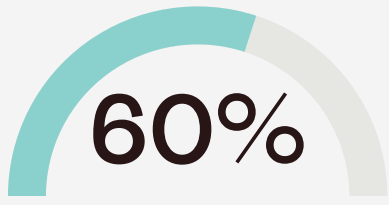


MINDFULNESS-BASED INTERVENTIONS

IMPROVING WELL-BEING & MENTAL HEALTH OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Influx of students

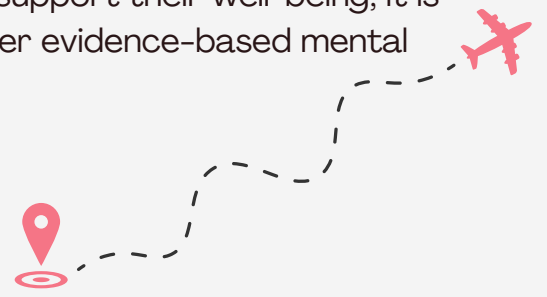


Increase in US international students within the past decade

Since 2019, US international student enrollment in higher education has surpassed 1 million, providing significant revenue and enhancing campus diversity. Despite these benefits, many international students face severe mental health challenges that are often inadequately addressed by institutions. To support their well-being, it is essential to offer evidence-based mental health services.

Challenges students face

The unique challenges faced by international students include language barriers, academic and financial stress, acculturation difficulties, and social discrimination. This often leads to higher incidences of depression compared to domestic students, contributing to lower self-esteem, reduced confidence, diminished satisfaction with education, and poorer learning outcomes.



What is well-being?

Experiencing positivity, managing everyday pressures effectively, having self-awareness about strengths and potentials, maintaining productivity, and actively participating in society



Barriers to mental health services and well-being

Counselling services are often underutilized, with a high dropout rate reported. Factors such as stigma, lack of awareness, limited understanding of available services, and a shortage of culturally sensitive therapists contribute to this lower help-seeking behaviour.

What is mindfulness?

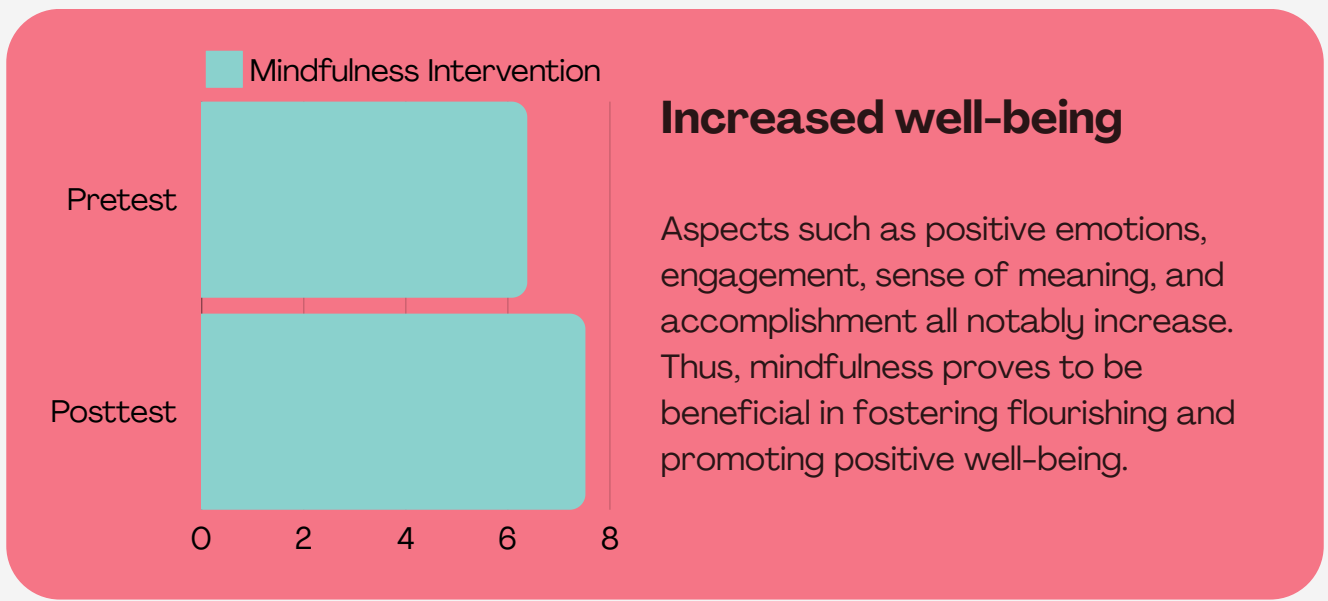
Practicing an open mindset involves being keenly aware of current experiences. This can include various activities like meditation, relaxation techniques, and breathing exercises, all aimed at staying present without judgment. Consistent practice is key for upkeep.



