

SEL + Mindfulness Institute

In 2020, the global pandemic forced schools, educators, students, and families to adjust to remote and hybrid learning. We are only beginning to understand the long-term social and emotional impact of this. The Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mindfulness Institute was created to help educators better cope with the stressors of the 2021-22 school year.

In order to build healing and resilience in schools, we must continue to prioritize emotional health and well-being. At Youth Yoga Project, we wondered what would happen if we deliberately and systemically trained teachers to develop self-awareness and self-management skills through mindfulness and movement training. With the support of The Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the Columbus City Schools Wellness Initiative, we have partnered with Columbus City Schools (CCS) to guide teachers, step by step, to learn mindfulness practices to support their social-emotional skills. Through our year-long SEL and Mindfulness Institute, we provide mindfulness training and curriculum to CCS teachers so they can help themselves and their students manage stress.

Together, with the Columbus City Schools Wellness Initiative and The Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, we are helping to put student and educator well-being at the forefront of education. Here's what we've learned so far . . .

Educators want to focus on their wellness.

51

Columbus City Schools Educators

from **37** schoolshave committed to **20** hours of
professional learning and support.

These educators are teaching **1,275**
students practical, research-based Mindful
Tools to manage their stress.

What We've Learned from Educators . . .

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How is the pandemic impacting your work with students?

- Students have regressed socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. Students are re-learning how to be together in a classroom setting.
- There is an additional layer of stress present. This is a difficult school year and teachers feel tired.
- Student concentration and motivation is low

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- Increase in feelings of exhaustion, loneliness, anxiety, stress, worry, and insomnia
- Compassion fatigue
- Worry about health and having to quarantine
- Increased focus on self-care practices including movement, meditation, and taking time to slow down

How is the pandemic impacting your personal well-being?

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YYP + The Wellness Initiative are Setting Up Educators for Success by . . .

- Providing mindfulness and movement opportunities during the monthly professional development sessions.
- Making time for educators to check-in with each other and share best practices.
- Giving educators tools and resources to practice to support their self-care routines.
- CCS Wellness Initiative is creating structures to support educator well-being in years to come.

Youth Yoga Project is grateful for the support from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the Wellness Initiative at Columbus City Schools. Because of their support, educators have access to the tools and resources they need to manage this difficult year.