
Thinking Matters Symposium

2021 Thinking Matters Symposium

Apr 30th, 12:00 AM

Clinicians Use of Mindfulness-based Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Leah Ridley

University of Southern Maine, leah.ridley@maine.edu

Samuel J. Giese

University of Southern Maine, samuel.j.giese@maine.edu

Shelby Cogan

University of Southern Maine, shelby.cogan@maine.edu

Chelsea Hughes

University of Southern Maine, chelsea.hughes@maine.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking-matters-symposium>



Part of the [Counseling Commons](#), [Mental and Social Health Commons](#), [Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons](#), and the [Public Health Commons](#)

Ridley, Leah; Giese, Samuel J.; Cogan, Shelby; and Hughes, Chelsea, "Clinicians Use of Mindfulness-based Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic" (2021). *Thinking Matters Symposium*. 36.

<https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking-matters-symposium/2021/poster-sessions/36>

This Poster Session is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at USM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Thinking Matters Symposium by an authorized administrator of USM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jessica.c.hovey@maine.edu.

Clinicians Use of Mindfulness-based Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Chelsea Hughes MSW Student, Samuel Giese MSW Student, Shelby Cogan MSW Student, and Leah Ridley MSW Student

Background

Most of the current research regarding alternative mental health treatments like mindfulness in Social Work has focused on the benefits to the clients with a gap in the literature regarding the relationship between providing mindful-based treatments and connecting to the social work profession.

- Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for children (MBCT-C) is a psychotherapy that has been modified to be developmentally appropriate for school-aged children. ¹
- MBCT-C supports clients in mindfulness-based practices to control the body's automatic responses to stressors. ²
- Research shows that MBCT-C interventions have been successful in children while increasing self-regulation, social-emotional resiliency, and self-management of attention. ²

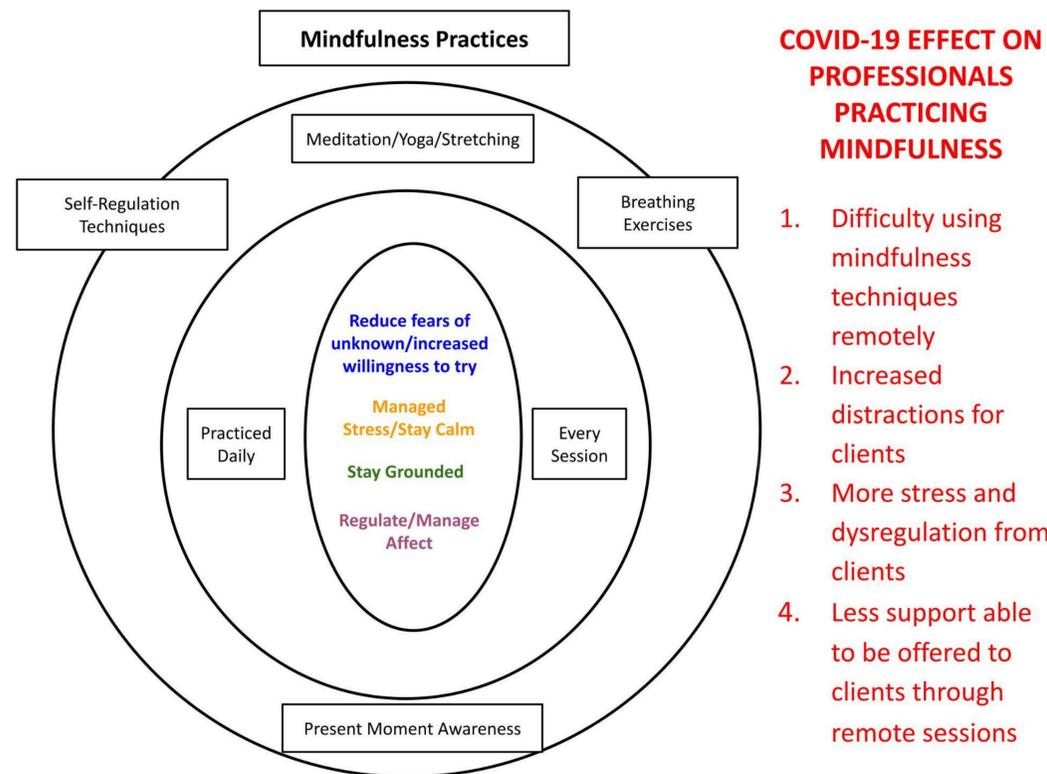
In these unprecedented times, social workers have an enormous task before them. They are essential frontline workers, and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health clinicians have been forced to adjust their practice to ensure their clients' physical safety and self. This change has impacted clinicians and their clients and the type of care and treatment that is offered.

