



This Amazing
COUNSELOR
is loved and appreciated

FRANK AND BILLY
YEAGER CENTER



SCHOOL COUNSELOR
LEADERSHIP NETWORK
RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Welcome BACK
to SCHOOL
MORENO MUSTANGS

SCHOOL COUNSELORS:
BUILDING BETTER HUMANS

COUNSELORS CAN DO
VIRTUALLY
anything.

BE
FEARLESS
IN THE PURSUIT
OF WHAT SETS
YOUR SOUL ON
FIRE

Welcome!
your
counselors

SCHOOL COUNSELORS
RESILIENT AND RELENTLESSLY
LEADING CHANGE

Help Students Cultivate Mindfulness

By: Sarah Kirk

About Me

- Sarah Kirk
- School Counselor Specialist at the Oklahoma State Department of Education
- Elementary School Counselor for 8 years
 - Received RAMP designation in 2019
 - Trauma-Informed
 - PBIS
 - Responsive Classroom
 - Conscious Discipline
 - Restorative Practices
 - ChildLight Yoga and Mindfulness for Children
- ASCA Board of Directors
- PhD Student in Counselor Education and Supervision
- Advocate for School Counseling
- I love to connect with school counselors!
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After attending this session you should be able to:

- Define mindfulness and how it can be used in the educational setting.
- Learn about research-based supports that work to increase mindfulness, decrease anxiety, and decrease problematic behaviors. These supports can be used as individual student support, in small group lessons, in classroom instruction or as tiered systems of support.
- Implement supports and interventions to create happier, more mindful students right away.

The Why.

- What does the research say?
 - Two out of three children under the age of 17 report exposure to different forms of violence, crime, and abuse (Finkelhor, Turner, Shattuck, & Hamby, 2015)
 - From 2007 to 2017, suicide rates among persons aged 10 to 24 raised 76 percent (Curtin & Heron, 2019)
 - 17% increase in Anxiety Disorder diagnoses of young people in the past 10 years
 - 1 in 8 children experience anxiety disorders (even more than that experience feelings of anxiety)
- What do we see?
 - More and more students are entering school unable to manage emotions
 - Often this is presented as disruptive behaviors or anxious behaviors
- *This is adding another tool in their toolkit!*

Signs of Anxiety:

- Increased visits to the nurse, counselor, etc.
- Sleepiness
- Headaches, stomachaches
- Depression
- Overthinking
- Irritability

It's like an allergic reaction to a casserole-- we have to figure out the underlying issue causing the problematic behavior

The goal is not necessarily to take away the stress and anxiety but instead to teach coping mechanisms and teach the student to manage it.

when you feel ANXIOUS

@POSITIVELYPRESENT



Image by: @PositivelyPresent

The What.

- Jon Kabat Zinn defines mindfulness as “the awareness that arises from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, in Purser, 2015)
 - It is noticing whatever experience you are having including all thoughts, feelings or physical sensations
 - It is not the same as meditation but meditation can be used to increase mindfulness

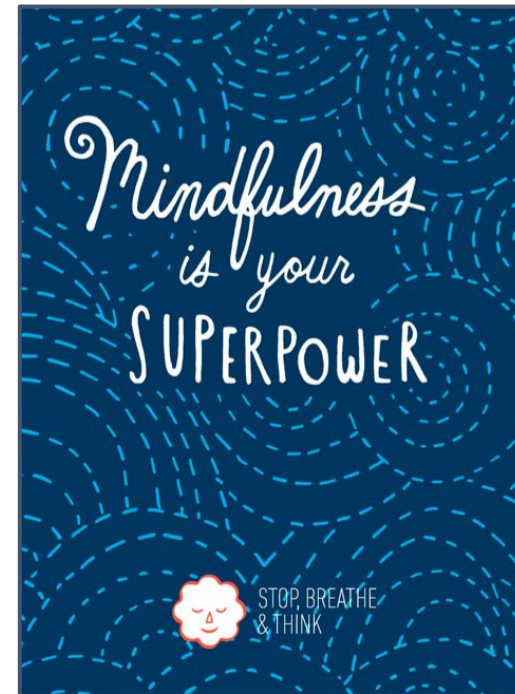


Image by: Stop Breathe & Think

- But how do we do it?
- What does it look like?
- How do we implement mindfulness into our counseling programs?

