THE EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS ON STUDENTS’ ATTENTION

An Action Research Report by Rose Bringus
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Purpose of the Research

- This action research project examined the effects of mindfulness and meditation on attention among elementary students.

- Central to the Montessori pedagogy is the idea of deep concentration.

- I examined if mental and physical training fostered the ability to concentrate in the classroom.
Background

- Participants: A Montessori classroom composed of 26 children ages nine to twelve.

- Three days of baseline data. Four week intervention with data collection.

- Data collection methods: Observational records, journal notes, group discussions and questionnaires.
The Interventions: Mindfulness and Meditation

- Mindful movements in the morning. Modeled from Thich Nhat Hanh’s *Ten Mindful Movements*.

- Daily meditation in the afternoon. Silent meditation to instrumental music for three to five minutes.
Results

- The percent of on-task behavior did not increase with the implementation of mindfulness practices.

- However, children reported through group dialogue and questionnaires that mindfulness practices had a positive impact on their daily lives.

- Children also believed mindfulness practices increased their ability to focus.
Questionnaire Response: Mindfulness practices help me focus.
Results

- Children frequently used breathing techniques to focus and they plan to use mindfulness techniques in the future, particularly in competitive events.

Group Dialogue Question: How will you use mindfulness in the future to improve concentration?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency of Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before competitive events</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before dance or sports</td>
<td>8</td>
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What does this mean for the classroom?

- Children enjoy mindfulness and mediation.

- Meditation is a practice. Improvements in attention may appear over time.

- Each child will find different techniques beneficial.

- Mindfulness may be useful in helping children learn conflict management as empathy increases with continued practice.
Questions?