mental health matters

promoting resilience for chippewa valley youth

MINDFULNESS OPPORTUNITY

The Mental Health Matters Coalition aims to improve the mental health of middle and high school youth in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties by focusing on increasing resilience, or the ability to manage stress and function well even when faced with challenges, adversity or trauma. One of three strategies the Coalition supports is to provide resources to middle and high schools to use mindfulness-based strategies with teachers and students.

Who can apply and how does my school apply?

- Middle or high schools in Chippewa or Eau Claire counties.
- Implement the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).
- Review and complete application materials.
- Identify a Mindfulness Champion.
- Identify up to 30 staff members to participate in a six-session training.
- Provide space and supportive environment for ongoing practice of mindfulness strategies.
- Commit to two semesters of participation, beginning INSERT DATE.

What is being offered?

The Mental Health Matters Coalition will support the implementation of mindfulness-based strategies for teachers, staff and students beginning INSERT DATE.

Schools interested in this opportunity and selected to participate will receive:

- Training in mindfulness-based practice for up to 30 teachers and school staff (six-session course; 90 minutes per session, over a 6-12-week period). Training will typically occur after the school day.
- Support, beginning INSERT SEMESTER, in development of a plan to integrate mindfulness practice for staff and students at school.
- INSERT STIPEND AMOUNT for Mindfulness Champion, who will serve as an internal coach for mindfulness. Stipend may be split if more than one champion.

Why mindfulness in schools and why this approach?

- Mindfulness is being used more and more in schools due to emerging research linking it to many positive outcomes for those who practice it. Better focus (attention, learning, memory), less stress (better overall well-being, improved physical health, more happiness, less anxiety and depression), and more compassion (greater empathy, better listening, improved relationships) are all outcomes of implementing mindfulness.
- Developing a schoolwide plan for implementation of mindfulness practice and focusing first on teacher/staff skill building is a best practice approach to achieving the positive outcomes associated with mindfulness strategies in schools.
    1. Research shows that learning mindfulness skills can increase teachers' sense of well-being and self-efficacy as well as their ability to manage classroom behavior and establish and maintain supportive relationships with students.
    2. Building the skills of school staff alone has been shown to positively impact school climate and teacher-student relationships.
- For students, mindfulness strategies implemented in schools have been shown to lead to a decrease in symptoms of depression and anxiety and protect against later development of depression-like symptoms, as well as lessen stress and anxiety.

Application materials (Application, Roster of Participation, and Letter of Support) must be emailed to INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION, by INSERT DATE, TIME.

MINDFULNESS CHAMPION – JOB DESCRIPTION

For mindfulness to take root to support staff and students, regular practice is essential. The role of the Mindfulness Champion is to support a mindful climate in the school. This involves creating opportunities for staff mindfulness practice and supporting mindfulness practice in education. The Mindfulness Champion will be provided with a stipend to support the integration of mindfulness practice. This person:

- Is a teacher, aide, pupil services, or other staff who is in the school building most days.
- Meets with the mindfulness trainer prior to class start to determine a schedule for mindfulness training to occur and confirm rosters of staff participation.
- Participates in the six-session mindfulness course when offered in the school.
- Is interested in cultivating his/her/their own mindfulness practice for stress reduction, well-being, and to support his/her/their work as an educator.
- Connects with other school champions implementing mindfulness.
- Holds regular weekly mindfulness practice sessions for building staff. For example, holding a 10-minute mindfulness practice in a classroom or common space before school once a week.
- Integrates mindfulness practice into staff/building meetings to support a mindful school climate and support building staff. For example, leading a mindful minute at the opening and closing of each staff meeting.
- Serves as a building resource for mindfulness. This involves offering resources for personal practice as well as creating opportunities for staff to connect and discuss ways to bring mindfulness practice into education. For example, coordinating a mindful book study or creating grade-level teams for integrating mindfulness in the classroom.
- Maintains communication with Mental Health Matters grant staff.
- Plays a role in the development of the school plan to foster and sustain mindfulness practice.
- Assists with completion of staff surveys/evaluations related to quality of training, use of practice, impact on self-care and coping strategies, use with students, perception of student use of coping strategies, etc.
- Reports monthly activity related to mindfulness practice in the school.
- Provides attendance for six-session trainings and implementation workshops.

This project is funded by the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

MINDFULNESS APPLICATION

Part 1: Contact Information

Contact Name:

Title:

Email:

Phone Number:

Name of School:

Link to School Website:

Principal's Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

County in Which School Resides:

Rural or Urban School – Rural/Urban

Total Number of School Staff (teachers, administrative support, custodial, nurse, other youth-serving professionals):

Number of Students in Each Grade:

Is the Youth Risk Behavior Survey administered at your school: Yes/No

Part 2: Project Information

1. Explain why mindfulness strategies will be helpful to your school. Provide data to support your answer if available.

2. Explain why your school is the right school for this opportunity. Please address:
   a. Why this is the right year for this experience

   b. How you know staff and students are ready for this opportunity

3. What are your expectations for this opportunity?

4. Describe the space that will be made available for staff for training and ongoing practice of mindfulness strategies (note: space should accommodate up to 30 staff and allow room to move, for example, special education rooms, gymnasium)

5. What mindfulness-related training/conferences/workshops have staff attended already? (prior experience not required)

6. How will you assure all six sessions of the course are well-attended and new skills are used by staff? What incentive(s) may be provided?