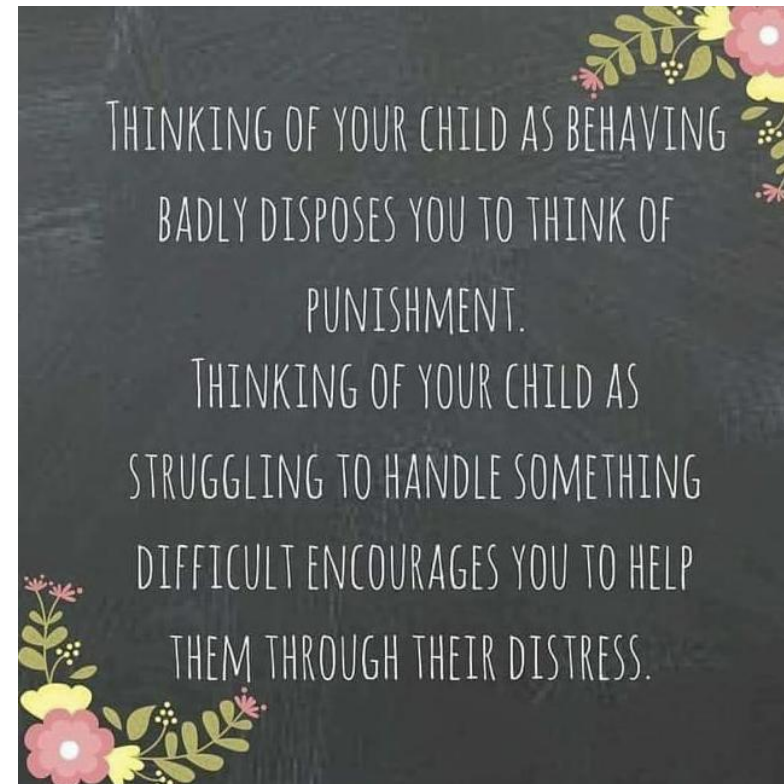
We can all benefit from being more mindful:



Image by: @avamariedoodles

Mind Shift-- Our language matters:

- Behaving badly vs. struggling to handle something difficult
- What is wrong with them vs. what happened to them
- He is lacking ____ (the missing skill)
- She is reacting with adrenaline/survival skills
- How can I help them learn _____ (the missing skill)?



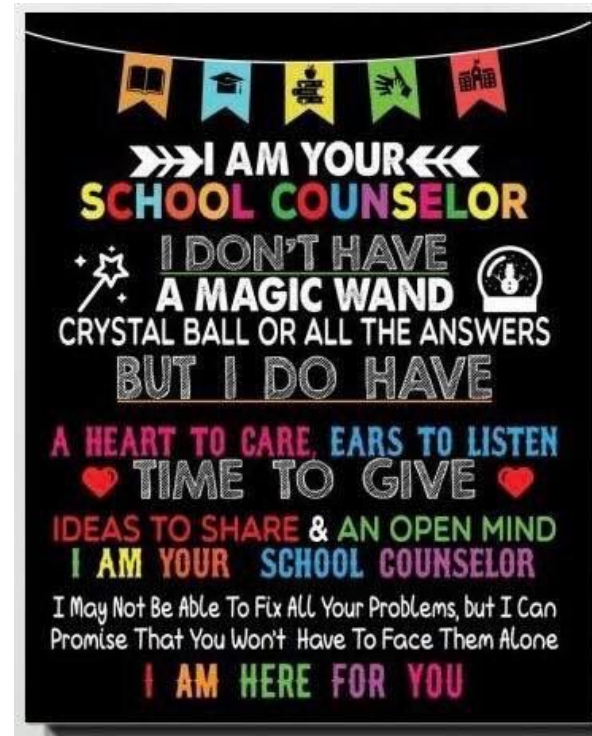
Misbehavior is a caution sign pointing to skills children are missing. Punishing behavior does not stop it. The only thing that will change behavior is to **teach** a new skill to replace the troublesome behavior.



