



Mind Matters supports the healing process in young people, ages 12 and up, who have experienced ACEs and other traumas.

Mind Matters Minutes is an online set of practices that facilitators or teachers can use with youth both virtually and in-person in schools and community settings.

Topics covered –

- Focused Breathing and other Breath Exercises
- Body Scan
- Loving-Kindness

For instance, the mindful exercise “*Focused Breath*” helps people be in the present and grow the space between stimuli and response.

Try this later:

“Focused Breath”

- *Sit quietly, soften your gaze, and breath naturally*
- *With next breath in, count to 4, hold for 4, and exhale for 4 counts.*
- *Continue for a couple of minutes.*
- *Notice how your breath comes and goes and what is happening in your body*



University of Louisville – Random Control Trial

Population Description: Demographics, Trauma Experience, Baseline Functioning

In the first wave of the study, 86 participants from Maryhurst Residential Treatment and Kentucky Youth Career Center completed baseline surveys for Mind Matters. The average age of participants was 15.91. This sample has significantly higher levels of trauma and impairment than the national average. They reported significantly more impairment in social competence, resilience, emotional regulation, and overall behaviors. The average number of ACES was 4.9, placing them in the highest category of risk for long-term outcomes. Subsequently, they also reported significantly higher numbers of PTSD symptoms than the national average.

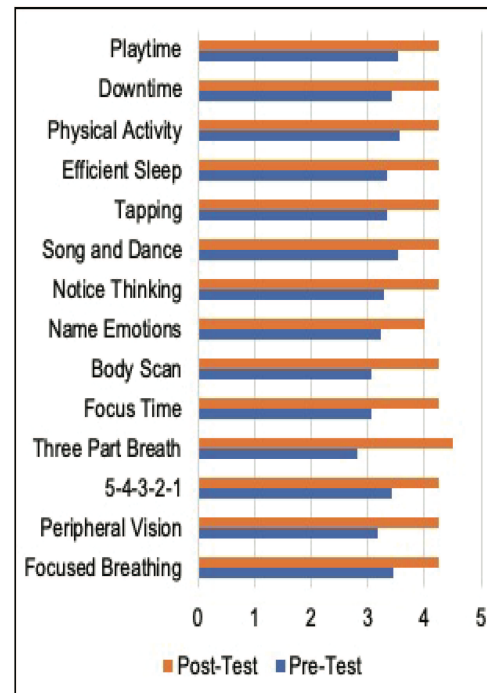
Preliminary Outcomes: Knowledge and Skill Gain

Preliminary analysis shows statistically significant improvement in knowledge and skills from pre- to post-intervention. Participants developed better knowledge and skills for coping with trauma and adversity. Partners report youth using the skills in daily life in residential treatment.

"For the clients who are engaged in the MIND MATTERS, they are utilizing the learned coping skills in their individualized treatments and on the milieu floor. I have heard kids shouting their 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 observations from across the hallway and giggling while comparing."

—MIND MATTERS FACILITATOR

Skill Acquisition After 12 Sessions



FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Trauma-Centered Practice

Trauma such as that experienced by the youth in this study has significantly long-term effects on multiple domains of functioning and should be a treatment priority.

Preliminary findings suggest that this curriculum may be an effective strategy to promote knowledge and skills for coping with trauma.

This program may be incorporated into a variety of treatment settings. The program should be embedded into regular programming and supports such as incentives used to promote attendance.

Trauma Focused Research

Given the abundance of research on the impact of ACES on long-term functioning, research is needed on whether participation in programs such as Mind Matters can build resiliency skills and different trajectories for high risk youth.

Trauma Informed Organizations

Trauma informed organizations embed skills from programs like Mind Matters into formal programming but also incorporate in the therapeutic milieu.