

PEACE IN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN

JULY 2022- JUNE 2026



INTRODUCTION

Imagine having the opportunity to discover who you authentically are - to unconditionally LOVE who you are - at the age of 15, 16, 17? Mindful Studies, the nation's first, for-credit, semester long mindfulness class in public high schools, offers teens the life-long gift of knowing their inherent wholeness. Teens who complete our course get in touch with a greater sense of interconnection, purpose, and agency in their lives. Students report significant increases in self-awareness and compassion for self and others. They share that they are less anxious and more able to cope with the ups and downs of life.

At Peace in Schools, we believe it is essential to equip teens with a toolset for wellbeing. We know that this can, and must be an integrated part of their high school education. For all these reasons and more, I am deeply honored to present our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. May every child have peace in their mind, in their heart, and in their school.

Janice Martellucci
JANICE MARTELLUCCI
Executive Director

WE ALL WANT TO **BELONG.**
WE ALL WANT TO **KNOW LOVE.**

What is an education in awareness, love and belonging?



**We've created an essential
inner curriculum.**

A way for teens to ask important questions:

Who am I?

What do I value?

What does it mean to be human?

How can I have hope?

How can I belong?

How can we belong to each other?

How can I be happy?



WE ALL WANT TO **BE WELL.**



MISSION

Our mission is to liberate mind and heart through teen-centered transformative mindfulness education.

VISION

Our vision is to reverse the teen mental health crisis so the next generation of adults can thrive.

VALUES


As we work towards our ultimate vision, we center the values of presence, equity & racial justice, interconnection, flexibility, compassion and joy.

Program Highlights

Serving Teens and Adults

In 2014, Peace in Schools partnered with the Portland Public Schools District to launch the nation's first for-credit mindfulness class in a public high school.

Today, we have:

- Proven success in Portland, Oregon – a strong partnership with the Portland Public Schools District since 2014
 - A time-tested, 60-120 hour curriculum – the only of its kind in the nation
 - An equity and racial justice lens for all of our programs and organizational structures
 - A groundbreaking and award-winning research study by Dr. Gia Naranjo-Rivera of Johns Hopkins University
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Addressing Teen Mental Health through Mindful Studies

In January 2022, the Surgeon General made a rare public health advisory warning of a youth mental health crisis in the US. Providing effective, trauma-informed, social-emotional education in the classroom is a viable, mental health intervention that empowers teens in supporting their own wellbeing.

Eight years of direct service in Portland, Oregon show that our Mindful Studies for-credit course serves as an accessible, practical, and critical resource for teens – with particular benefit for marginalized youth and youth with high trauma. Mindful Studies equips teens with a life-long toolset for connection and compassion, leading to significant improvements in psychological and emotional wellbeing. In addition to the supportive tools provided to students through the curriculum, our instructors serve as an early warning system in the schools, alerting counselors when students need one-on-one support or urgent interventions.

Mindful Studies

Caring for Ourselves, Each Other, and the World

Mindful Studies is a for-credit elective course for 10-12th graders. It is fully integrated into the school day like any other subject.

In this class teens learn tools they can use for the rest of their lives. We share mindfulness skills to work with stress and strong emotions like anger and anxiety. We learn to focus and recharge with meditation. We explore the limitations caused by societal norms and conditioning. We facilitate an embodied experience with mindful movement. We create a strong community of people who support each other. Mindfulness empowers us to live to our full potential and to begin the process of knowing who we authentically are.

Our semester and year-long courses gives teens tools to profoundly:

Increase Wellbeing

- Emotional regulation
- Self-compassion
- Acceptance // Sense of Belonging

Decrease Social-Emotional Suffering

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Judgment



This semester my great grandma died, a friend committed suicide, my parents got divorced, and my mom got breast cancer. This class gave me skills to be able to move through this.”

Teen Mindful Studies Student



Unique Depth & Impact

Mindful Studies is the most comprehensive, in-depth high school mindfulness class and curricula in the country.

Since we launched in 2014, we've offered **216** semester sections of Mindful Studies to 10 high schools in the Portland Public Schools District.

276,000

teen participant hours demonstrate the unique depth and duration of our mindfulness class.



On average, each student receives **72** hours of in-depth mindfulness education per semester.

We've served over **1,600** adults through our university-accredited mindfulness trainings since 2017.



% of teens reported positive outcomes in acceptance as a result of our class



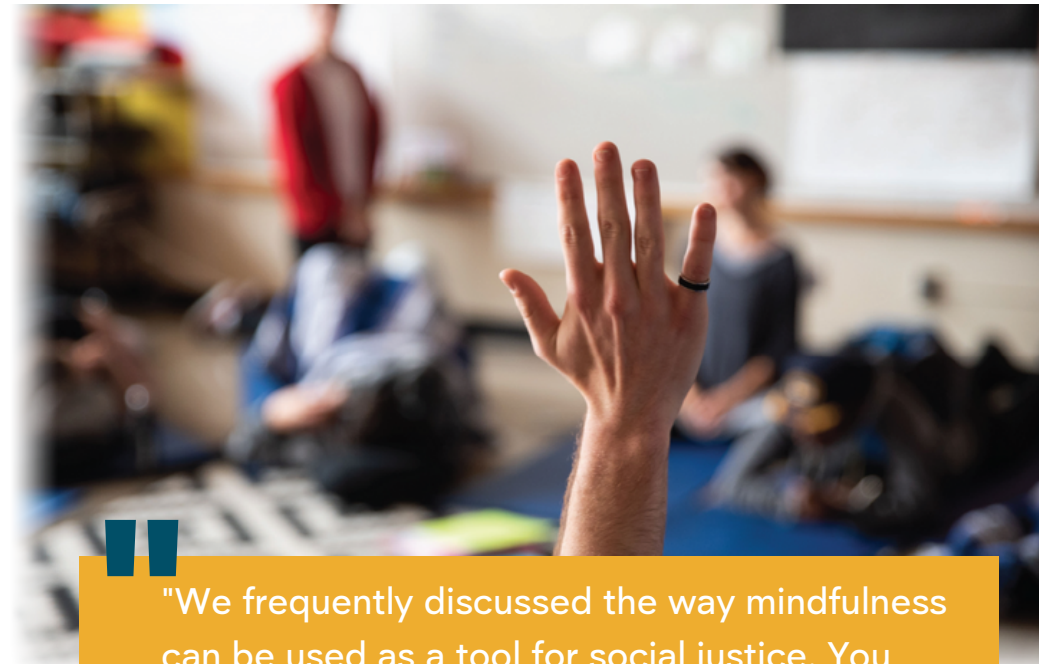
% of teens reported that what they learned supported them in relation to anxiety or depression