ConsciousDiscipline®

The How.

- Preventative vs. Reactive
- Most interventions are less effective if only used reactively.
- The goal is to teach ALL students these skills so that they can then retrieve the skills when needed.
 - Trying to teach them and use them during a crisis is not likely to be effective



Tiered Approach:

- Mindfulness fits at each tier
 - Tier One- whole school approach, educating staff
 - Tier Two- Small groups, more targeted approach
 - Tier Three- Individual students, more individualized approach



Model of Implementation:

- School-wide Assemblies
- Classroom Counseling Lessons
 - Expectations
- Small Groups
- Individual skill-building
- Morning Meetings
- Targeted Intervention
- After school or before school program or club

Easy-to-Implement Resources:

- Today I will share many supports you can put in place to increase mindfulness, decrease anxiety, and decrease disruptive behaviors.
- The goal is to connect with at least one and take it back to your students.
- Some of these ideas might also be great to take back for your teachers/other staff members. Modeling!
- Remember, we cannot say we are trauma-informed if we are not implementing trauma-informed practices. We also cannot say we are doing what is best for kids if we are not thinking outside of the box and putting supports in place for our kids. “This is how I have always done it” does not work.

Lizard Brain vs. Wizard Brain:

- We often see students in fight, flight, freeze
 - This is like a lizard basking in the sun until he reacts from a perceived threat-- the “lizard brain” is activated and information cannot pass through the prefrontal cortex.
 - The “wizard brain” (the wise decision making part of the brain) cannot react because it is blocked by the emotions of the “lizard brain”
 - The “lizard brain” is great for protection (skills not often needed at school). Not so great for focus, decision making, and reason (skills needed at school)
- The interventions we will be discussing today help to train the “wizard brain” to respond instead of the “lizard brain” reacting.
- This is a great thing to teach students too!

Calm Down Corners:

- Do your teachers have a take a break spot in their room? Do they have a calm down space?
 - These are two different things.
 - If an educator has ever said “I need you to go take a break” and directed the student to the take a break spot, it is NOT a calming corner
 - A calming corner is never, ever forced on a student or seen as punitive.
 - How can we help teachers transition from having Take a Break spots to Calming Corners? (Or at least have both)
- What could you have in a Calming Corner?
 - Calming Bottle
 - Manipulatives
 - Sensory Tools
 - Noise Cancelling Headphones
 - Books about feelings
 - Journals

Five Whys:

- Ask why five times to get to the root of the problem
 - Example:
 - Why did you choose to hit the other student?
 - I was mad at him.
 - Why were you mad at him?
 - He took the ball I was playing with.
 - Why did he take the ball you were playing with?
 - Because he wanted the ball.
 - Why did he want the ball?
 - Because he wanted to play too.
 - Why did he want to play too?
 - Because the game is fun and he wanted to be included.
 - (Then you can process through the root of the problem-- including others)

Breathing Techniques:

- Candle/Flower Breathing
- Dragon Breath Breathing
- Belly Breathing
- In the Good and Out the Bad
- Five Finger Breathing

5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Technique:

- Have the student name:
 - Five things you see
 - Four things you can touch
 - Three things you can hear
 - Two things you can smell
 - One thing you can taste
- This is a great grounding technique.
- Really beneficial for anxiety
(specifically test or performance anxiety)

Mindful Writing:

- Journaling
- Crush the Can'ts
 - Write what you cannot do and then crush it (crumble it up)
- Brain Dump
- Positive Self-Talk Writing
 - I am...
 - I can...
- Worry Journals
- Positive Word Wall
 - As a class, add positive self-talk words to your word wall
- Daily quotes
- Circle of Control

Mindful Writing:

