

Peace in Schools: Liberating Mind and Heart through Transformative Mindfulness Education in High Schools

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Developed in Portland, Oregon in 2014, Peace in Schools (PINS) delivers transformative mindfulness education through its for-credit Mindful Studies high school course. Providing 72+ hours of social emotional learning, PINS' strength lies in its relational, trauma-informed, equity-centered instruction delivered over a long period of time by deeply trained facilitators who embody the mindfulness they teach. Mindful Studies is currently offered through two models: direct instruction by PINS teachers and the Mindful Studies Partnership Program, which certifies high school educators to teach the curriculum.



Mindful Studies For-Credit Elective

- Designed for 10th-12th graders (~15-18 year olds)
- Semester, Year-long, and Trimester options
- 45 Core Lessons; 30 Supplemental Lessons
- 45 90 minute class periods
- Class size typically 25 30
- Tier 1 (universal) and Tier 2 (targeted) mental health intervention

PINS Mindful Studies™ Theory of Change

Activities

Mindful Studies for Students:

Delivering semester and year-long indepth mindfulness courses

Mindful Studies Curriculum **Development:**

Continual refinement of lesson plans, materials, and pedagogical strategies

Mindful Studies **Teacher Training:**

intensive training and mentorship for educators to teach Mindful Studies

Mindful Studies Whole School Support:

Professional development to support support staff well-being, and improve school climate

Assumptions

Strong partnerships and adequate funding available

Teachers, school staff, and students have sufficient motivation and capacity to participate in programming

Teachers, school staff, and students engage with program and apply what they learn

Intermediate **Outcomes**

Students increase self and social awareness

Students improve emotional regulation and coping skills

Students increase compassion for self and others

Teachers, school staff, and students increase knowledge and practice of mindfulness

School climate improves

Goals

Students and school staff improve mental health and well-being

Students improve relationships with peers family & community

Students flourish

PINS Pedagogical Approach

Students reflect on the ways they have been conditioned by their families, school, society, community, and culture.

We co-create a community in which all voices and experiences are validated, and all students experience a felt-sense of belonging.

The Environment of CARE creates a container of compassion that is essential for students to explore their inner landscape.

Centering

Directing

the Attention

Conditioned

Inherent

Wholeness

Beliefs

Relationships 8



COMPASSION

PRESENCE

Mindful Studies Skills & Concepts

experience in school and life.

In the first classes, students **build trust**, recognizing that

everyone and all parts of themselves are welcome.

Next, students learn tools to consciously direct their

attention where they want it to be. They recognize how

and where they focus of their attention can impact their

Students explore individual and collective conditioning

Students learn how to have an unconditionally loving

for self and others, experiencing what it means to be

fully whole and how to honor that wholeness in others.

relationship with themselves. They cultivate compassion

through introspective reflections, pair-sharing,

experiential activities and community discussions.

Students are invited to bring nonjudgmental inquiry to their direct experience and get to know themselves on the deepest level.

> **Presence** is the foundation. Throughout the course, students are given various tools and practices that give them a felt experience of presence.

Research

The ACEs, Mindfulness, & Adolescent Wellbeing study¹ finds significant social-emotional impacts from participation in Mindful Studies. Positive impacts are magnified for teens who are girls, LGBTQ+, and have more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

Increase Well-being



Coping*** (+ 12.2%)



Self-compassion*** (+ 11.5%)



Emotional regulation* (+ 8.3%)

• Girls, LGBTQ+ & 8-14 ACEs***

Decrease Distress



Anxiety symptoms* (-13.6%)



Depression symptoms (-12-16%)

• Girls* & LGBTQ+**

*p<.1, **<.05, ***<.01

Naranjo-Rivera, K. L. (2021). The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Mindfulness, and Adolescent (AMA) Health Study: Addressing Health and Well-being in Schools and Advancing the Science of Social Justice in Public Health and Education (Doctoral dissertation, Johns Hopkins University).



Student Voice

I have learned to love myself even when it is hard.

