

# OSCA WINTER 2024 TODAY

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### FEATURES

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## Supporting Emotion Regulation with Mindfulness in the Guidance Office: A Workshop Review

IN SECTION: ELEMENTARY CORNER | By Lisa Butera-Fracassi in consultation with Angela Ventrice Heidi Bornstein, Co-founder and Executive Director of MindfulnessEveryday.org, and Angela Ventrice, York Region District School Board Guidance Counsellor/Teacher, gave a wonderful presentation at the OSCA Annual Conference on October 16, 2023. The presentation was titled: **Supporting Emotion Regulation with Mindfulness in the Guidance Office**. The objective of the workshop was to incorporate trauma-informed and EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) principles to support emotional regulation for students. This workshop helped attendees with an understanding of the importance of emotional resilience for student well-being and success. The presenters offered techniques for teaching emotion regulation and fostering resilience in students as well as for integrating resilience-building activities within the guidance office. More importantly, they referenced and recognized the role of the guidance teacher in fostering emotional resilience in their students.

Bornstein and Ventrice offered educators hands-on activities to promote emotional resilience by asking teachers to engage in active listening to comprehend students' emotions and requirements effectively. They asked educators to notice, listen, and connect with their students by acknowledging their feelings, asking them to ground themselves, and providing resources and tools for students to consider and practice in future.

The workshop included information about the body's nervous system and why it needs resetting, as well as how stress affects the brain and activating the relaxation response of the body through breathing practices. The ABCD Practice was discussed: Anchoring your attention to the present moment, Breathing and Noticing the quality of your breath, checking in mentally/emotionally/physically, and Deciding what you need right now.

Workshop attendees participated in a mindful breathing exercise, which allowed them to be mindful of their bodies, thoughts, and emotions at that very moment. A grounding practice with a trauma-sensitive approach was also discussed. Grounding is a technique that helps keep someone in the present. They help reorient a person to the here and now. Grounding skills can be helpful in managing overwhelming feelings and regaining mental focus. Examples of grounding techniques include grounding through the soles of the feet, eye palming, and the Circle of Joy.

The website [www.mindfulnessseveryday.org](http://www.mindfulnessseveryday.org) offers support for educators and other helping professionals such as Stress Management and Resiliency Techniques for Educators and Helping Professionals: Mindfulness for Educators: smartEducation. This nine-session program, equips educators and healthcare professionals with strategies to navigate challenges and nurture students' emotional growth. Covering stress management and resilience, it fosters a positive learning environment, enhancing concentration for improved emotional regulation. Participants rediscover purpose, revitalizing their well-being to support themselves and to guide students towards emotional resilience in both academic and personal domains.

The site also provides resources to teens, parents, and organizations in order to build the capacity of people and communities through trauma-informed training and practice, meeting the current and emerging training needs of organizations. Mindfulnessseveryday.org offers wellness (MBWO) programs led by certified highly qualified training teams that are customized to the organization's needs, delivered on-location or online.

Under the "Resource" tab, [Mindfulnessseveryday.org](http://Mindfulnessseveryday.org) offers a plethora of varied resources to assist educators and the general public with a library that includes books and videos to assist anyone in the journey of helping others through mindfulness education.

In summary, this workshop provided educators with practical strategies to support student well-being and empowered guidance teachers to learn and cultivate skills in mindfulness to help foster resiliency in their students so that students can succeed both in and out of a classroom setting.

Check them out on CBC [https://mindfulnessseveryday.org/Videos/MindfulEdge\\_CBC.mp4](https://mindfulnessseveryday.org/Videos/MindfulEdge_CBC.mp4)