RESEARCH BRIEF

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF THE MINDUP™ MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDY

MindUP™ is an evidence-based program grounded in neuroscience, mindful awareness, social and emotional learning, and positive psychology, providing children with the knowledge and tools they need to manage stress, regulate emotions, and face the challenges of the 21st century with optimism, resilience, and compassion.

What did researchers examine?

In this study, researchers examined the implementation and impact of MindUP™ on middle school students and their teachers. Specifically this study was done to examine the MindUP™ Middle School program - a new MindUP™ curriculum designed specifically for middle school students.

Teachers and students in both MindUP™ and comparison groups completed a battery of measures at two time points: February 2022 (baseline prior to implementation of the MindUP™ program) and May/June 2022 (after the MindUP™ program was completed).

Implementation

Defined as "the ways a program is applied in practice and delivered to participants" (Durlak, 2015, p. 1124). To assess the implementation of the MindUP™ Middle School program researchers analyzed quantitative and qualitative data from measures assessing the following areas of implementation:

Teacher Measures

- ❖ **Dosage:** Assessments of the total number of lessons completed and percentage of each lesson completed
- ❖ **Fidelity:** Assessments of the degree to which lessons were implemented as described
- ❖ **Adaptations:** Assessments of any adaptations the teachers made to the lessons
- ❖ **Acceptability:** Assessments regarding the degree to which teachers liked the program
- ❖ **Responsiveness:** Assessments of students' engagement in each of the program lessons

Where did the research take place?
Large urban public school district in British Columbia, Canada

Study Design
- Randomized-controlled trial, pre/post-test
- Mixed methods: Qualitative & quantitative data were collected.

When was the research conducted?
January to June 2022, during an active wave of the Covid-19 pandemic

Who participated?
Teachers
- 14 teachers across 4 public middle schools
- 7 teachers assigned to implement MindUP™
- 7 served as comparison (Business-as-usual)

HUMAN
EARLY LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

UBC

Student Measures

- ❖ **Acceptability:** Assessments regarding the degree to which students liked the program
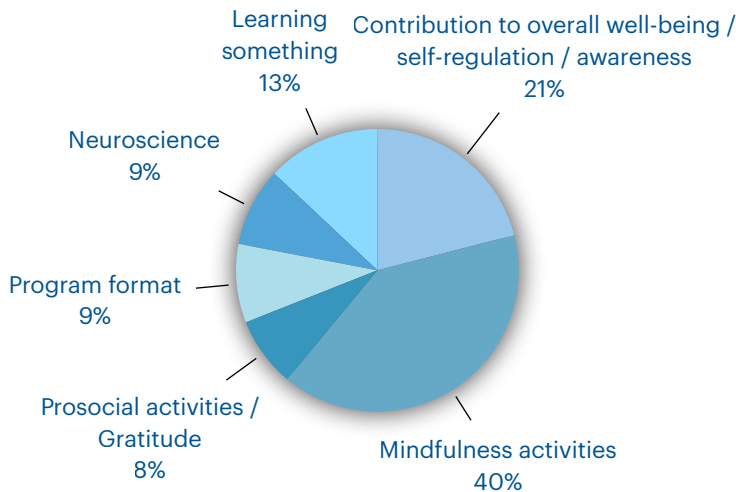
Preliminary Outcomes

Student Measures

- ❖ Peer nominated Helpfulness: "Students who help other kids when they have a problem."
- ❖ Peer nominated Compassion: "Students who show compassion"
- ❖ Peer nominated Trustworthiness: "Students you can trust"

What did researchers find?

Implementation Findings

- ❖ **Dosage:** Teachers completed between 9 and 13 lessons, out of 15. Note: Teachers only had 11 weeks to implement the program.

- ❖ **Fidelity:** Teachers followed at least 40% of each lesson. Most lessons were followed with >60% fidelity by most teachers.

- ❖ **Acceptability: What students liked** (65 out of 145 provided a response)

Learning something 13%
Contribution to overall well-being / self-regulation / awareness 21%
Neuroscience 9%
Program format 9%
Prosocial activities / Gratitude 8%
Mindfulness activities 40%

- ❖ **Acceptability: What students did not like** (13 out of 145 provided a response):

    - ❖ 7 students reported that they found the MindUP™ program to be boring.
    - ❖ 3 students reported that they didn't like the brain breaks.
    - ❖ 2 students reported that the MindUP™ program was too long.
    - ❖ 1 student reported that they did not like the body scan.

