



Meeting Minutes

10/14/2024

Hot Springs Early Childhood Association

Presentation: Cultivating Mindfulness Every Day

Training Minutes

There were 8 people in attendance representing 3 centers. Three board members were present.

Pam Furman from Curricula Concepts was the presenter for the evening.

Mrs. Furman defined mindfulness as paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally. She shared the importance of practicing mindfulness and how understanding mindfulness can strengthen relationships. The benefits of mindfulness include physical (strength and flexibility), emotional (self-care and self-regulation), cognitive (improved concentration and focus), and social (internal wellness, an increase in kindness and empathy in the classroom, and improved relationships) aspects. Ways to practice mindfulness include, pausing before you respond, listening more, talking less, letting empathy lead, and keeping a daily gratitude journal. What are some things we do to help us relieve stress?

We strengthen families by providing protective and promotive factors. All families have challenges and experience difficulties, so we support all families, not just at-risk families. Protective factors include providing knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, concrete support in times of need, and the social/emotional competence of children. We can create an emotionally safe environment by practicing active listening, providing a judgment-free zone and a safe place, practicing confidentiality, and accepting all responses.

Class participants spent some time practicing a mindfulness activity. We all labeled how we felt as we entered the classroom in terms of miles per hour, with the maximum being 100 mph. We then did a breathing box exercise for several minutes. After the breathing exercise, we reevaluated how we felt. Did our "mph" lower?

Another mindfulness activity we participated in was taking a few moments to relax, think about something positive about our day, and focus on something that made us proud and about someone who made us happy.

The class participants were presented with three questions: 1) How can practicing mindfulness benefit the relationship you have with others (parents, families, children, coworkers)? 2) When do you find yourself being reactive and how can mindfulness help you be more intentional in your response? 3) What mindful strategies do/can you include in your daily life?

Reflection: How did you feel listening to others share their experiences? How did you feel sharing your thoughts and experiences? What will you take away from today?

As a final activity, each participant was given a piece of paper and an envelope. We each wrote how we can cultivate mindfulness every day on the paper, then sealed it in the envelope. We addressed the envelope to ourselves so it can be mailed back to us in a few weeks as a reminder to practice mindfulness.

A QR code was provided for the class survey. Mrs. Furman awarded the door prizes (two Amazon gift cards and one Walmart gift card) to the class participants whose ticket numbers were drawn.

Melanie thanked everyone for attending and dismissed the class.