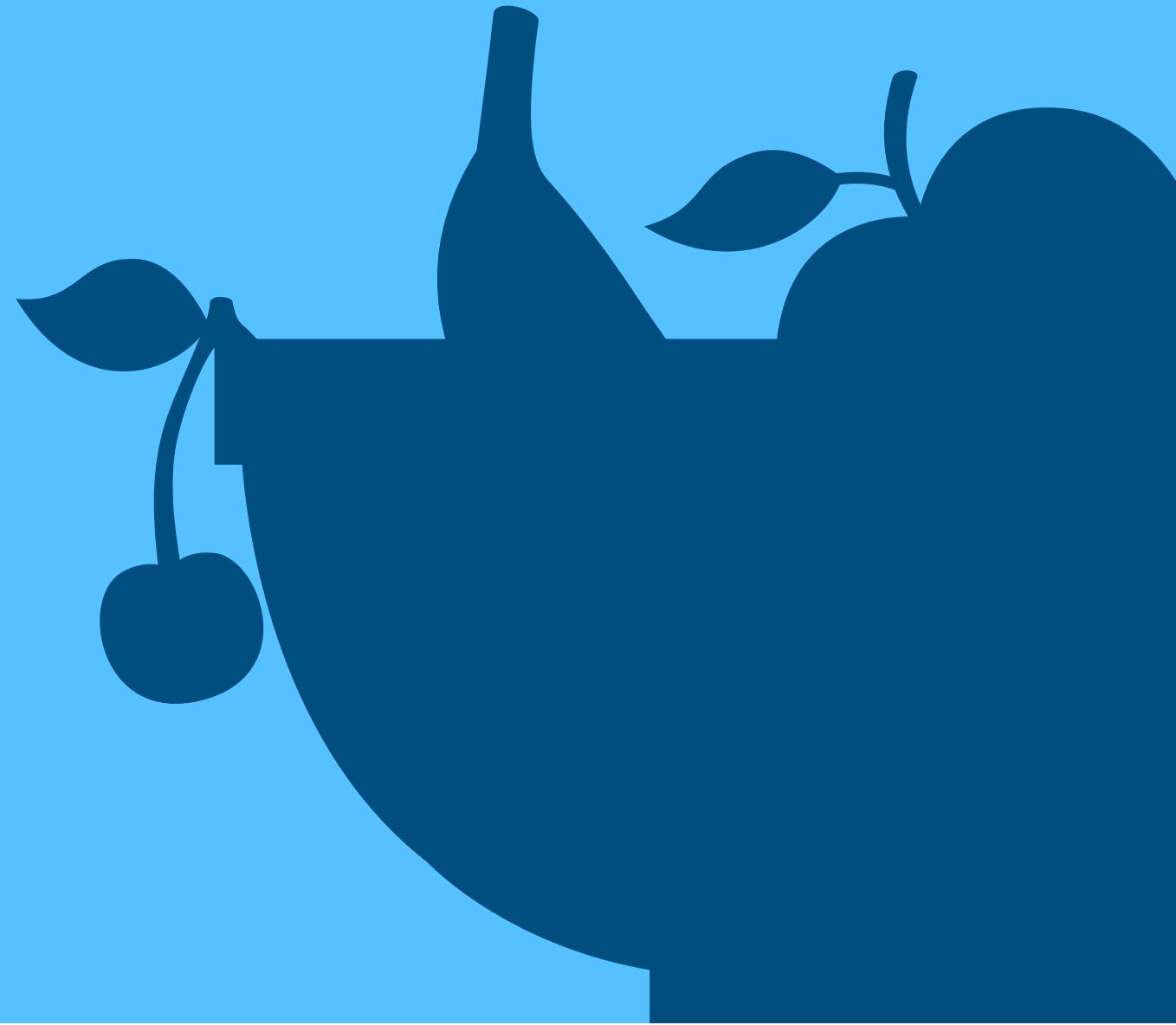


Christian Meditation in Schools

Evidence of the benefits



Centre for Children
and Young People



Southern Cross
University



The World Community
for Christian Meditation

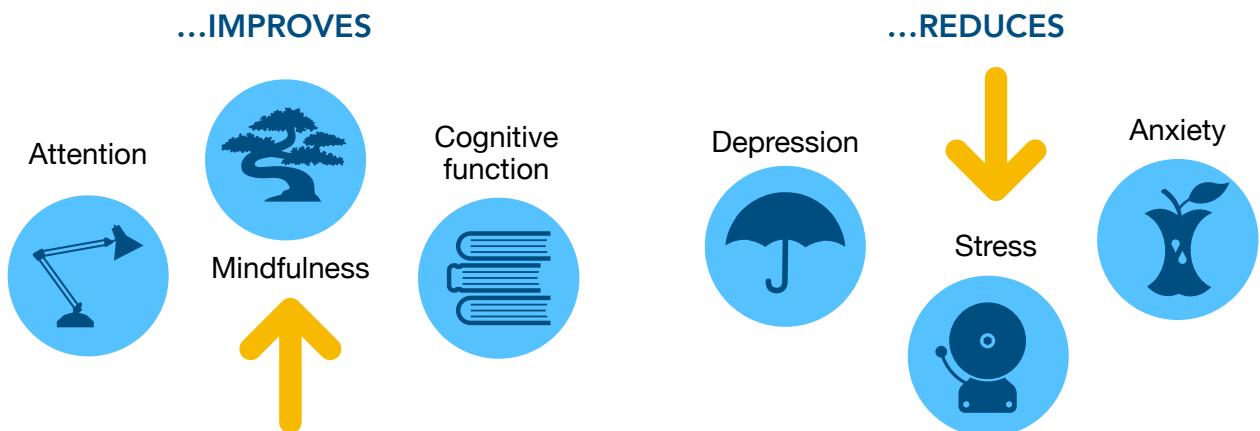
Christian Meditation in Schools

The Benefits

Scientific research shows that practising meditation offers many potential benefits to children.