Students

- 327 students, 91% participation rate
- Grades 6 & 7 (ages 11 to 13)
- 41.5% girls, 50.9% boys
- 4.6% described their gender in another way, 2.1% preferred not to disclose
- 21% Asian, 0.4% Black, 2% LatinX, 0.7% Indigenous, 48% White, 14% More than one race (e.g., White and LatinX, Asian & Black, Asian & LatinX), 6.5% Other

MindUP™ Training

- Two 1.5 hour after school training sessions facilitated by lead MindUP author & facilitator, Dr. Molly Lawlor
- March 10 & April 6
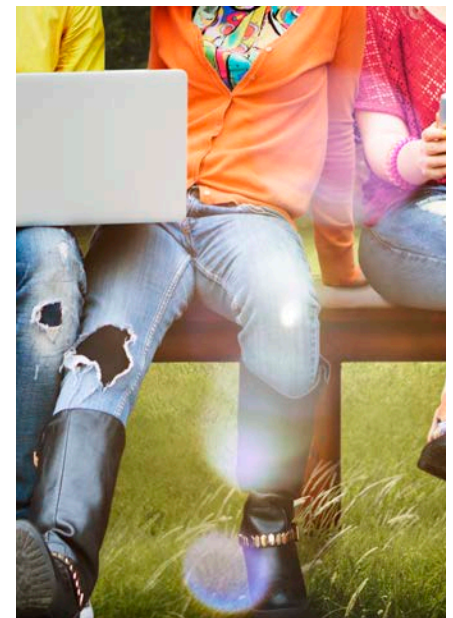
Teachers' Voices

"Instead of the 'make a poster and teach it to the rest of the group,' I still had them in pairs to learn about different parts of the brain, then we shared and took notes as a class. I did this as an adaptation for my class - they have difficulty staying focused and it was the afternoon. They came back from their other class really riled up and I knew they would lose their focus. Doing the note taking together was really helpful to keep them on track and focused on the lesson."

- Lesson 2 - Grade 6/7 Teacher

Conducting Research in the Context of Covid-19

The present study was conducted during a time of increased COVID-19 (Omicron variant) health protocols and visitor restrictions, therefore some adaptations were required:

❖ The administration of permission slips and student surveys by research team members was conducted virtually rather than in person.

❖ The training of teachers to implement MindUP™ was shortened considerably from six hours to two 90-minute virtual sessions after school.

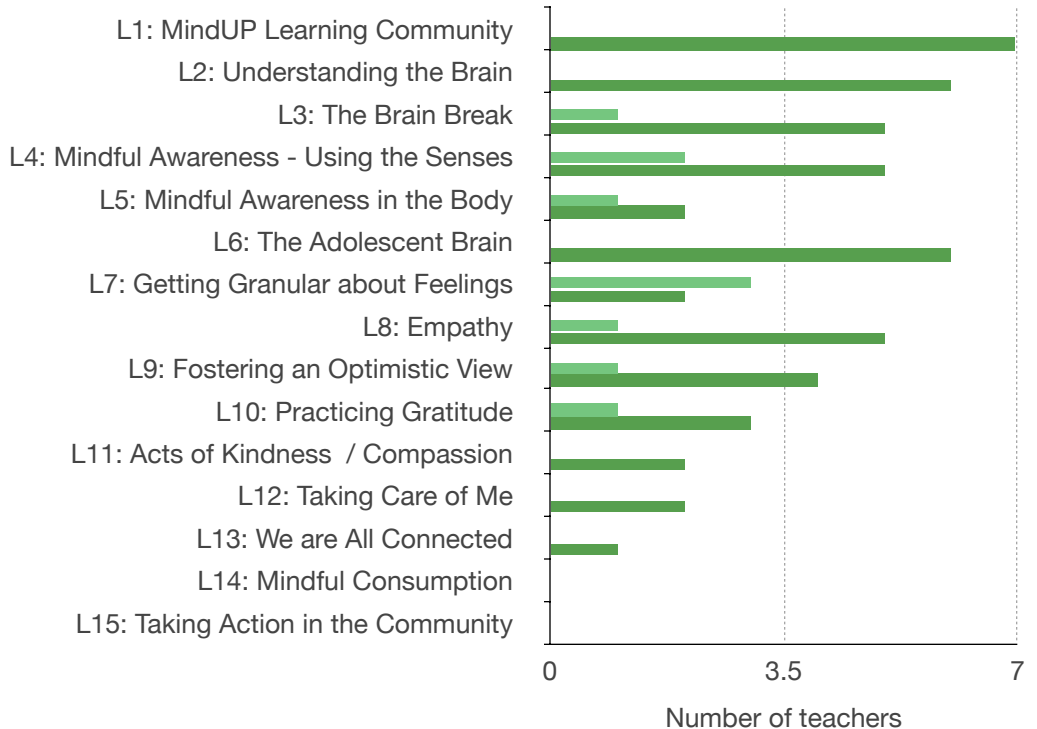❖ Teachers had only 11 weeks to implement the 15-week program.

