular way: **on purpose**, in the **present moment**, and **non-judgmentally**.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

“Present-moment awareness, an open and friendly willingness to understand what is going on in and around you.”

Eline Snel



What Mindfulness Isn't

- ... a disciplinary tactic
- ... only calmness and happiness
- ... a magic pill for everything that ails
- ... the absence of thought
- ... religious

History of mindfulness practice and research

Mindfulness can be traced back thousands of years to ancient practices and traditions

Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs) have 30+ years of research & development behind them beginning with the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn and MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction)

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

Benefits of Mindfulness

Supported by 30+ years of research and current neuroscience among adults, and a growing literature with youth



Cognitive Outcomes

Better **focus**
and
concentration



Social-emotional Skills

Improved **self regulation** as well as **compassionate attitudes** and **behavior**



Well Being

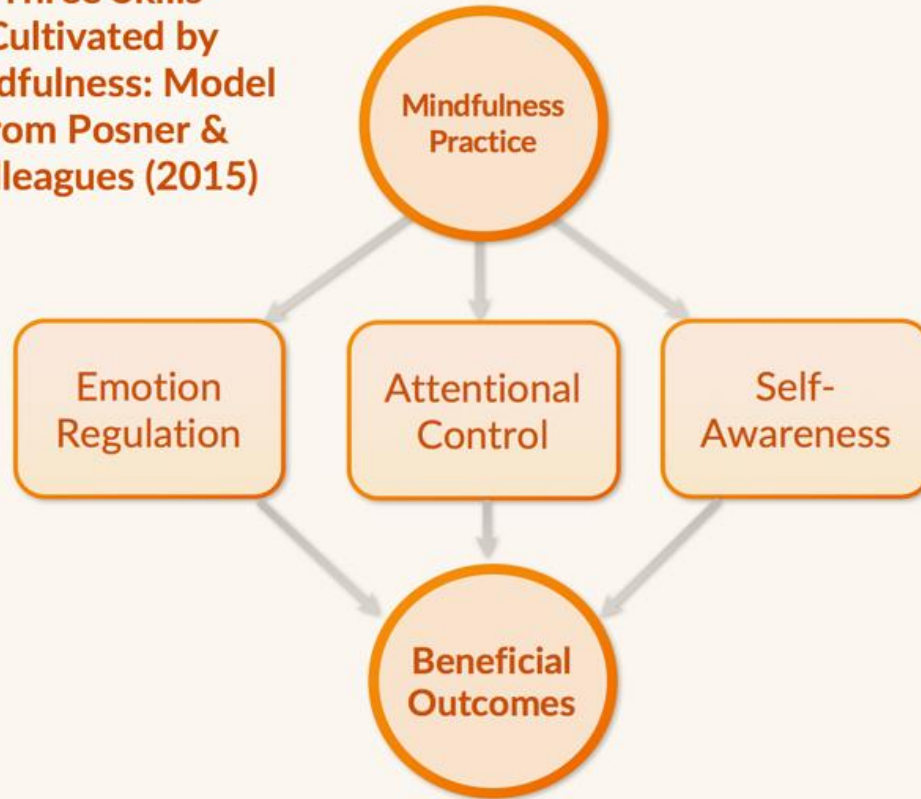
Decreased **stress, anxiety,** and **depression**

Research finds benefits for educators randomly assigned to mindfulness training

- Demonstrated reduced **stress** and **burnout**
- Reported greater **efficacy** in doing their jobs
- Had more **emotionally supportive** and **better organized classrooms** (based on independent observations)



**Three Skills
Cultivated by
Mindfulness: Model
from Posner &
Colleagues (2015)**



Lunch detention total # of students

76 students exposed to Mindfulness

Lunch detention repeat # of students

21 attended 2 times
2 attended 3 or more times

Jan to May 2017

Jan to May 2017

Principals Mindfulness Forum

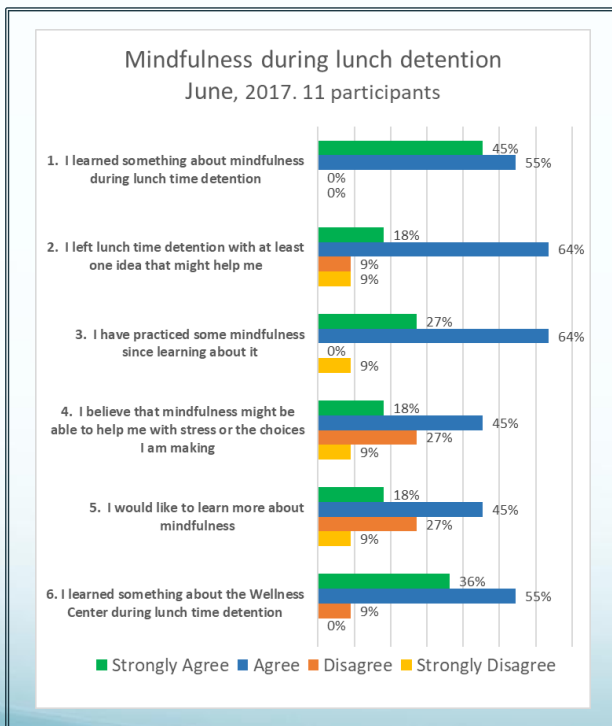
About 40 staff, students and parents attended

Mindfulness Mondays

Between 3 to 7 students regularly attended



Wellness Center Focus Group “Mindfulness at Lunch Detention” Wheaton High School Evaluation Report, June 2017. 11 participants



In learning about mindfulness, what mattered most to you?

