

# WHY PRACTICE MINDFULNESS?

## BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

- **Improves mental health.** (Biegel, Brown, Schapiro, & Schubert, 2009)
- **Alleviates depressive symptoms.** (Raes, Griffith, Van der Gucht, & Williams 2013)
- **Improves emotional regulation and self acceptance while decreasing negative affect.** (Broderick & Metz 2009)
- **Enhances focus and attention.** (Napoli, Krech, & Holley 2005)
- **Improves standardized test scores and working memory.** (Mrazek, Franklin, Phillips, Baird, & Schooler, 2013)
- **Increases executive function.** (Flook, et al. 2010)
- **Improves social skills.** (Biegel & Brown 2012)

### DATA FROM OUR PILOT PROGRAM AT SMILIE MEMORIAL SCHOOL

REPORT CARD AREA	2011-2012 school year % scoring 3 or 4 (before full implementation)	2012-2013 school year % scoring 3 or 4
Works cooperatively 1 (fall)	50%	81%
Works cooperatively 2 (spring)	67%	82%
Completes quality work independently 1	49%	70%
Completes quality work independently 2	46%	64%
Active Listener 1	60%	79%
Active Listener 2	66%	79%

During the 2011-12 school year, teachers and the administrator at Smilie Memorial School, a preK-4 school in Bolton, Vermont, helped develop the Modern Mindfulness Program. The program was modified following feedback from students and staff, who then used the 5 minute program daily with students during the 2012-13 school year. Data was collected through 60 student report cards, principal behavioral intervention records, and pre and post teacher surveys.

## DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS AT PRINCIPAL LEVEL

2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR  
(before mindfulness)

**125**

interventions

2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR  
(partial implementation)

**42**

interventions

2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR  
(full implementation)

**20**

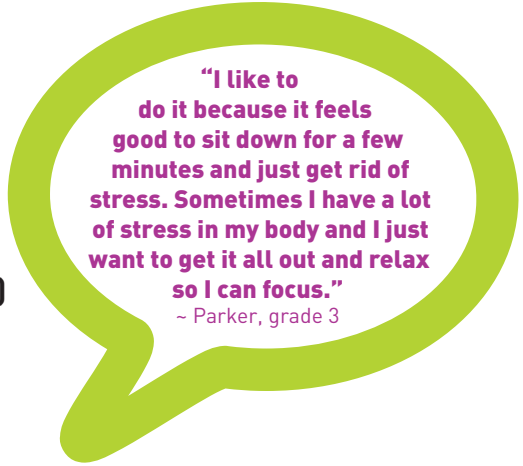
interventions

# WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

A FOCUSED AND RELAXED ATTENTION.  
A NATURAL ABILITY THAT CAN BE CULTIVATED WITH PRACTICE.

## TECHNIQUES PRACTICED IN MODERN MINDFULNESS:

- RELAX** Focusing on letting go of tension
- LISTEN** Hearing sounds around us (especially teachers and peers)
- ACHIEVE** Using imagination constructively to create and accomplish positive and realistic goals



## MINDFULNESS ENHANCES SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND ACADEMIC LEARNING<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SCHONER-REICHL, & LAWLOR, 2010; SEMPLE, LEE, ROSA, & MILLER, 2010

### MINDFULNESS TEACHES THE SKILLS BENEATH THE BEHAVIORS TAUGHT IN MANY CURRICULA AND COMPLEMENTS<sup>2</sup>:

**SELF AWARENESS MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE:**

**RELAX**  
When we relax we are open to seeing how our thoughts and emotions affect our bodies and our actions.

**SELF-MANAGEMENT MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE:**

**RELAX**  
As we practice relaxing we learn how to control our emotions rather than be controlled by them.

**SOCIAL AWARENESS MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE:**

**LISTEN**  
When we open to listening to others we can learn from people with different ideas and beliefs.

**RELATIONSHIP SKILLS MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE:**

**LISTEN**  
When we practice listening we can engage with our teachers and peers and communicate effectively.

**DECISION MAKING MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE:**

**ACHIEVE**  
When we practice setting and achieving goals we learn how the choices we make affect ourselves and others.

<sup>2</sup> CASEL's 5 Core SEL Competencies: <http://www.casel.org/socialandemotionalllearning/corecompetencies/>

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