Implementation Findings (cont'd)

＊ Adaptations by Teachers (by lesson)
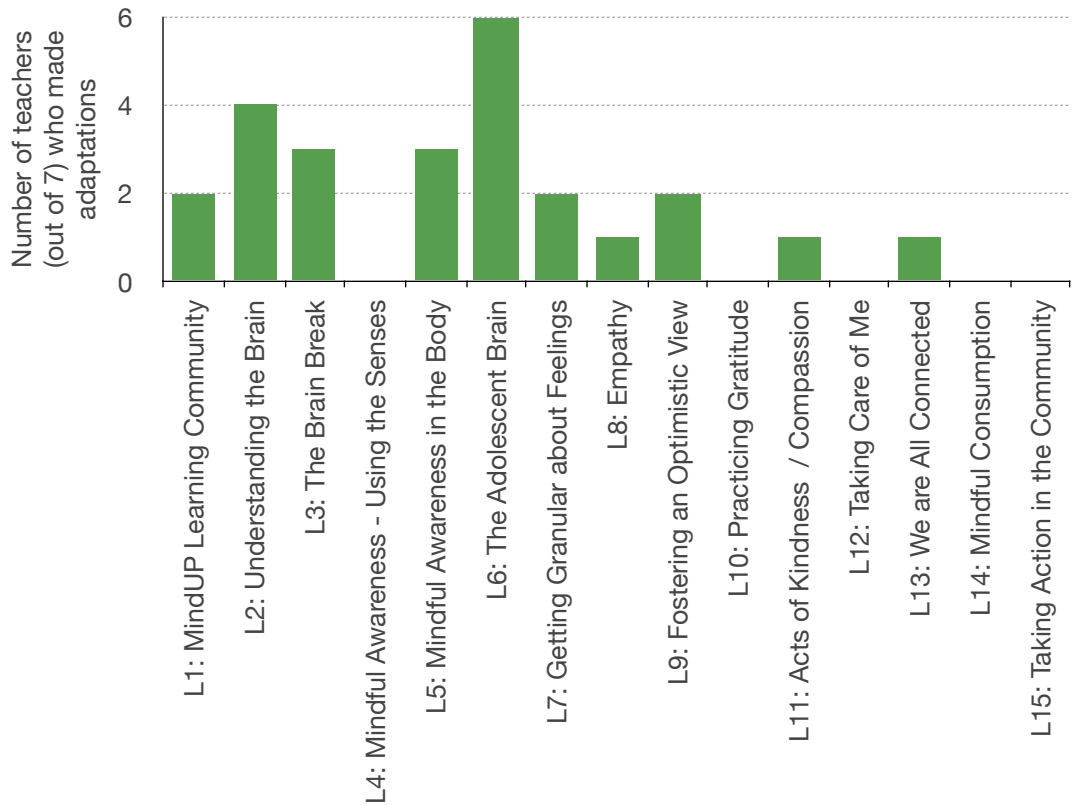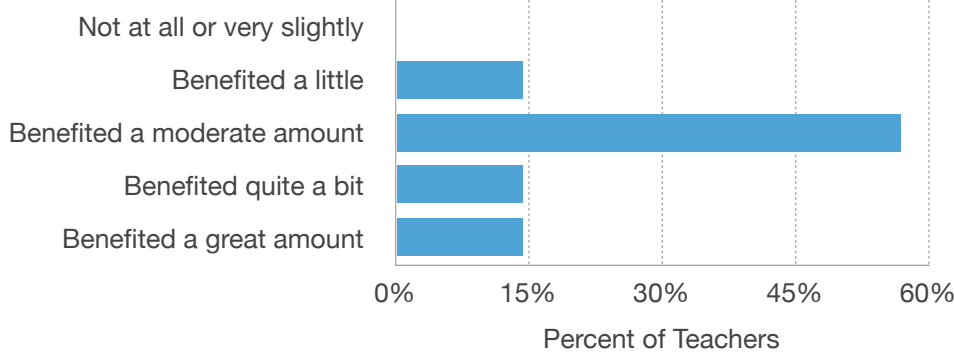

