

Introduction

Key Term: Mindfulness: “paying attention in a specific way, that is, in the present moment, and as non-reactively, as non-judgmentally, and as openheartedly as possible.”⁹”

- **Mindfulness has been shown to have a number of benefits for individuals with intellectual disabilities including:**
 - ↑ self-control, confidence, and self-esteem⁵
 - ↓ depression, anxiety,⁸ and challenging behaviors⁷
- Limited research on Mindfulness staff trainings exists
- Systematic review identified benefits of Mindfulness staff trainings:
 - Increased happiness in individuals with intellectual disabilities when being supported by a staff member trained in Mindfulness⁴
 - Decreased use of physical restraints by staff trained in Mindfulness⁴

Occupational therapists' goal to increase engagement in their clients' everyday activities can be achieved through indirect services such as consultation with staff who work with their target population to promote well-being of their clients.¹

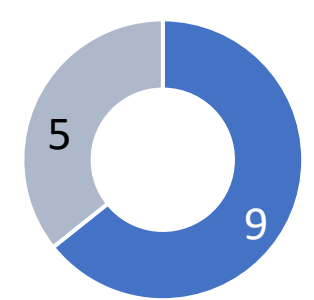
The Site: Walnut Street Center (WSC) day program, a nonprofit organization that works to improve the lives of adults with intellectual disabilities by providing support and opportunities for clients to be involved in their community.¹¹ WSC identified need for increased staff support due to a lack of funding and services.¹¹

The Aims: Design, implement, and evaluate effectiveness of a Mindfulness Staff Training for day program staff with goal of increasing knowledge, comfort, and confidence of using Mindfulness with clients.

Population

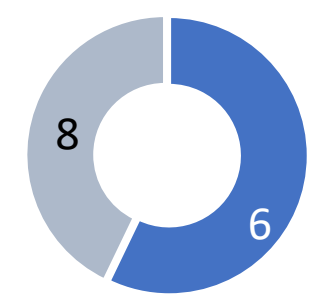
Participants were day program staff who work at Walnut Street Center.

I have participated in Mindfulness activities before



■ Yes ■ No

I have participated in Mindfulness groups at Walnut Street Center



■ Yes ■ No

*data from first training

Methods

The Kirkpatrick Model



- The Kirkpatrick Model¹⁰ was used as a basis for program evaluation process. Data collection focused on reaction of staff trainees to program and change in regards to knowledge about, comfort, and confidence with using Mindfulness at site.
- IRB approved Exempt Study

Stages

Stage 1: Develop Mindfulness Staff Training for WSC day program

- Observe daily site activities at WSC and interact with staff and clients to build rapport
- Create staff training manual

