

# Benefits of meditation at a young age

By Bobby Azarian, New York Times

It's long been known that meditation helps children feel calmer, but new research is helping quantify its benefits for elementary school-age children.

A 2015 study found that fourth- and fifth-grade students who participated in a four-month meditation program showed improvements in executive functions like cognitive control, working memory, cognitive flexibility – and better math grades. A study published recently in the journal *Mindfulness* found similar improvements in mathematics in fifth graders with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. And a study of elementary school children in Korea showed that eight weeks of meditation lowered aggression, social anxiety and stress levels.

These investigations, along with a review published in March that combed the developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience literature, illustrate how meditative practices have the potential to actually change the structure and function of the brain in ways that foster academic success.

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