＊ Teachers Reports of Student Engagement

- 0% (none or almost none of my students)
- 25 - 50% (some to half of my students)
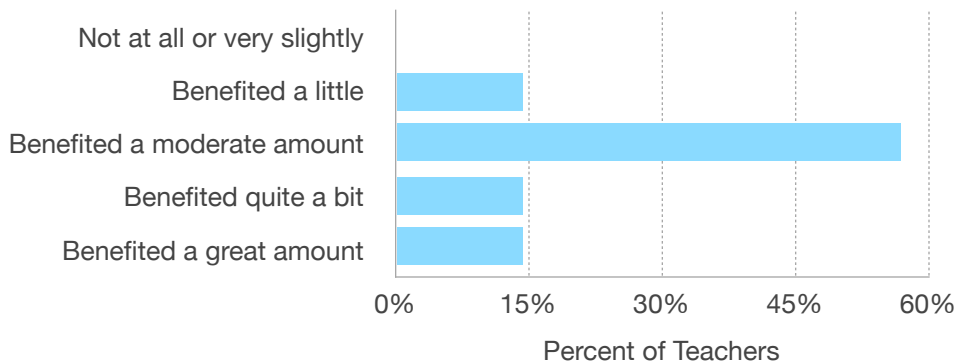- 75 - 100% (most to almost all of my students)

Preliminary Outcome Findings

Teacher Findings
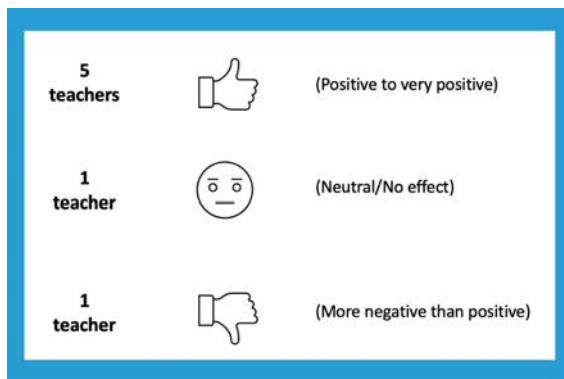
❖ **Teachers' perceptions of benefits: Professionally**

Percent of Teachers

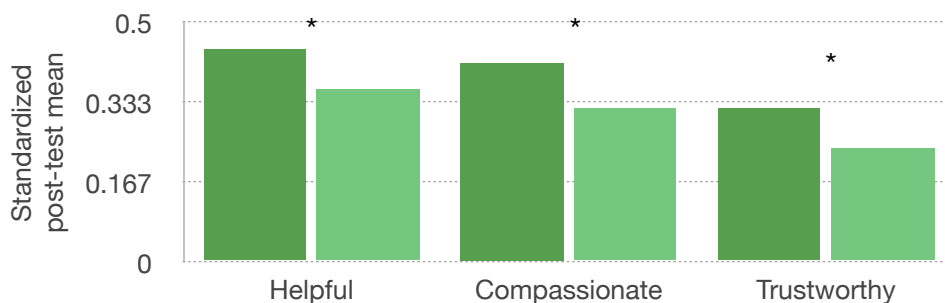❖ **Teachers' perceptions of benefits: Personally**

Percent of Teachers

Student Findings

❖ **Teachers Perceptions of MindUP's Impact on Students**

❖ **Peer-Nominated Improvements in Helpfulness, Compassion, Trustworthiness**

Citation
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Access Full Report:
FORTHCOMING

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MindUP
Comparison

*Note: These differences were statistically significant, $p < .001$; effect sizes ranged from medium (.6) to large (.12).