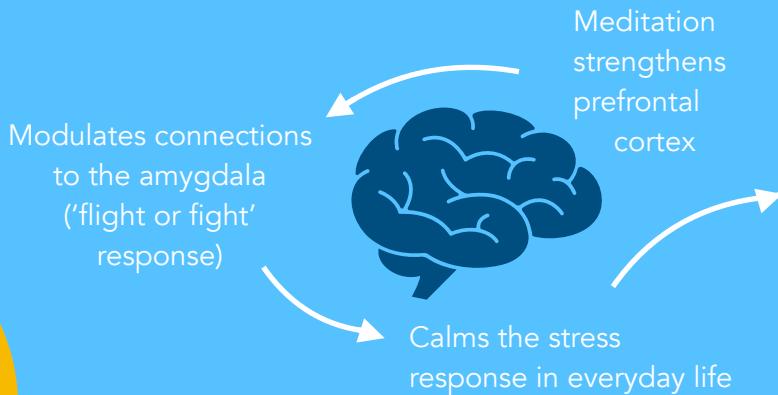
These include clinical improvements in mental and physical health as well as strengthening emotional and behavioural regulation, stress management and concentration.

While effect sizes vary, particularly for interventions offered universally in schools, there is now **consistent** evidence across studies that meditation in schools...



WHY do these benefits occur?

Clear scientific evidence from magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans shows that meditation builds grey and white matter in the brain and changes brain connectivity. These changes likely underpin many of the potential benefits. For example...



Calming the stress response likely underpins many of the potential physiological and mental benefits of meditation, from alleviating gut problems and building immunity to reducing anxiety and improving school grades.

The Experience of Christian Meditation at School

Recent research on Christian meditation in schools in Australia and Ireland highlights similar calming benefits.

Students and teachers consistently say Christian Meditation helps:

"I feel like I just got out of the ocean on a hot day."
(Yr 5 student, Australia)

reduce the 'drama' of school life

create a peaceful, cohesive atmosphere

focus on school work afterwards



In addition, the research suggests practising Christian meditation at school creates a safe, respectful 'space' for nurturing children's **spiritual growth**.

"I used to not really believe in God that much...but ...I've felt like he's around me now and I've come closer."
(Yr 5 student, Australia)

"I feel like God is wrapping his arms around me."
(Yr 5 student, Australia)

The stillness and silence helps create a space where children are open to the presence of God. This:

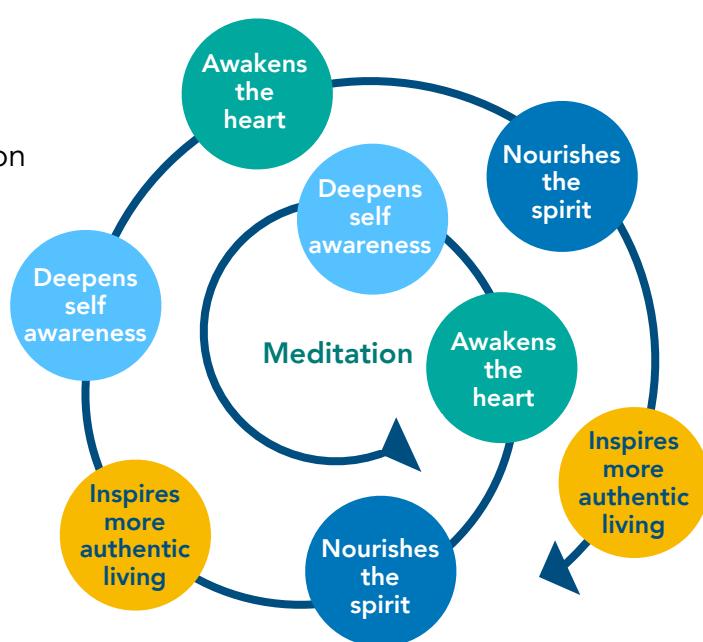
- Helps strengthen children's relationship with God (even when their religious behaviour such as church attendance may begin to drop)
- Offers a sense of personal agency in spirituality which can renew faith

In turn, the research shows Christian meditation also helps children become more aware and accepting of themselves and others:

- Supports identity formation and self-acceptance
- Increases kindness towards others
- Fosters a sense of community

"When I meditate I feel more 'me' than I ever did before."

(Norah, age 11, Ireland)



The evidence to date highlights that the practice of Christian meditation provides an important space for nourishing children's spiritual growth, with connections to the fruit of the Spirit. It also suggests that children's spiritual growth, and the many other benefits, might be deepened further through opportunities to give voice to or reflect upon their experiences.



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This summary document was developed by the Centre for Children and Young People (CCYP) at Southern Cross University. It is derived from a comprehensive research review undertaken by the CCYP in 2019 on behalf of The World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM). The full review is available here: <https://www.scu.edu.au/centre-for-children-and-young-people/our-research/meditation-in-schools/>

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Meditatio, the outreach of The World Community for Christian Meditation offers resources, training and support to help you launch Christian meditation at your school.

Please visit: www.wccm.org