



## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### The Effects of a Mindfulness-Based Education Program on Pre- and Early Adolescents' Well-Being and Social and Emotional Competence (2010)

**MindUP™** is an evidence-based program grounded in neuroscience, mindful awareness, social and emotional learning, and positive psychology, providing children with the knowledge and tools they need to manage stress, regulate emotions and face the challenges of the 21st century with optimism, resilience and compassion.



#### What did researchers examine?

In this study, Drs. Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor, examined: (1) the degree to which the MindUP™ program was implemented as intended, (2) teachers' perceptions of the benefits and challenges with implementing the MindUP™ program, and (3) the influence of the MindUP™ program in promoting students' social and emotional competence and well-being.

#### How did the researchers conduct the study?

Before starting the program, students completed a pre-survey that asked them questions about:

- optimism
- general school concept (for example, I am good at school subjects)
- general self-concept (for example, I like the way I am)
- positive affect (for example, happiness, joy)
- negative affect (for example, anger, fear, sadness)

Teachers completed a survey assessing each student in the following four areas:

- social and emotional competence (for example, empathy, compassion)
- aggressive behaviors (for example, fights)
- oppositional behaviors/dysregulation (for example, easily irritated)
- attention and concentration (for example, pays attention, trouble with a task)

MindUP™ classrooms and comparison classrooms were recruited from different schools to avoid any program contagion. Program teachers then implemented the MindUP™ curriculum and kept track of how many of the program components they implemented with their students. Comparison teachers implemented the regular social responsibility curriculum. At the end of the program, students and teachers completed post-surveys. Teachers also gave feedback about their experience of delivering the program.

*Note that in this study, the program was called Mindfulness Education (ME), which was a previous version of the current MindUP™ program.*

#### Research Location

Large urban public school district in British Columbia, Canada

#### Study Design

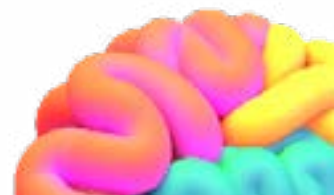
Quasi-experimental

#### Research Participants

- 6 classrooms that received MindUP™ (139 students)
- 6 classrooms that did not receive MindUP™ (107 students)
- All students were in 4th to 7th grade (ages 9-12)
- 48% of students were female
- 57% learned English as their first language. 23% learned an East Asian language; and the remaining 20% included a wide-range of first languages (for example, Spanish, Russian, Polish)

#### MindUP™ Teacher Training for this study

- One day intensive MindUP™ training session facilitated by MindUP™ Certified Trainers
- Bi-weekly consultations with one of the developers of the program





## What did the researchers find?

### Program Implementation

MindUP™ teachers reported implementing an average of 75% of lesson components. They reported high implementation of core program exercises (brain breaks) and all reported implementation of extension activities in their classrooms.

### Program Outcomes

Compared to students who *did not* participate in MindUP™, students in MindUP™ classrooms reported significant:

- increases in optimism
- improvements in general self-concept (4th and 5th graders only)

Compared to control classrooms, teachers in the MindUP™ classrooms reported that their students exhibited significant:

- improvements in social-emotional competence
- improvements in attention and concentration
- decreases in aggression
- decreases in oppositional/dysregulated behaviour

### Teachers' Perception of MindUP™

Teachers who implemented MindUP™ perceived the program to be both effective and beneficial to their students. Comments from teachers included:

*"I noticed considerable growth in my students' awareness of their place in the world around them and their ability to articulate their feelings and thinking in class discussions."*

*"Helped the class become more cohesive and I feel the students became more aware of their inner potential."*

## Final Summary

This first study of MindUP™ provided encouraging evidence of a modest positive effect on MindUP™ students, in the areas of optimism, general self-concept, attention and control, along with decreases in aggression and oppositional/dysregulated behavior.

The research findings indicated that teachers were very positive about the program and saw the benefits and effectiveness of the program for their students.

### Original Research Article

Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Lawlor, M. S. (2010). The effects of a mindfulness-based education program on pre- and early adolescents' well-being and social and emotional competence. *Mindfulness, 1*, 137–151.

[Access the original research article here.](#)

### About the Authors

**Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, Ph.D.**  
Professor and NoVo Foundation Endowed Chair of Social and Emotional Learning, Department of Psychology, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Molly Stewart Lawlor, Ph.D.**  
Director of Research and Curriculum at the Goldie Hawn Foundation

### Project Funding

This research was funded by grants from the Goldie Hawn Foundation and the Human Early Partnership (HELP) at the University of British