- ✓ “My actions and how it would affect me in the long run”
- ✓ “Being calm”
- ✓ “Taking time to control myself”
- ✓ “Listening before acting”
- ✓ “Stress relieving”

Which best describes you?				
Caucasian (Non-Hispanic)	African American/Black	Hispanic/Latino	African Origin	Other/No answer
0	6	2	1	2
Gender				
Female		Male		No answer
5		6		0

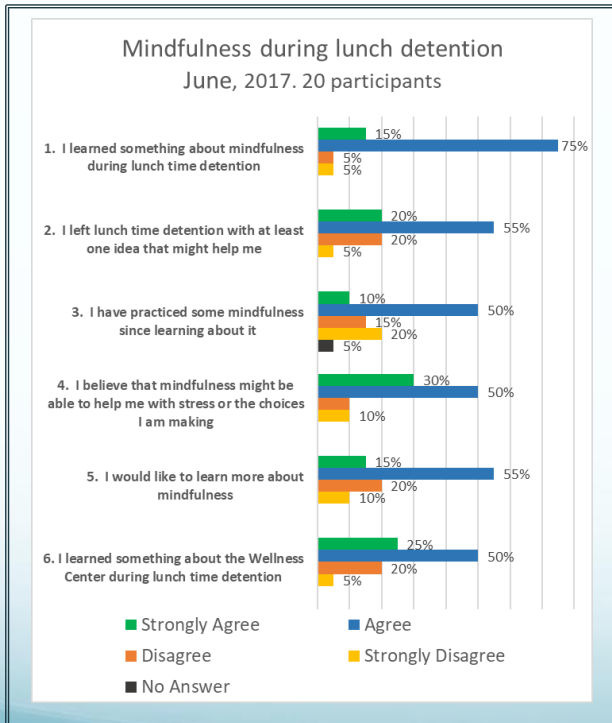
**Attended two or more sessions
 of lunch time detention**



Wellness Center Focus Group

“Mindfulness at Lunch Detention” Wheaton High School

Evaluation Report, June 2017. 20 participants



In learning about mindfulness, what mattered most to you?

- ✓ “How to relax and stay calm ”
- ✓ “Not being stress ”
- ✓ “Think before you say something ”
- ✓ “Help me to study more ”
- ✓ “The relaxation and the time for quietness”

Which best describes you?				
Caucasian (Non-Hispanic)	African American/ Black	Hispanic/ Latino	African Origin	Other/No answer
1	8	7	2	2
Gender				
Female		Male		No answer
0		18		2

Attended one session of lunch time detention

GHS Trojan Experience

88 rising 9th graders exposed to Mindfulness & Yoga during week-long summer program

Biweekly mindfulness practice for students

Started October 17th
25 core students; up to 10-12/session

Mindfulness in classrooms

24 students, 16 sessions, 10-15 min/wk
Special Ed resource class; 1 class period/wk; 21 students

July 2017

August - present

Intro to Mindfulness for Teachers

34 teachers attend at GHS
17 teachers attend at WHS

Regular mindfulness practice for teachers

Five, one hour sessions on half day

Conflict resolution circles w/mindfulness



What teachers are saying

Questions from “Introduction to mindfulness” - Evaluation	GHS Teachers (N:33)	WHS Teachers (N:17)
Are you interested in learning more about mindfulness?	97% said Yes	100% said Yes
Would you be interested in meeting with peers to build and support your own mindfulness and/or meditation practice?	88% said Yes	82% said Yes
Would you like help introducing mindfulness to your students and establishing simple (& short) mindfulness routines in your classroom?	82% Said Yes	82% Said Yes
Would you support further mindfulness initiatives for staff and students?	97% Said Yes	94% Said Yes



What teachers are saying

“It was always beneficial to me personally to start off every Monday with some mindfulness. It helped prepare me mentally and emotionally for class and for the rest of my week.”

“With more time it would have also been great to have students write/reflect more and share this out.”

“I personally benefited from the mindfulness sessions as I reminded myself to take deep breaths especially when interacting with challenging students, to journal to reflect on my days and remember what I am grateful for.”



What students are saying

“The main thing I learned is taking deep breaths is a good way to help in stressful situations.”

“I feel more calm and aware about my surroundings.”

“Mindfulness helped me in school to take a minute, and relax and think stuff through.”

“I would most definitely recommend mindfulness because as you grow up you deal with a lot of things and sometimes you just need a break.”

Practicing Mindfulness



Where do we go from here?

Please share a reflection, learning
and/or question



Mindfulness Resources

The Movement of Meditation Replacing Detention in Schools.- Newsweek

<http://www.newsweek.com/education-meditation-after-school-program-holistic-life-504747>

Why breathing and movement exercises – and quiet time – belong in the classroom.

<http://health.usnews.com/wellness/mind/articles/2016-12-08/mindfulness-in-schools-when-meditation-replaces-detention>

