

A young boy with short brown hair is sitting in a lotus position on a wooden box. He has his eyes closed and a calm expression. He is wearing a black long-sleeved shirt and dark blue jeans. His hands are resting on his knees in a mudra. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky with light clouds.

# meditation in the classroom

Students around the world are benefiting from  
the practice of Transcendental Meditation –  
academically, emotionally and socially

By Steven Yellin



According to an American Psychological Association poll in 2007, one-third of Americans are living with extreme stress and nearly half of Americans (48 percent) believe their stress has increased over the past five years.

And our students are facing the same challenges.

Consider the facts: There are 10 million kids on antidepressants, and 5 million kids have been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), a stress related disorder, of which 4 million are on Ritalin. And the third leading cause of death among teenagers is suicide.

This is not a pretty picture. Certainly the growing tendency to prescribe high power, potentially dangerous adult drugs to treat this epidemic of stress is not the answer.

Another option, proven effective in schools around the world is Transcendental Meditation (TM), which is a simple, natural and effortless mental technique practiced for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day, and gives deep rest to the mind and body.

During the practice, the mind settles down and experiences finer levels of the thinking process. When the mind settles, the body settles, and deep rooted stresses and strains are released. When coming out of meditation, a person feels like he or she has taken a bath from the inside out — the mind is clear and alert, and one has more energy and happiness radiating from within.

More than 6 million people from all countries, religions and educational backgrounds have learned the

technique, and hundreds of scientific research studies confirmed the practical benefits of the TM program for mind, body, behavior and society as a whole.

Research shows this state effectively reduces stress and vulnerability to stress — and protects the developing brain of a student while fostering learning and emotional development. Research on the Transcendental Meditation program the past 40 years has shown an increase in students':

- ▶ Academic performance
- ▶ Attention span
- ▶ Creativity
- ▶ Intelligence
- ▶ Brain functioning
- ▶ Social and behavioral skills
- ▶ Health and well-being

In addition, this research found a decrease in students':

- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Substance abuse
- ▶ Mental problems
- ▶ Anti-social problems
- ▶ Absenteeism

The following are some students' comments from an at-risk school in Tucson where 130 students and faculty learned Transcendental Meditation. These





comments are typical of students around the country that have learned the practice:

"TM has been very effective for me. Before I began, I felt angry nearly every day, and I did something like starting a fight every other day. Since I learned TM, I have not felt seriously angry, and I have not done anything violent. TM has made it possible for me to stay in school. Thank you so much." —*Julio, who was suspended from school many times for fighting and was assigned to anger management programs since he was in first grade.*

"Since I started TM life has gotten a lot easier. I think more clearly and don't rush into things so

levels than schools in the suburbs. These schools tried any number of programs to calm their environment down, and TM has been shown to be the most effective. A principal from a San Francisco school, where gunshots outside are heard daily, said the following about TM:

"Stress has a major negative impact on both students and faculty at our school and in our community, and I am grateful the Lynch Foundation funded the TM program to reduce stress in our school. Everyday I see improvements in individual students and staff, and in myself. This program is making a difference in the lives of the students and staff at our school."

The introduction of TM into schools across the country has shown a significant impact in many areas of a student's life. If the future leaders of our society are educated in an environment that fosters inner development, creativity and moral development, then we can expect a brighter destiny for the world.

This is the reason three-time Academy Award nominated filmmaker David Lynch, who has practiced Transcendental Meditation (TM) for 35 years, created the David Lynch Foundation for Consciousness Based Education and World Peace.

After visiting a private school in Iowa and an inner-city charter school in Detroit seven years ago, where all the students of both institutions practice TM, Lynch was inspired to start a foundation to give students everywhere the opportunity to learn to meditate. At those facilities, he saw students from all walks of life happy, self-confident and radiating a wonderful sense of inner peace. High levels of stress were nowhere to be found.

In 2003, he started the foundation and since its inception, millions of dollars have been raised and more than 60,000 students have been taught Transcendental Meditation around the world. The goal for 2009 is to teach one million kids to meditate. **For more information on The David Lynch Foundation, visit [www.davidlynchfoundation.org](http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org).**

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The goal of The David Lynch Foundation for 2009 is to teach one million children to meditate.

quickly, so I make better decisions. Plus my grades have gone up." —*Cecilia*

"TM is the best way of calming down." —*Carlos*

"TM is very invigorating." —*Johnnie*

"TM is great — it has helped me think more clearly, and is a lot of help on my schoolwork." —*Umberto*

"Before TM, I was angry all the time. Now I am not angry. I am very grateful for that." —*Esteban*

Transcendental Meditation is taught at a number of at-risk inner city schools, where stress is at higher