How does Yoga for Youth (Y4Y), an after-school Kundalini yoga program, affect at-risk middle school students’ self-reported emotional regulation, depression, anxiety, and stress levels?

Introduction

Over the last five years, yoga and mindfulness programs have started to become a part of educational settings. Research suggests that providing yoga and mindfulness practices to students may help them develop self-regulation strategies, mind-body awareness, and physical fitness, which may then foster additional positive student outcomes, including improved classroom behavior, mental state, health, and academic performance.

Results

➔ Students who participated in the yoga program reported a significant increase in the ability to regulate their emotions.
➔ Yoga students showed an increase in engaging in goal directed behavior.

Data & Methods

Embodied Learning Summit

This year’s Embodied Learning Summit - a day-long community event - focused on “Yoga in the Era of #MeToo” to understand how yoga and mindfulness practices can be used to address struggles related to sexual violence.

Conclusions & Next Steps

The after-school based Kundalini yoga program improved emotion dysregulation in at-risk adolescents. The intervention also decreased students’ anxiety, depression, and stress levels. Next year, our team will be assessing the data from our follow-up 2017-2018 study.

Future research should study how local contexts and the complexity of school environments can affect specific interventions. By considering these factors, we can tailor school-based yoga programs to the school contexts.

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“I feel like I have a clearer head after it. I think being able to sit in silence is a really good skill to have, especially like today with everything going on... And I feel like that always helps me with my moods... it’s serene.”