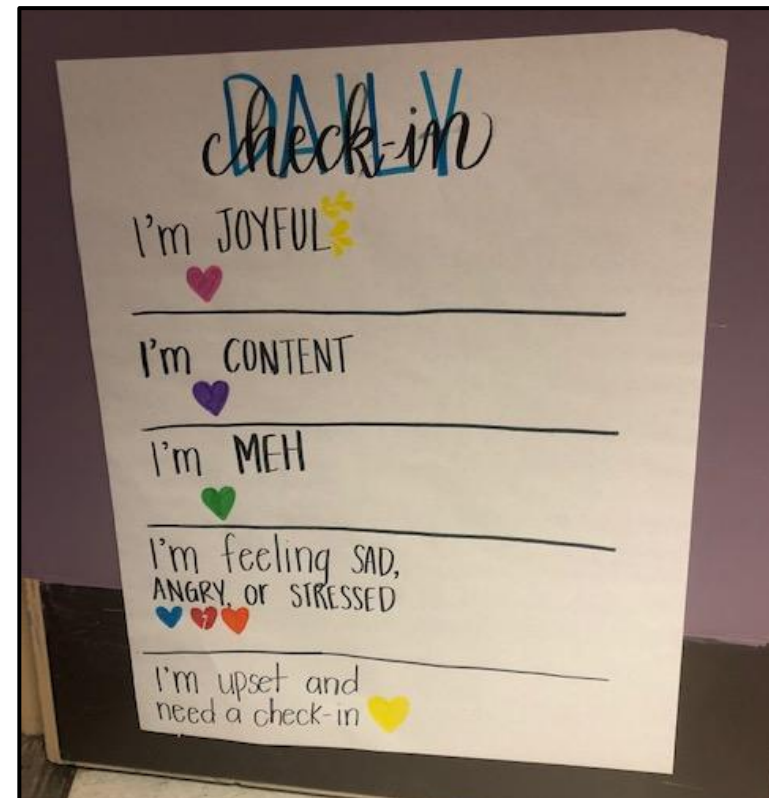
- Let's practice!
 - **Who** could you share this information with?
 - **What** is one thing that you hope to take back to your school?
 - **When** can you commit to continue learning about mindfulness?
 - **Where** do you feel trauma or stress in your body?
 - **How** can you add mindfulness to your life?
 - **Why** do you feel implementing mindfulness in schools is important?

Mindful Movement:

- Desk Yoga
- Chair Yoga
- Yoga Card Decks
- Rainbow Walk
- Five Senses Walk
- Cosmic Yoga (on YouTube)

Daily Check-In:

- Each morning
- Sticky note with name on back
- Ah has



Apps Available:

- Breathe2Relax
- Calm
- Happify
- Mind Yeti
- Stop, Breathe, and Think
 - Can get a lifetime Premium version of this (usually \$299 a year) because you are a teacher-- just sign up using your school email address
 - <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/educators/>

Other Ideas:

- Relaxing Music
 - [Mindful Music Moments](#)
- Brain Breaks
- Community Circles/Morning Meetings
- Mindful Eating
- “Find a Focus”
- “Mindful Mornings”
 - Could be a club
 - Morning announcements
 - Small Group
 - Visit classes



My favorite resources!

Things to Keep in Mind:

*Adding Mindfulness with
a Trauma-Informed Lens*

- Do not force students to participate
- Do not require that students close their eyes
- Do not expect students to be silent
- Start simple-- deep breathing is usually a good start!
- Meet the child where they are at-- Are they already triggered?
- Focus on the relationship with the child

Results

The benefits of mindfulness for students includes improvements in attention and focus, cognitive development, behavior in school, empathy & perspective taking, social-skills, emotional regulation, reduced anxiety and stress, post-traumatic symptoms and depression (Mindful Schools, 2019).

Specifically, when social emotional learning programs include a mindfulness component, students have enhanced emotion regulation skills (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015).



Research Supports Yoga & Mindfulness in Schools

There's been a lot of interest in recent years about the potential benefits of implementing yoga and mindfulness in schools. While research on school-based yoga and mindfulness is in its early stages, the initial results are promising.

