

Educalme Classroom

Summary of Ambassador Feedback
(2019 – 2020)

**HEALTH
in COMMON**

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Introduction

Background

Educalme Classroom is a web-based program used to teach mindfulness at school. Helping support the social-emotional needs of both students and teachers, the program offers ready-to-use audio, video and printable mindfulness lessons for the classroom. Lessons focus on themes that include: mindfulness, emotions, five senses, gratitude, kindness and compassion, growth mindset, self confidence and mindful movement.

Educalme provides resources throughout the school year, including:

- **Core Practice** - two- or five-minute audio recordings to prepare students for calm, focused learning
- **Lesson Plans and Printables** - links *The Core Practice* to regular teaching curriculum with activities, projects and discussion topics
- **Community** - opportunities to collaborate with teachers online
- **Training** - training videos so teachers can teach students to self-regulate

Review Process

Selected teacher ambassadors participating in Educalme completed monthly logs throughout the school year (n=36); 12 in 2018-19 and 24 in 2019-20. Thirty-three teachers across Canada and three teachers in the United States provided feedback. Teachers answered questions related to student behaviors, student responses, classroom management and program features. Focusing on 2019-20 educator feedback, logs were analyzed in Excel and themed by key words, topics or ideas.

Limitations

Feedback provided in 2018-19 and 2019-20 did not use consistent questions; limiting the ability to align responses across both years. While 2018-19 data was reviewed, analysis focused on 2019-20 educator feedback.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, students were learning remotely from April to June 2020. Given the significant change in program delivery, feedback provided during this time is not included in the overall analysis. Notable observations made while offering Educalme remotely are included at the end of this report.

Highlights

Educalme Classroom was well-received by both teachers and students, helping add structure to the school day. Teachers noticed a positive change in student behavior, including ability to self-regulate and focus, and level of resilience. While participating in the program, students developed strategies for dealing with social-emotional needs, understood the importance of following a routine, and felt more comfortable sharing and talking about feelings. Teachers were better able to stay present and manage challenging behaviors in the classroom, while applying new techniques for learning.

Opportunities for improvement related to program specifics – adapting audio and video clips, revising resources and website, and extending lessons beyond the classroom. Suggestions included providing more videos and shorter audio options, targeting resources based on grade level and app development for on-the-go mindfulness.

Program Strengths

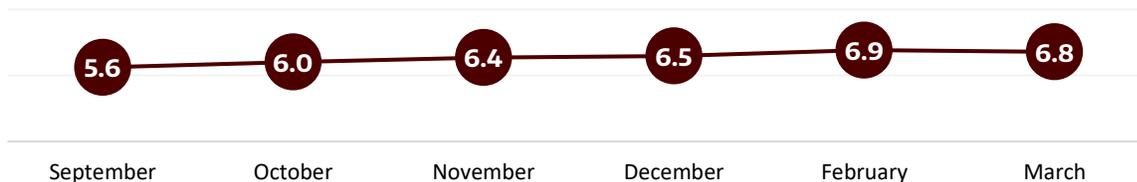
Student Behavior

Self-regulation

Monthly, teachers evaluated students' ability to self-regulate on a ten-point scale. On average, students' self-regulation increased throughout the school year (Figure 1). In the words of one teacher, Educalmé lets them spend “more time teaching [and] less time managing because [students] are self-regulating.”

A student left this message for me today: “I believe that us practicing these skills has made me more in-control with my emotions, and that I am a less angrier person in stressful time[s].”
- 2019-20 Teacher

Figure 1. On average, students' ability to self-regulate increased throughout the school year



Focus

Teachers reported that students increased productivity and were able to concentrate on tasks for extended periods of time. Some teachers referred to the fact that having “common language” was helpful to keep students on track, while others observed students using Educalmé techniques throughout the school day to “get ready to learn.”

My students are able to focus on a task much longer now. After we do our five minute videos the kids always comment on how short they feel now that it is getting easier to sit and focus.

It has helped us have common language to refocus and breathing strategies to bring students back to the present moment.

I have noticed some students using the five finger breathing during times when they have been asked to 'get ready to learn'.

- 2019-20 Teachers

Resilience

Observed resilience was rated on a scale of one to ten. On average, teachers saw students' resilience increase throughout the school year (Figure 2). Teachers describe less behavioral issues, noting, "it seems like they are taking things less [personally] and are more able to let things go and move on from a problem."

