Mindfulness in Education

**Mindfulness Practice for Students**

Students in our fast-paced, technologically-driven world may internalize increasing amounts of stress. Poverty, highly competitive schools and test-taking, trauma in the home, anxiety or addictions can compound such stress. Students who are stressed are not ready to learn.

Mindfulness, when practiced regularly, can help protect developing brains from the harmful effects of excessive stress. Mindfulness can contribute to the development of cognitive and performance skills and executive function. It can help young people pay greater attention, be more focused, think in more innovative ways, use existing knowledge more effectively, improve working memory, and enhance planning, problem solving, and reasoning skills. Over time, mindfulness practice can help students judge themselves and others less, and be more connected to each other.

To learn more about the benefits of mindfulness practice in education and the Mindfulness In Schools Project, please visit [http://mindfulnessinschools.org/](http://mindfulnessinschools.org/). Katherine Weare, Professor of Education at the University of Southampton, England; Mindfulness In Schools Project on Mindfulness practice with youth:

**Mindfulness Practice for Educators**

“The development of the pre-frontal cortex appears to be profoundly influenced by interpersonal experiences. This is why our early relationships have such a significant impact on our lives.”

Daniel J. Siegel MD; UCLA; neuroscientist

Teaching can often be stressful. In addition to being responsible for teaching content and focusing on test scores, educators may experience compassion fatigue as they navigate and support the range of emotions involved with their students. Self-care is key. Mindfulness and other nurturing practices can be pivotal in maintaining equilibrium. Mindfulness training decreases burnout and increases empathy and self-compassion.

When educators practice mindfulness, they develop skills to help themselves stay calm and nurtured. Through this self-care, they can increase their capacity for meeting the needs of their students. When we are compassionate with ourselves, we can be more present and empathic with students. Young people recognize mentors who really listen and are present with them. This kind of compassionate presence creates a feeling of being ‘seen’ and can have a lifetime of benefit for a young person.