



A Counselor-Delivered Mindfulness and Social-Emotional Learning Intervention for Early Childhood Educators

SUMMARY

This article explores the effectiveness of a counselor-led early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) intervention and its impact on the lived experiences of a small group of early childhood educators. The intervention consisted of 12 weeks of one-on-one counselor-teacher consultation using social-emotional learning and mindfulness-based interventions. There was also a mindfulness intervention group-consultation component with the teacher participants. Participants reported feeling an increased ability to handle classroom related stressors while also experiencing changes in their beliefs toward themselves as educators and individuals. These beliefs extended beyond the classroom as participants also reported changes in their personal lives.

IMPORTANCE

- Work-related stress and lack support can limit educators ability to be healthy and effective
- School counselors are able to supplement and promote mental health care for other educators.
- Promoting mindfulness habits and emotional regulation skills, counselors can not only support fellow educators' wellbeing but also positively impact students.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

- This study was conducted in urban schools with student populations consisting mostly of students from minoritized and low-income backgrounds.
- Teacher participants largely identified as part of minoritized groups as well.
- Participants (teachers) were provided with consultation on culturally-responsive practices.

PRACTITIONER TIPS

Mindfulness-based interventions have the potential to **positively enhance inter-educator relationships**. Educators may use the skills they learn to inform interactions with other colleagues.

Mindfulness skills helped participants learn to **cope with and address workplace conflict**.

Consultation influenced by mindfulness allows the educator to receive some **mental health support** while developing goals and **problem-solving** from a new approach.

Mindfulness practices helped teachers **increase their self-awareness** which allowed for changes in beliefs about teaching behaviors and in their personal lives.

Palacios, A.F. & Lemberger, T.M.E. (2019). A counselor delivered mindfulness and social-emotional learning intervention for early childhood educators. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 58(3), 184-203. <https://doi.org/10.1002/johc.12119>