



RESEARCH SUMMARY

Improving Young Children's Adaptive Skills and Behaviours Through MindUP™ (2020)

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, researchers examined the impact of MindUP™ on kindergarten students' social, emotional, and adaptive behavioural skills.

How did the researchers conduct the study?

Educators in the intervention group received MindUP™ training and implemented MindUP™ programming in their classrooms. Educators in the comparison group followed their usual classroom practices to meet the expectations of the regular curriculum.

Educators in both the MindUP™ and comparison groups assessed the behaviour of their students at the beginning and the end of the school year using two measures:

- (1) the Behavior Assessment System for Children Teacher Rating Scales (BASC-3 TRS)
- (2) the Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function-Preschool and Child Versions (BRIEF-P; BRIEF-2).

The researchers analysed the data from the two above measures which included the following areas of assessment:

- Behavioural Symptoms
- Internalizing Problems
- Externalizing Problems
- Adaptive Skills
- Executive Functioning

They then compared the results of MindUP™ students to those students who did not receive MindUP™.

Research Location

A large school district in Southwestern Ontario, Canada

Study Design

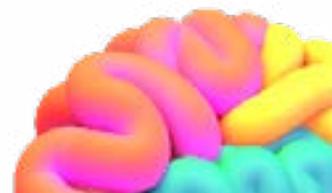
Quasi-experimental

Research Participants

- 23 classrooms in 10 MindUP™ schools (261 students)
- 19 classrooms in 7 schools that did not receive MindUP™ (323 students)
- All students were in kindergarten (ages 3-5)
- 51% of students were female
- 30% were non-Caucasian

MindUP™ Teacher Training for this study

- One day intensive MindUP™ training session facilitated by MindUP™ Certified Trainers.
- Full day extension training partway through the school year





What did the researchers find?

Overall, students who received MindUP™ programming demonstrated noticeable improvements in all five outcome areas.

Specifically, researchers found:

1. a reduction in behavioural problems (measured using ratings of hyperactivity, aggression, depression, attention, atypicality and withdrawal)
2. a reduction in externalizing problems (measured using ratings of hyperactivity, aggression, and conduct problems)
3. a reduction in internalizing problems (measured using ratings of anxiety, depression and somatization)
4. an increase in adaptive skills (including measures of adaptability, functional communication, social skills, and study skills)
5. a reduction in executive functioning deficits (including measures of ability to initiate, plan/organize, monitor, shift attention, and control emotions)

While both MindUP™ and the comparison group improved in adaptive skills and executive functioning, the MindUP™ group improved much more rapidly. Across the five outcomes, MindUP™ had the biggest impact on reducing executive functioning deficits. This finding is consistent with earlier research that found similar impacts among older students who received MindUP™ programming.

There were no differences in outcomes between boys and girls in the study, which indicates that boys and girls may benefit equally from MindUP™ programming.

Final Summary

Earlier studies on mindfulness-informed programs have shown positive outcomes for students, but few have evaluated outcomes with young children. Students who received MindUP™ improved in all five areas, demonstrating increases in adaptive skills and fewer behavioural problems. Findings suggest that MindUP™ programming can help young children develop positive social, emotional, and cognitive skills.



Original Research Article

Crooks, C.V., Bax, K., Delaney, A., Kim, H., & Shokoohi, M. (2020) Impact of MindUP™ among young children: Improvements in behavioral problems, adaptive skills, and executive functioning. *Mindfulness* 11, 2433–2444.

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

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