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Mental Health and Resilience

Reduces anxiety,¹ problematic stress responses² and depression.³ Improves resilience⁴ and coping frequency.⁵



¹ Noggle (2012) ³ Sibinga (2015) ⁵ White (2012)
² Mendelson (2010) ⁴ Sarkissian (2018)

Social-Emotional Skills

Improves social-emotional outcomes⁶ such as self-regulation⁷ and social skills.⁸ Reduces problem behaviors such as suspensions and disciplinary referrals,⁹ bullying¹⁰ and hostility.¹¹



⁶ Maynard (2017) ⁸ Fishbein (2016) ¹⁰ Dentello (2017)
⁷ Razza (2015) ⁹ Bakosh (2015) ¹¹ Frank (2014)

Physical Health

Increases physical well-being¹² and physical fitness¹³ as well as flexibility, balance and strength.¹⁴



¹² Chen (2014) ¹³ Purchil (2016) ¹⁴ Folletto (2016)

School /Classroom Climate

Cultivates positive climates by fostering beneficial mental, social-emotional, academic and physical outcomes for educators and students.^{22, 23, 24}



²² Roeser (2012) ²³ Wisner (2014) ²⁴ Kiatly (2017)

Academic Performance

Enhances focus and attention^{15, 16} and supports positive academic outcomes such as improving grades^{9, 17} and test scores,¹⁸ and preventing declines in Grade Point Average (GPA).¹⁹



⁹ Bakosh (2015) ¹⁶ Tarrasch (2018) ¹⁸ Bellinger (2015)
¹⁵ Mak (2018) ¹⁷ Bennett (2016) ¹⁹ Blutzer (2015)

Teacher Well-Being

Educators who participate in yoga-and-mindfulness-based training experience improvements in mood, classroom management, physical symptoms, blood pressure and cortisol awakening response²⁰ as well as teaching efficacy, well-being, stress reduction and burnout prevention.²¹



²⁰ Harris (2016) ²¹ Jennings (2013)

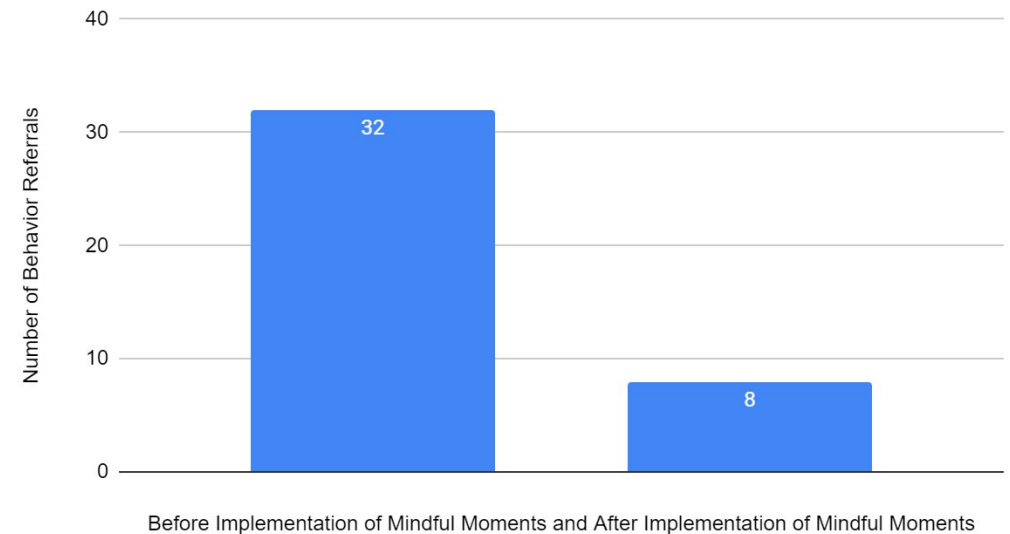
For more, visit www.yoga4classrooms.com to download the free *Research Repository: Yoga, Meditation and Mindfulness for Children, Adolescents and In Schools*, sponsored by Yoga 4 Classrooms®/ChildLight Yoga®



Data Collection

- Outcome data results from mindful moments
- Perception data results from staff
- Process data results from yoga club

