



Mentally Healthy WA

Mentally Healthy Schools

Benefits of being spiritually active

Successful mindfulness

in schools

In order to make the most out of mindfulness programs and engagements, it helps if there are a number of key people and strategies in place.

Having leadership support a whole of school approach

For teachers to be able to encourage and utilise mindfulness programs and strategies, leaders of the school need to be understanding of, promoting and accepting of this process. For best results mindfulness should be included in wellbeing policies and as a regular engagement activity for the school. Schools who engage the whole school community (school leaders, educators, support staff, students, parents and the wider community) when implementing and maintaining their mindfulness program report the biggest impact. This also has potential to improve the classroom environment and hopefully pupil wellbeing too. However, this research has also highlighted a number of barriers which may exist and need to be taken into consideration. The root causes of teacher stress must be addressed alongside giving teachers tools to deal with it. It's important to note that mindfulness strategies are also beneficial for teachers.

Mindfulness champion or wellbeing committee

Having a mindfulness champion or a wellbeing committee keeps the school on track and up to date with latest practices and information, and it can also encourage uptake by having a mindfulness 'voice' to motivate the school community.

Engaged educators

Educators can become more engaged when they understand the benefits of mindfulness and exactly how to implement it with their students or classes. Once this thought shift takes place from a 'must do' to 'time for self-care' it can improve mindfulness activity uptake in classrooms. Teachers who practice mindfulness are less stressed, sleep better, report fewer bad moods and report higher workplace satisfaction than those who don't.

Dedicated time to practice mindfulness

To ensure consistent and regular mindfulness practice, it's important that schools have dedicated time to do this. This could be in home room or at form time, set times in primary classrooms or if there is no dedicated class time then running sessions at lunch or afterschool could be an option. Consider offering mindfulness sessions as an alternative to detention. See below for suggestions on how long students should spend per week engaging in mindfulness.

Adapted from: Smiling Mind. (2018). Evidence based guidelines for mindfulness in schools. A guide for teachers and school leaders.