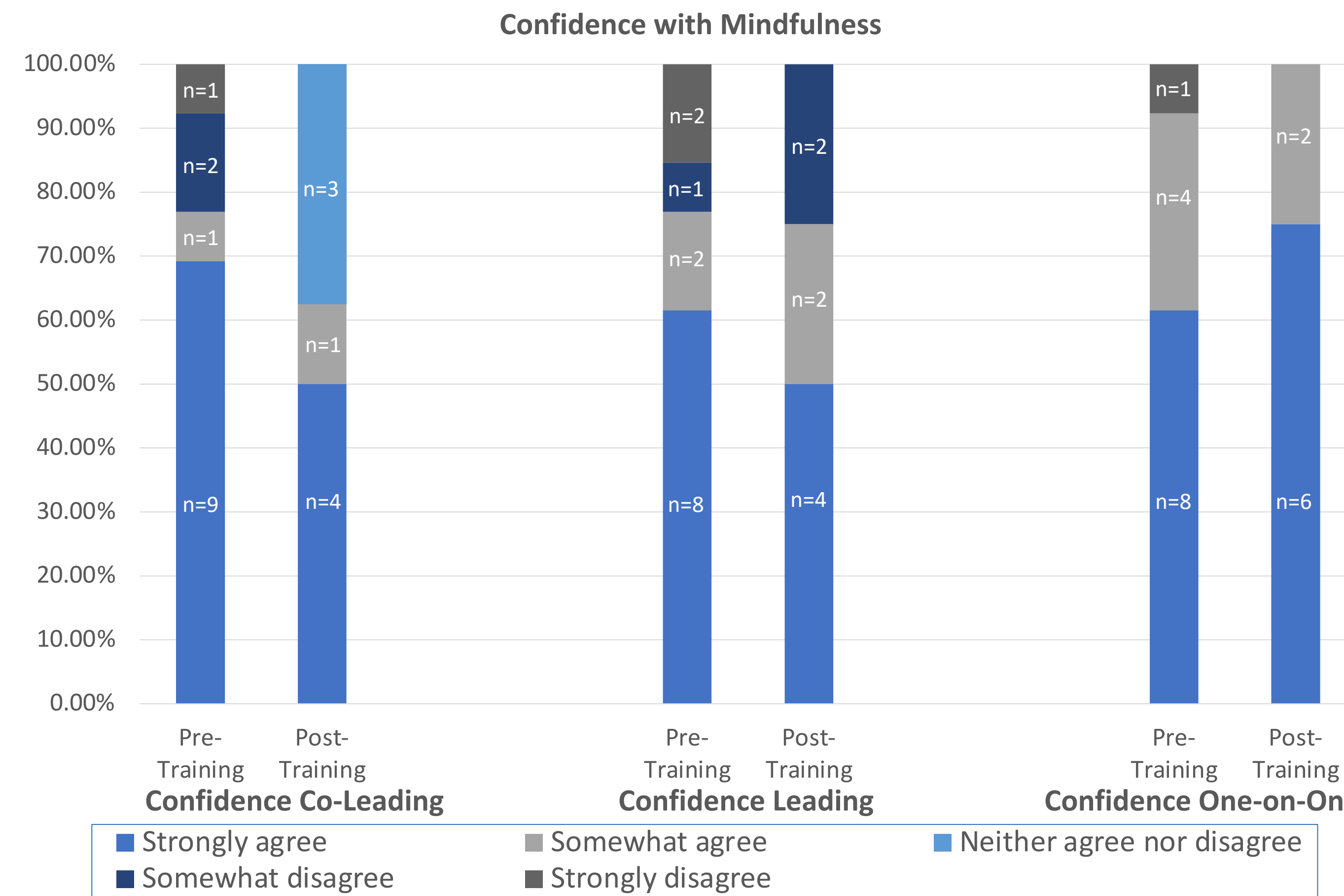
Stage 2: Run Mindfulness Staff Training at WSC day program

- Recruit participants with Site Mentor
- Run Training
- Post-training interviews

Stage 3: Reflections, recommendations, and data analysis

- Quantitative data analysis on surveys
- Qualitative data analysis on interview
- Site recommendations

Results



Wilcoxon signed rank conducted on paired pre/post (n=3); no significance

87.5% reported learning one new skill or strategy (n=8)
75% strongly agreed training was relevant to their work (n=8)

3 individuals participated in both the first and second training

2 out of 3 individuals pre/post surveyed strongly agreed to being confident in 1:1, co-leading, and leading Mindfulness

1 out of 3 had increased confidence in co-leading a Mindfulness group post second training

Interview Themes

Sensory/senses	Feelings	Thoughts	Training Suggestions	Other suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature • Visual • Touch • Listen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff burnout • Mindfulness is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training was informative • Staff buy in is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More interactive elements • Open-ended questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for staff to practice Mindfulness

Discussion

Informal interactions and reflections with the staff led to the understanding that some staff were more comfortable with Mindfulness than others. Immediately it became evident that using a coaching and co-leading format for future Mindfulness groups would be helpful. For future trainings, it may be useful to survey all staff to get a baseline understanding of staff exposure level and interest with Mindfulness.

