

# The Impact of Kindness Curriculum Training on Children: Teacher & Parent-Reported Social Measures

**The Kindness Project Team**



Report prepared by Erin Ijzer, Nupur Vaghasia, Beth Haines, & Kathy Immel

# Kindness Project Team

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# Introduction to the Kindness Project

- The Kindness Project brings **mindfulness training to preschoolers, their families, and teachers**. One aim of the research on the Project was **to assess the impact of the Kindness Curriculum (KC)** on children's social-emotional and cognitive skills.
- Many children, their families, and their teachers face a variety of **stressors** in their everyday life and may benefit from mindfulness-based training.
- The goal of this report is to examine the **impact of the Kindness Curriculum (KC)** on preschooler's **social and emotional regulation skills**, as reported by the teachers and parents of the children.



# Earlier Work Using the Kindness Curriculum with Young Children

The Kindness Project for Preschool Children was based on a study done by  
**Flook, Goldberg, Pinger, & Davidson (2015)**

## ➤ **Flook et al. (2015) Study Design:**

- Sample of **68 preschool children (4-5 years old)** in a public school setting
- **Randomly assigned** by classroom to Kindness Curriculum (KC) Intervention group or Control group
- KC group participated in the **12 week mindfulness-based Kindness Curriculum training**
  - **Taught by experienced mindfulness instructors** as opposed to regular classroom teachers
- Looked at the impact of Kindness Curriculum training on:
  - **Executive function (i.e., cognitive flexibility and inhibitory control)**
  - **Self-regulation**
  - **Prosocial behavior**



## Findings of the Flook & Colleagues 2015 Study

- Children who received the Kindness Curriculum (KC) showed **greater improvement in teacher-reported social competence (TSC)** in the areas of **prosocial behavior, emotional regulation**, and their **total scores** than those in the Control group.
- **Children in the KC Group** also had **higher report card grades** in the areas of approaches to learning, health and physical development, and social-emotional development.
- On the **Sharing task**, the **control group demonstrated more selfish behavior**, keeping more stickers for themselves over time, than did the KC group.
- The **KC Group** also showed **modest positive effects** (effect sizes favoring the KC group) in **cognitive flexibility** (Card Sort task) and **delay of gratification** compared to the Control Group.
- The **Kindness Curriculum** appeared to be **particularly beneficial** for **children with lower baseline functioning** (i.e., started out with lower social competence & lower executive functioning) as they showed **greater improvement in social competence over time** compared to those in the control group.

# Our Kindness Project: Comparisons to Flook & Colleagues' (2015) Study

Our Kindness Project was based on the study by **Flook & colleagues:**

- We used many of the same outcome measures: Sharing, Social Competence, Executive Function measures (Card Sort & Flanker Task), and School Grades.
- We added measures of: Social Self-Efficacy, Physical Self-Regulation, Empathy Skills, Social-Emotional Competency (ASQ-SE), School Success Skills (TS-Gold), & Mindfulness Skills.
- Their Mindfulness Coaches trained our Coaches & our Teachers in June 2018.

**We expanded their work in 3 important ways:**

- 1. A larger, more diverse sample of over 225 children, more than 50% from lower income and non-White families.**
- 2. Younger children, preschoolers (3-4 years), were included in addition to 4K (4-5 years) children.**
- 3. We worked with Healthy Minds Innovation & employed their mindfulness coaches to train our classroom teachers to implement the Kindness Curriculum (KC) → a “train the teacher model,” instead of using the mindfulness coaches to implement the KC.**
  - The goal of the “train the teacher model” was to make the Kindness Curriculum available more broadly & support the teachers through their development of personal mindfulness practices & mindful teaching skills.
  - Their Mindfulness Coaches and ours offered ongoing support to teachers in their implementation of the KC & in their personal mindfulness practices.

## Other Research on Mindfulness with Young Children

- Previous research has demonstrated that young children (ages 4-6) in mindfulness-based programs were **more prosocial, less hyperactive, and showed greater improvement in self-regulation (Viglas & Perlman, 2018)**. Their mindfulness program consisted of 20-minute lessons delivered 3 times a week for 6 weeks by an *external* mindfulness teacher (& the primary researcher in the study).
- Children (6-7 years) in mindfulness-based programs have also shown **improvement in executive functions** (flanker inhibitory control, working memory, cognitive flexibility) **and behavior** (attention, peer relationship problems, & prosocial behavior) (**Janz et al., 2019**). The mindfulness program, CalmSpace, was taught by trained classroom teachers (1/2 day training & coaching support from lead researcher) for 2 school terms.
- However, there is **not much research** that systematically assesses the impact of mindfulness training implemented by *trained classroom teachers* for young children (3-5 years).



# Research Questions for the Kindness Project

## Primary Questions:

- What are the benefits of the mindfulness-based *Kindness Curriculum*?
  - Does the Curriculum contribute to children's improved **social/emotional skills**?
  - Does the Curriculum contribute to improved **cognitive & academic skills**?
- Is the *Kindness Curriculum* effective in both *preschool (3-4 years) and 4K (4-5 years) classrooms*?
- Is participation in the Kindness Curriculum particularly beneficial to *children from lower income families*?
- Does the Curriculum provide measurable benefits beyond what already occurs in classrooms using a strong social-emotional learning curriculum?