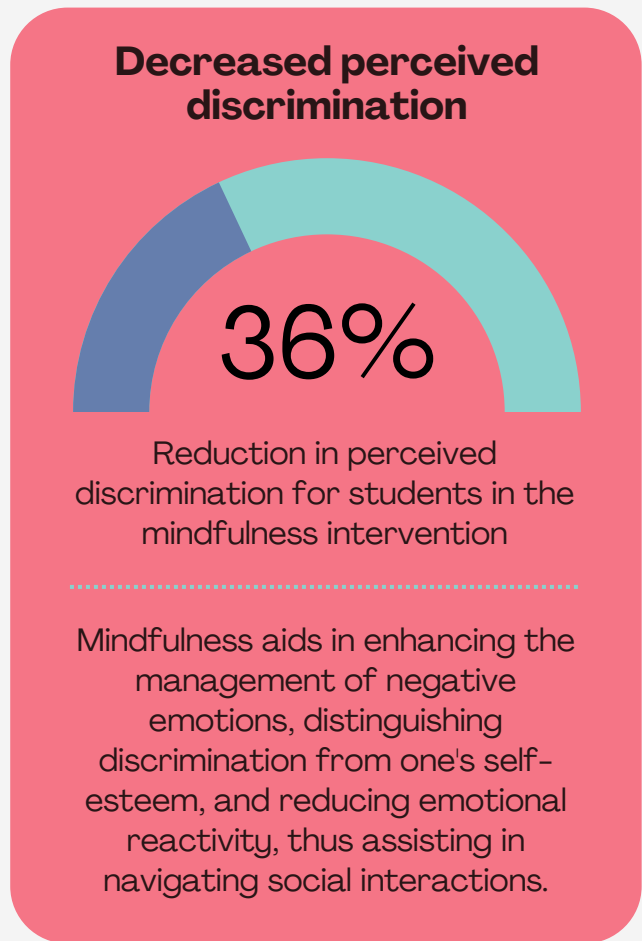
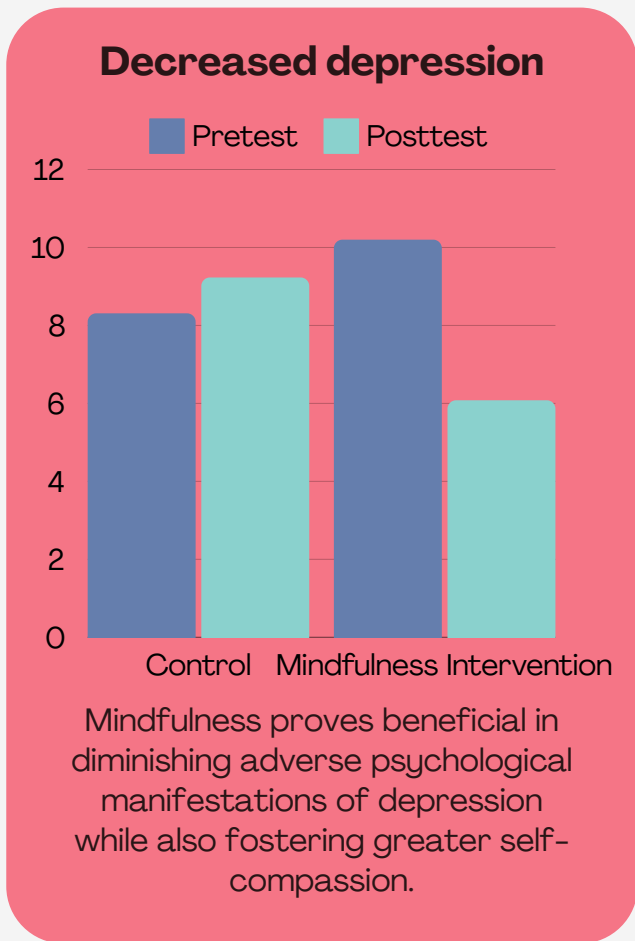
How does mindfulness help?

Improves student well-being by reducing stress, promoting non-judgmental attitudes, and fostering positive mental states. Purposeful practice can also reduce depression, enhance self-regulation, and boost resilience.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MINDFULNESS



3 important outcomes for students:



Mindfulness benefits students

Mindfulness-based well-being groups could offer a cost-effective and efficient approach to supporting international students in enhancing their positive mental health and overall well-being. Additionally, the practice of mindfulness holds the potential to reduce general psychological distress and the sense of discrimination experienced, potentially leading to a decrease in academic challenges.

Suggestions for institutions

1 Counsellors working in university settings or community agencies might explore the potential of utilizing mindfulness-based well-being groups as a promising intervention for international students.

Establishing support communities wherein group facilitators lead mindfulness practices, enabling students to receive support from counsellors along with fellow group members.

2



3 Create culturally sensitive approaches to connect with students, taking into account any stigmas they may hold regarding mental health services. Potential strategies might involve partnering with international student offices and administrators, and utilizing terms like 'workshop' or other suitable language to promote intervention programs.

References

Xiong, Y., Prasath, P. R., Zhang, Q., & Jeon, L. (2022). A mindfulness-based well-being group for international students in higher education: A pilot study. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 100*(4), 374–385. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12432>