Mindful Therapy: Exploring mindfulness techniques for school participation

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Objectives

Participants will be able to:

• Demonstrate knowledge of mental health needs of children and students

• Explain the role of school-based occupational therapists with child mental health

• Discuss the history and foundations of mindfulness practice
Objectives

• Discuss the evidence supporting mindfulness practices in the classroom
• Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships of occupational therapy and mindfulness practice
• Demonstrate knowledge of mindfulness interventions to use in the classroom

MINDFUL BODIES AND LISTENING EXERCISE
Mental Health

• Developmental and Emotional Milestones

• Coping Skills

• Social Development

Mental health disorders

• Unexpected cognitive, social, emotional development

• Prevalence:
  • 13 to 20% of children
  • 1 out of 5 children
Common disorders

- ADHD
- Behavioral or Conduct
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Autism

OT in school mental health

- Roles and routines of daily school life
- Mental Health
- Social Emotional
- Stress, Organization, & Calming
SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH

• OT’s Mental Health Approach
  ◦ Tier 1 – Whole School / All students

  ◦ Tier 2 – Targeted groups/ At-risk students

  ◦ Tier 3 – Individual interventions / High-risk students

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Mindfulness definition

• Present and attentive
• Moment-to-moment experiences
• Kabat-Zinn
  • Purposeful
  • Non-judgmental

History

• Chinese Taoist
• Indian Buddhist
• Hindu
• Buddhism
  ◦ “Sati”
  ◦ Mindfulness = essential pathway to cessation of suffering
History

Modern Mindfulness
• Not religious
• Secular practice
• Not a comprehensive belief system
• Reaffirms humanistic values

Contemplative Practice Spectrum
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- Kabat-Zinn
  - 1979
  - MBSR Clinic
  - Secularization of mindful practice

Mindfulness and cognitive behavioral therapy

- Adults
  - As effective as CBT
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Stress
Mindfulness and children

- Mindfulness-based interventions improve:
  - Stress
  - Anxiety
  - Depressive symptoms
  - Quality of life

Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy

- Adolescents
  - Reduce depressive symptoms
  - Promote positive change
  - Improve quality of life
  - Improve rumination
  - High satisfaction
Mindfulness based cognitive therapy

In children, improves:
- Anxiety
- Internalizing and externalizing behaviors
- Attention
- Happiness
- Self-Control
- Attunement

Mindfulness and children

- Combination programs
  - Mixed martial arts
  - Art-based
  - Mindful parent training
Mindfulness-based school programs

• Effective and feasible

• Attractive to students, staff, & parents

• Evidence in early stages, but promising

Mindfulness-based school curriculums

• Improved attention

• Self-control

• Participation

• Caring/Respecting others
Mindfulness-based school curriculums

• Social competence
• Increased report card grades
• Student achievement
  • Reading
  • Math

Individual student mindfulness practice

• ADHD
  ◦ Improved academic achievements
  ◦ Improve academic engagement
Individual student mindfulness practice

- Urban youth
  - Improved emotional regulation
  - Ability to de-escalate negative emotions
  - Calmness
  - Reduced stress

Mindfulness-based stress reduction for teens

- Behavioral, psychosocial, cognitive and emotional strengths
- Interpersonal and intrapersonal strengths
- Family involvement
- School functioning abilities
- Affective strengths
Mindfulness based interventions

• At-Risk youth
  ◦ Reduce depression
  ◦ Improve student mood

Secondary schools

• Hong Kong program
  ◦ Decreased depression
  ◦ Improved overall well-being

• Urban public school
  ◦ Reduced problematic response to stress
  ◦ Improved self-regulatory capacities
Mindfulness and occupational therapy

- Identify meaningful occupational engagement
- Improve function of brain
- Increase subjective well-being
- Achieve “flow”
MINDFULNESS INTERVENTIONS
Guided meditations
Mindful communication
Mindful eating
Mindful movement or yoga
Compassion
Awareness and reflection

MINDFULNESS INTERVENTIONS
Awareness and reflection
Loving kindness
Awareness
Body scan
Breathe work
Loving and kindness
HOT CHOCOLATE BREATHS

BREATHING STICKS

Materials needed:
Pipe cleaners
Beads (5 per student)
USING YOUR SENSES

CLOSING
LOVING
KINDNESS
MEDITATION
Thank you

References


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