% of teens reported feeling more present, aware, or in the moment as a result of our class



% of teens reported positive outcomes in compassion for self and others as a result of our class



"We frequently discussed the way mindfulness can be used as a tool for social justice. You can't work to better your present society unless you are attuned to it. It gave mindfulness a whole new impact."

Teen Mindful Studies Student

Independent Research

In 2018, we launched our first independent research study in partnership with Johns Hopkins University. Led by researcher Gia Naranjo-Rivera, PhD Candidate at the time, the study was pioneering in its focus on the impact of mindfulness for youth with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Dr. Naranjo-Rivera's research was recognized with the 2019 Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Partnership Award for Excellence in United States Public Health Practice. The research points to the Mindful Studies class being an effective mental health intervention for teens, and particularly for LGBTQ+ and low income students.

Our Plan: Scaling Mindful Studies

Peace in Schools is ready to expand and deepen our impact because teens are in crisis. Over the next four years, our goal is to create a plan to sustainably, yet significantly, grow the number of teens impacted per year. We will do this through deepening and expanding our direct service in Oregon, as well as creating and testing a new Mindful Studies Partnership Pilot. Our core values, specifically, presence, and equity and racial justice, will guide our plan. To maintain depth while scaling impact, we need to:



1: Expand our Programs

2: Further our Research and Curricula Development

3: Deepen our Organizational Health and Culture

1 Expand our Programs

Direct Service

This time-tested model sends our Mindfulness Teachers into schools to teach our Mindful Studies course directly to teens. Over the next four years, we will grow our impact to teens served through maintaining and deepening our 9-year partnership with Portland Public Schools, as well as establishing new partnerships with other schools and/or districts. As we grow, we will continue to lead with an equity and racial justice lens in our curriculum, training, and schools that we serve. Our direct service programs in Oregon will always be a vital and integral part of our mission; in order to effectively and authentically train adults, we must continue to work on the ground with teens ourselves.

Mindful Studies Partnership Pilot

For the next three years we will pilot a Mindful Studies Partnership Program certifying high schools to implement our groundbreaking elective course. Rather than send our employees into schools, this model invests in training teachers already integrated within the high school community and culture. This model builds off of the success of our established Adult Programs that we've offered to hundreds of adults since 2017. More than just a train-the-trainer model, this program will provide mentorship and support to schools and teachers throughout the implementation process. Through this partnership program, we strive to equitably serve diverse school communities and teens. Our ultimate vision is to create a school partnership and training model that is replicable in other cities, allowing us to scale transformative mindfulness education for teens.

Build & Network

YEAR
1

- Find school partners & financial investors
- Design program pilot and teacher training in collaboration with stakeholders

Train & Certify

YEAR
2

- Facilitate training program for teacher cohort
- Provide support to partners for class implementation and professional development to the school community

Implement & Support

YEAR
3

- Support teacher cohort with in-depth mentorship while the first class is implemented.
- Continue Outreach in school partner community

Support & Assessment

YEAR
4

- Continued mentorship for teacher cohort and professional development for school community
- Evaluate program to assess impact and replicability

2 Further our Research and Curricula Development

Our Mindful Studies curricula and pedagogy is central to our mission to liberate mind and heart. As we build our Mindful Studies Certification Program, we know the quality of our training will also be key to meeting our goals. Therefore, we will invest in further refinement and deepening of our curricula and pedagogy for both teens and adults. Specifically, we will prioritize making our curricula even more accessible to students and teachers. We will hire an Evaluation & Research Manager to ensure our programs are effective, impactful, and data-driven. We aim to secure a new research partnership by 2026 to improve our programs and benefit the entire field of mindfulness education.



3 Deepen our Organizational Health and Culture



For Peace in Schools to achieve its mission, we know we must have strong organizational health and culture. We will continue to build a supportive work culture by ensuring we have sufficient staff who are well-trained, embody our values, and who reflect

the diversity of the communities we serve. We will deepen organizational health by continuing to uphold the highest ethical financial standards, having clear and equitable policies and procedures, and ensuring that the Board of Directors has adequate members and represents diverse backgrounds and expertise.



"This class has been a kind of safe haven for me. I know that when I enter the classroom there won't be judgment waiting for me, even if I'm having a difficult day. During times of high anxiety and overstimulation, I have gotten to rely on the fact that there is time reserved to care for myself, and to be with others authentically."

Teen Mindful Studies Student

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