Part 3: Participation Roster

Please designate a champion at your school (see Mindfulness Champion – Job Description)

Staff Name	Position at School – Include Grade Level(s)	Staff Signature (required)

Please designate an alternate/co-champion (see Mindfulness Champion – Job Description)

Staff Name	Position at School – Include Grade Level(s)	Staff Signature (required)

Please indicate staff interested in participating. Identifying staff from other schools in the same district is allowable.

#	Staff Name	Position at School – Include Grade Level(s)	Staff Signature *optional signature indicates interest in participating*
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Part 4: Letter of Support

Support of senior leadership is essential for the success of initiatives like this one. Include a signed letter of support from your principal that includes the following:

1) How does the mindfulness initiative align with your school's strategic plan and/or other school initiatives?

2) How will support be given to staff to support mindfulness in your school?

3) Indicate the intended school champion and why this person is the best match for the position. How will time be provided for him/her to complete the duties as described in the job description?

4) How will this align with teacher effectiveness or teacher professional development?

Part 5: Signature and Submission

Signature indicates that the application is complete, all requirements of participation in this project have been reviewed, and the school agrees to participate in the program as described in this document.

Principal First and Last Name:

Principal Signature:

Date:

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DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
SCHOOL AND
FISCAL AGENT/MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the fiscal agent for the Mental Health Matters (MHM) grant, and SCHOOL is to delineate the relationship among the parties related to the delivery and implementation of the MHM mindfulness opportunity. The term of this MOU shall be two semesters, beginning DATE.

SCHOOL WILL:

- Provide a champion who will meet with MHM Mindfulness Trainer and Implementation Coach as necessary.
- Provide space and a supportive environment for ongoing mindfulness practice.
- Encourage and incentivize commitment of staff to attend and participate in six-session course.
- Develop a school plan to integrate mindfulness practice for staff and students.
- Complete MHM surveys/evaluations related to quality of training, use of practice, impact on self-care and coping strategies, use with students, and perception of student use of coping strategies, etc.
- Report selected Youth Risk Behavior Survey data.
- Complete mindfulness activities as outlined in the application.
- Commit to two semesters of participation, beginning DATE.
- Meet with MHM Project Director a minimum of two times per grant period.

SCHOOL MINDFULNESS CHAMPION WILL:

- Meet with MHM Mindfulness Trainer prior to class start to determine a schedule for mindfulness training to occur and confirm rosters of staff participation.
- Participate in the six-session mindfulness course when offered in the school.
- Cultivate own mindfulness practice for stress reduction, wellbeing, and support.
- Connect with other school champions implementing mindfulness.
- Hold regular weekly mindfulness practice sessions for building staff.
- Integrate mindfulness practice into staff/building meetings to support a mindful school climate and support building staff.
- Serve as building resource for mindfulness.
- Maintain communication with MHM grant staff.
- Play a role in the development of the school plan to foster and sustain mindfulness practice.
- Assist with completion of staff surveys/evaluations related to quality of training, use of practice, impact on self-care and coping strategies, use with students, and perception of student use of coping strategies, etc.
- Report monthly progress and activities related to mindfulness practice in the school.
- Provide attendance for six-session trainings and implementation workshops.

MHM WILL:

- Provide training in mindfulness-based practice for up to 30 teachers and school staff (six-session course; 90 minutes per session, over a 6-12 week period.)
- Provide school Mindfulness Implementation Coach to assist in the development of a plan to integrate mindfulness practice for staff and students at school.
- Provide a STIPEND AMOUNT for school Mindfulness Champion, following school policies and procedures for payment. Stipend may be split among more than one champion. Stipend to be paid to SCHOOL for distribution to school Mindfulness Champion.
- Distribute pre-post surveys/evaluations related to quality of training, use of practice, impact on self-care and coping strategies, use with students, and perception of student use of coping strategies, etc.

The undersigned individuals represent and warrant that the parties to this MOU on whose behalf they are signing have delegated signature authority.

_____

Name, School Mindfulness Champion Date
School

_____

Name, Co-School Mindfulness Champion (if applicable) Date
School

_____

Name, Superintendent Date
School

_____

Name, Principal Date
School

_____

Name, Position Date
Fiscal Agent

_____

Name, Project Director Date
Mental Health Matters

_____

Name, Team Mindfulness Chair Date
Mental Health Matters

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