Figure 2. On average, students' resilience increased throughout the school year



Student Responses

Useful Strategies

Students applied Educarme strategies and vocabulary both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers indicated that students adopted breathing and mindfulness techniques in other classes, on the playground, and at home. Often unprompted, teachers noted that now "[students] have tools they can use before they come and ask for help."

Students are able to take breathing to other classrooms with them and educate their peers as well as teachers. As a result of a group of students wanting to "practice breathing" before a test, teachers are learning the techniques through them. This also empowers the students!

A student told me he practiced 5 finger breathing outside at recess when he was mad so he could make a good choice.
- 2019-20 Teachers

Builds Routine

As students became familiar with Educarme, it was considered a regular classroom activity. Teachers noted students were aware if activities were missed because students "look forward to [Educarme] and consider [it] an important part of their day."

Making mindfulness a part of our daily routine has worked very well, the students now are in the habit of knowing what they need to do to be ready for our practice.

A child with autism that I support some mornings was asking about why we didn't do the Educarme program when I forgot it one day. He was practicing his five-finger breathing already, even without me.
- 2019-20 Teachers

Sharing Feelings

Students ability to share feelings and recognize emotions (their own and their peers) improved. Teachers also spoke of students' increased desire to share feelings. In one example, a child with autism started to talk about his feelings and his teacher noted, "This is huge. He is starting to tell me when he is sad and or upset, [which was] something that made him really uncomfortable in the beginning."

Educarme has helped our class feel more like a safe space for students to express their feelings. ... When students are getting frustrated or say "I can't do that!" there are a number of students piping up and saying "Yes you can!" or "Keep trying!" It is rewarding to see as a teacher.
- 2019-20 Teacher

Classroom Management

Behaviour Management

With the help of Educalme, teachers are better able to manage challenging classroom behaviors.

Teachers referred to common program vocabulary and strategies being helpful to “cue the class in to calming down and getting ready to learn.” Others spoke about leading by example, saying, “in order to help my students stay in control I’ve had to ensure that I can stay in control...I model [that behavior] using the [Educalme] strategies when I am feeling overwhelmed...”

I 10/10 recommend any teacher use mindfulness as a means to reduce unwanted behaviours and promote a calm happy environment.
- 2019-20 Teacher

Academics

Educalme helped students apply new techniques for learning. Teachers described several ways the program has helped academically including, using a growth mindset, goal setting and focusing attention.

Educalme has definitely helped students have a more open mindset about their learning. The growth mindset unit helped them to realize that they’re constantly growing and learning new things.

It helped us reflect on where we are at with our timestables and how to set a goal to get better.

I’ve really noticed [that] before assessments[,] when we do our 5 finger breathing practice[,] the students are calm and focused.
- 2019-20 Teachers

Being Present

Daily Educalme practice increased both students’ and teachers’ ability to stay mindful throughout the school day. Teachers refer to breathing and mindfulness strategies used during transitions as, “one way of getting [students’] attention [and] engaging them in the present moment...”

Some teachers described how modelling Educalme behaviors and approaches reduced stress by allowing them to refocus and take a break when necessary. One teacher indicated, “having this time allows me to reconnect to my body and the present moment. ... I have been experiencing less stress as a result...”

[Educalme] gives me opportunities to pause when I need it [and] to take a breath[.] I look forward to doing the mindful moments with the class[.]
- 2019-20 Teacher

Observations During Remote Teaching

During the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent school shut down, teachers' use of Educalme varied. Those that continued with regular practices, appreciated the flexible nature and ability to provide students access from home. For some, extending Educalme to remote learning maintained a sense of routine and provided a 'bridge' to familiar classroom activities (e.g., introducing 'mindful Mondays'). Teachers described students applying the tools learned during Educalme in the classroom as they adapted and adjusted to learning from home.

It was reassuring to have this in my back pocket and being able to send it home was a blessing.

Due to Educalme, I felt better equipped talking to my students about mental health and felt very supported, which gave me confidence to dive deeper with difficult conversations with my students about mental health.

Parents expressed that they were grateful to have the resource and found lots of value in it.
- 2019-20 Teachers