

Dear Principals of IE schools

Students today are showing signs of distress. However, a child's ability to learn is directly linked to their overall state of well-being and mental health.

IAIE is very pleased to announce the coming back of the 2 experts to offer mindful awareness training for school teachers as well as to equip teachers to conduct mindfulness training for their students. We are further pleased that we have participating schools in the Mindfulness Pilot Project last year, including one secondary school and one primary school (both focused on mindfulness for students), and two special schools (one on mindfulness for teachers and the other one on mindfulness for parents), to share their experiences in implementing mindfulness in their schools.

Strongly linked with cognitive neuroscience and positive psychology, mindfulness could equip children, even educators with vital social and emotional literacy skills, helping them increase focus, improve academic performance, reduce stress, gain emotional resilience and optimism. The forth coming training teaches self-regulatory behavioural control while offering engagement strategies for learning and living.

Mindfulness ties in well with the people dimension of Invitational Education: being inviting with oneself and to others. It **nurtures optimism** and happiness, **increases empathy and compassion, helps eliminate bullying and aggression** and assists **resolving peer conflicts** in schools. It also **prepares teachers** to guide students to achieve maximum academic performance. Mindfulness training has served thousands of children globally each year, developing children to be able to navigate 21st century challenges while optimizing opportunities for success in life.

Utilizing mindfulness training in the classroom allows teachers to:

- Help children maintain focused attention
- Form more accurate perceptions of students
- Think more clearly especially under pressure
- Improve understanding of and empathy with students, parents and staff
- Improve the overall classroom climate by infusing it with optimism and hope
- Be happier, more joyful and grateful — a disposition that ultimately spills out of the classroom and into private life
- Experience greater job satisfaction

Through mindfulness training, teachers can more easily manage the classroom, maintain an environment conducive to student learning and find greater professional and personal fulfillment while pushing student academic and personal success.

Below is the information about the two experts.

Dorothy Ahl, M.S., Ed.S., is a New York State Certified School Psychologist. She has worked as an Elementary School Psychologist in Massapequa since 1999. Before that she spent 15 years as a special education teacher in both Massapequa and Deer Park, New York. After completing the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course in 2011, she developed a daily mindfulness practice, and has been incorporating mindfulness techniques into her counseling sessions with elementary school-aged children. Dorothy is also a NY State department of Education Dignity Act Trainer, co-chair of the Long Island Social Emotional Learning Forum, and a member of the Long Island School Practitioners Action Network steering committee, which provides emergency support for school districts that are faced with a serious crisis.

Marjorie James, MSW., RSW., BSW., B.A. Hons, has over 25 years of experience working with children and families. As a school social worker with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the third largest school board in North America, Marjorie introduced the Learning to Breathe Curriculum to high schools and middle schools. In 2014, the program was the recipient of an Award of Excellence from the TDSB as a mental health initiative. Marjorie has trained many teachers in the delivery of the Learning to Breathe Curriculum as well as implementing the program in various schools across the city. Marjorie has also developed and delivered mindful parenting groups to parents within the TDSB. Marjorie has been a mindfulness practitioner for over two decades and within that time has attended numerous workshops and meditation retreats. She is a graduate of the MBSR program, Mindful Schools, and an approved trainer for Dr Patricia Borderwick's Learning to Breathe Curriculum.

Here is a proposed schedule for the training in January, 2018

15 Jan (Day 1): Mindfulness For School Teachers- and Mindfulness Implementation in Hong Kong IE schools

Morning:

Both trainers will begin the day with brief mindfulness exercises for the participants, working all together in one large group. The cultivation of attention to inner and outer experiences will help teachers be fully present for both themselves and their students. A teacher who is present is able to respond more effectively to situations as they arise, be more aware of stressful situations before they become overwhelming, manage emotions more skilfully, and avoid burnout.

Afternoon:

Sharing of HK experiences in Mindfulness implementation by Mindfulness Pilot Project Schools
The goal of this session is to explore the possibilities of implementing mindfulness training with students, teachers and parents in the Hong Kong school contexts.

Venue: Room W134 of Kowloon Tong Education Service Centre,

19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon.

Time: 9:15 am to 4:30 pm

Language: English

16-17 Jan (Day 2 & Day 3): Intensive Training: - Learning and Practicing the Skills for Teaching Mindfulness in the Classroom

Dorothy will spend the two full days with the **primary schools** participants and Marjorie will spend do the same with the **secondary schools** participants. They will start by introducing participants to theory and research on mindfulness in education to young children and adolescence in the primary and secondary levels respectively. They will then focus on practices, lessons that address social and emotional regulation and how to lead the exercises with students, as well as answering questions about the day to day challenges Hong Kong teachers are facing with regard to helping students with social and emotional concerns.

Venue: Room W421 & W425 of Kowloon Tong Education Service Centre,

19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon.

Time: 9:15 am to 4:30 pm

Language: English

18-19 Jan (Days 4 & 5): School visits could include:

- 1 class period - Meeting with Teachers in small groups to provide an overview of Mindfulness in Education. This could be done for different groups of teachers when they have 'free' periods.
- 30 mins - Small group mindfulness practice for teachers.
- 1 class period - Demonstrating a sample lesson to students or
- Observation of teachers doing the lessons and providing feedback.
- Half a day or full day staff development on Mindfulness for teachers.

Please fax your reply **on or before 5 Jan 2018** to **Staphanie c/o Creative Primary School (Fax 23382924) for enrolment**. If you have further enquiries, please feel free to contact Dr. Peter Wong at 93336474 or Ms. Staphanie Chan at 23360266.

(Ken Wright)

IAIE Inviting School Project Co-coordinator

Reply Slip

To: IAIE(HK) c/o Creative Primary School (Fax: 23382924)

Attn: Ms. Staphanie Chan

(Please fax on or before 5 Jan 2018)

In response to the invitation as detailed in the letter:

My school's participations are as follows:

Mindfulness for Teachers- and Mindfulness Implementation in Hong Kong IE schools (15 Jan 2018)

| | Name | Post |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |

Intensive Training: Learning and Practicing the Skills for Teaching mindfulness in the Classroom (16-17 Jan 2018)

| | Name | Post |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |

School Based Mindfulness school visit / training, 18-19 Jan, 2018

Please indicate 1st & 2nd choice in the following boxes

| Date & Time | 18 Jan 2018 (Thurs) | | 19 Jan 2018 (Fri) | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 9:00 am to 12:00 nn | 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm | 9:00 am to 12:00 nn | 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm |
| Put 1st & 2nd choice in the boxes | | | | |
| | | | | |

Activities: Mindfulness for teachers
Mindfulness for students

Duration: Whole day/Half day
1 class period
30 minutes

Activities & duration _____

Activities & duration _____

Name of School: _____

Address of the School: _____

Name of Principal: _____ Signature: _____

Telephone: _____ e-mail: _____

Name of the coordinating teacher: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

e-mail: _____ Date : _____