Mindful Moments Intervention



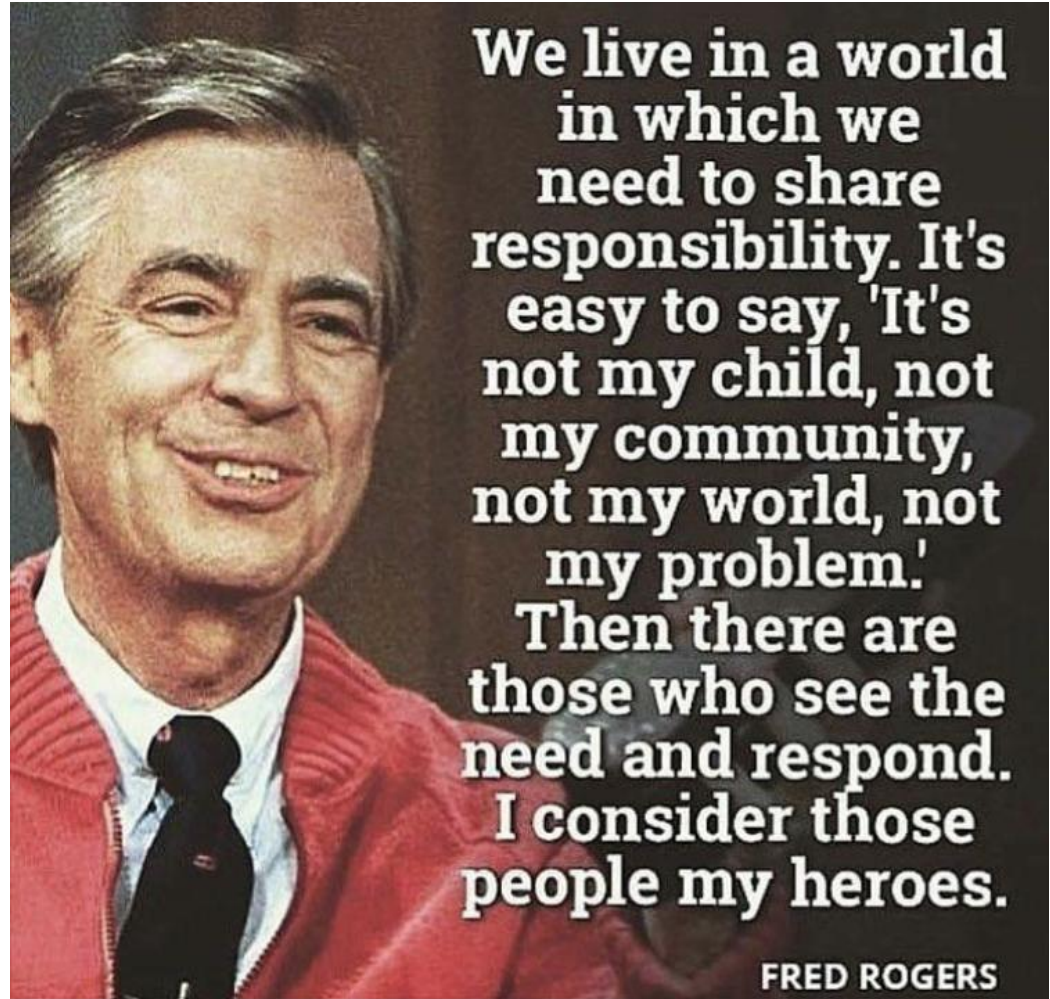
A hand with gold-painted nails holds a blue card against a pink background. The card features a white quote. The background is decorated with colorful paper clips: a yellow one in the top left, a red one in the top right, and a gold one on the right side. A teal paper clip is partially visible at the bottom right.

“YOU’RE GOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
A LOT OF TIMES IT WON’T BE HUGE,
IT WON’T BE VISIBLE EVEN.
BUT IT WILL MATTER
JUST THE SAME.”

- Commissioner James Gordon -

- [My website](#)
- [Why Mindfulness and Trauma-Informed Teaching Don't Always Go Together](#)
- [Why Teachers Say Practicing Mindfulness is Transforming Their Work](#)
- [Stop, Breathe, Think](#)
- [Yoga 4 Classrooms](#)
- [ChildLight Yoga for Children](#)
- [Dr. Dan Siegel](#)
- [Mindful.org](#)
- [MindfulSchools.org](#)

Resources



**We live in a world
in which we
need to share
responsibility. It's
easy to say, 'It's
not my child, not
my community,
not my world, not
my problem.'**

**Then there are
those who see the
need and respond.
I consider those
people my heroes.**

FRED ROGERS

Thank you!!

Never hesitate to reach out!!

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