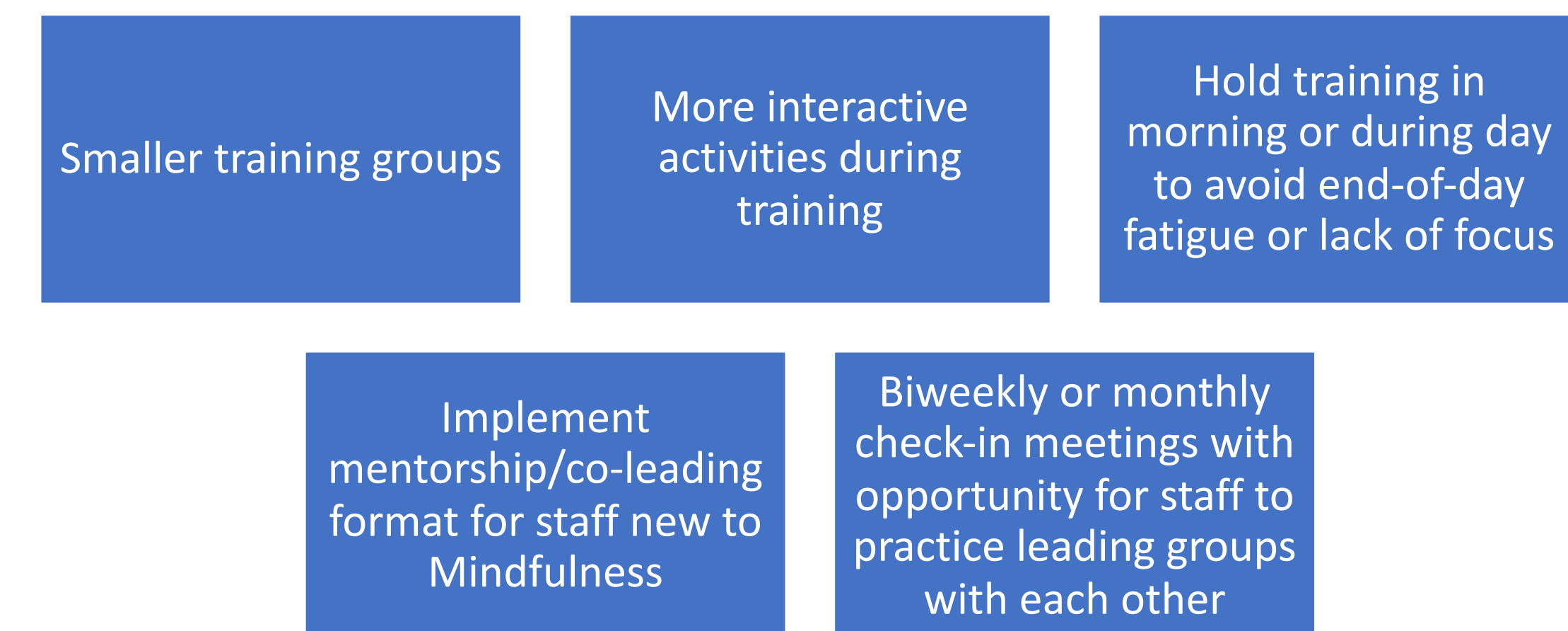
Moving forward with the Mindfulness program at WSC, focusing on the important role and impact of the middle managers can have benefits. Research shows that middle managers are able to effectively facilitate the implementation of change and innovation.^{2,3} Middle managers continuing to encourage and coach staff to use knowledge from training and to participate in quality improvement initiatives are proven practices they can use to increase effectiveness of implementing new programs.⁶

Role for future fieldwork and DEC students at WSC is to continue with Mindfulness training through the behavior and results stages of the Kirkpatrick Model.¹⁰

Limitations

- Small sample size and attrition from n=13 to n=8
- Only 3 participants participated in Part I as well as Part II of training
- Different participants in part I and part II of training

Recommendations for WSC to continue Mindfulness program:



References



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