Research Aim

This research was conducted to look at clinicians experiences and perspectives on providing mindfulness-based treatment to school-aged children in Maine, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods

- Twelve mental health professionals participated in an online survey for approximately sixty minutes.
- Master's level education or higher was required.
- Professional titles included LCSW or School Counseling.
- The snowball method was used to recruit participants via email.
- Participants were asked 16 questions about their experiences with mindfulness utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods.
- The survey asked participants to answer two questions using yes/or no answers, five questions using a Likert scale, and nine open-ended questions.
- The researchers identified commonalities in participant's responses to open-ended questions by coding responses to identify main themes.



COVID-19 EFFECT ON PROFESSIONALS PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

1. Difficulty using mindfulness techniques remotely
2. Increased distractions for clients
3. More stress and dysregulation from clients
4. Less support able to be offered to clients through remote sessions

Figure 1. Major Themes from Responses to Open-Ended Questions

"COVID-19 has had a significant effect on my practice. In the spring, when we transitioned to remote, the majority of my kids struggled to sustain attention and participate authentically. Due to their age and the level of distractions at home, making any significant clinical progress was difficult. Both spring and early summer of last year were mainly relationship maintenance."

The use of mindfulness practices has had a significant impact on my clients.

12 responses

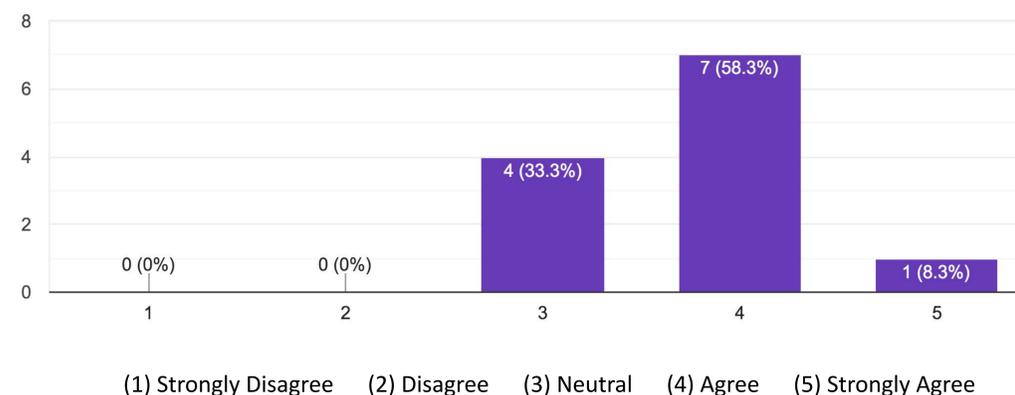


Figure 2. The Use of Mindfulness During COVID-19

Results

Thematic analyses of the survey responses demonstrated four significant impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had in the field which are noted in figure 1.

Future Implications

Research Recommendations

- More research is needed to understand better social workers' experience who utilize mindfulness-based treatment with school-aged children during COVID-19.
- Researchers should recruit more individuals to complete the survey so a focus group can be held. Doing so would create further discussions while unpacking the value of mindfulness.

Practice Recommendations

- This research can help clinicians in the mental health field by informing them of the best practices used with school-age children and the challenges faced during COVID-19.
- This research may clarify the usefulness and benefits of mindfulness-based treatment with school-aged children and its merit during COVID-19.

Acknowledgments

We want to thank our faculty mentor, Rachel Casey, for her continued support and education. We would also like to thank our classmates for their feedback and the University of Southern Maine for the opportunity to conduct this research project.

References

1. Semple, R. J., Lee, J., Rosa, D., & Miller, L. F. (2010). A randomized trial of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for children: Promoting mindful attention to enhance social-emotional resilience in children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 19, 218-229.
2. Thielemann, K., & Cacciato, J. (2014). Witness to suffering: Mindfulness and compassion fatigue among traumatic bereavement volunteers and professionals. *Social Work*, 59(1), 34-41.