## Practical Questions & Logistics:

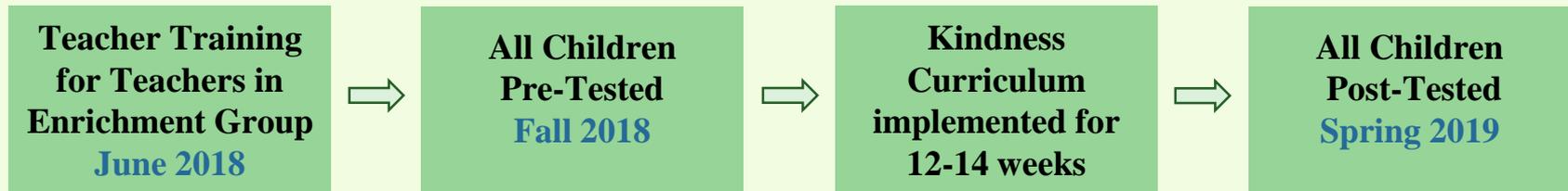
- Do teachers find the Kindness Curriculum useful personally & in their classrooms? Can it be cost-effectively implemented in preschool & 4K classrooms?
- Does the Kindness Curriculum provide teachers with additional tools to support the positive development of all children?

# Study Design –Year 1: 2018 - 2019

**Goal:** Using random assignment, classrooms were either placed in the Kindness Curriculum (KC) Enrichment group or in the control group (programming as usual) to measure the effectiveness of the mindfulness-based Kindness Curriculum for preschool and 4K children.

- Randomized by classroom; 10 assigned to **Kindness Curriculum (KC) Enrichment** because some teachers taught both am & pm 4K; 6 classes assigned to **Control Group**.
- Teachers assigned to KC enrichment received training in **June 2018**; Teachers assigned to the Control Group received training in **June 2019**.

There were four main phases in the study:



# Study Design: Phase Descriptions

- **Teacher Training – Over two weeks in June 2018**
  - Teachers participated in 26 hours of mindfulness and Kindness Curriculum (KC) training led by Mindfulness coaches focused on personal mindfulness practices, mindful teaching, & teaching the KC.
  - Coaches encouraged and supported teachers in developing their personal and teaching mindfulness practices, though the teachers were not allowed to start the Kindness Curriculum until November.
- **Pre-Testing of Children: September & October 2018 (about 6 weeks)**
  - In September & October 2018, college- student researchers individually assessed children on six measures: cognitive flexibility & attention (DCCST & Flanker tasks), physical self-regulation (Balance Beam), Mindfulness, Social Self-Efficacy, & a Sharing task. Teachers & parents reported on children's social & cognitive skills. *All children, KC Enrichment group & Control Group, were assessed.*
- **Teachers Implement the Kindness Curriculum (KC) in classroom: About 12 weeks**
  - The curriculum began in November 2018 going through 24 lessons total over 12 weeks. Each lesson is about 20 -30 minutes. Teachers were encouraged to break-up lessons as needed to meet the needs in their classrooms.
  - Teachers completed reflection measures about how each lesson went. Teachers finished teaching the curriculum in February of 2019. Teachers were encouraged to reinforce mindfulness practices regularly.
- **Post-Testing of Children: March & April 2019 (about 6 weeks)**
  - In March, 2019, teachers & parents reported on children's social & cognitive skills.
  - In March & April 2019, student researchers re-assessed all children on all 6 measures.

# Kindness Project Participating Agencies : Randomization by Classroom

Bridge's Child Enrichment Center  
Two Preschool Classrooms

1 KC Enrichment      1 Control

Four 4K Classrooms (am & pm)

2 KC Enrichment      2 Control

Note: same teachers teach am & pm

UW-Oshkosh Head Start, CELC  
Two Preschool Classrooms

1 KC Enrichment      1 Control

Four 4K Classrooms

2 KC Enrichment      2 Control

Appleton Even-Start Family Literacy  
Morning Classroom

KC Enrichment

Afternoon Classroom

Note: same teachers teach am & pm

Children's Center, UWO Fox Cities  
Two Preschool Classrooms

KC Enrichment

Note: teachers teach in both rooms

Children in the KC Enrichment group were taught the Kindness Curriculum for 12-14 weeks

# The Mindfulness-based Kindness Curriculum for Preschoolers

## Healthy Minds Innovation (2017)

- Available at <https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/sign-up-to-receive-the-kindness-curriculum>
- This Project trained classroom teachers to implement the Kindness Curriculum (i.e., Train the Teacher Model)

### 8 Themes, each with 3 lessons

**Theme 1: Mindful Bodies & Planting  
Seeds of Kindness**

**Theme 2: I Feel Emotions on the Inside**

**Theme 3: How I Feel on the Inside, Shows on  
the Outside**

**Theme 4: Taking Care of Strong Emotions on  
the Inside & Outside**

**Theme 5: Calming & Working Out Problems**

**Theme 6: Gratitude**

**Theme 7: All People Depend on Each Other &  
The Earth**

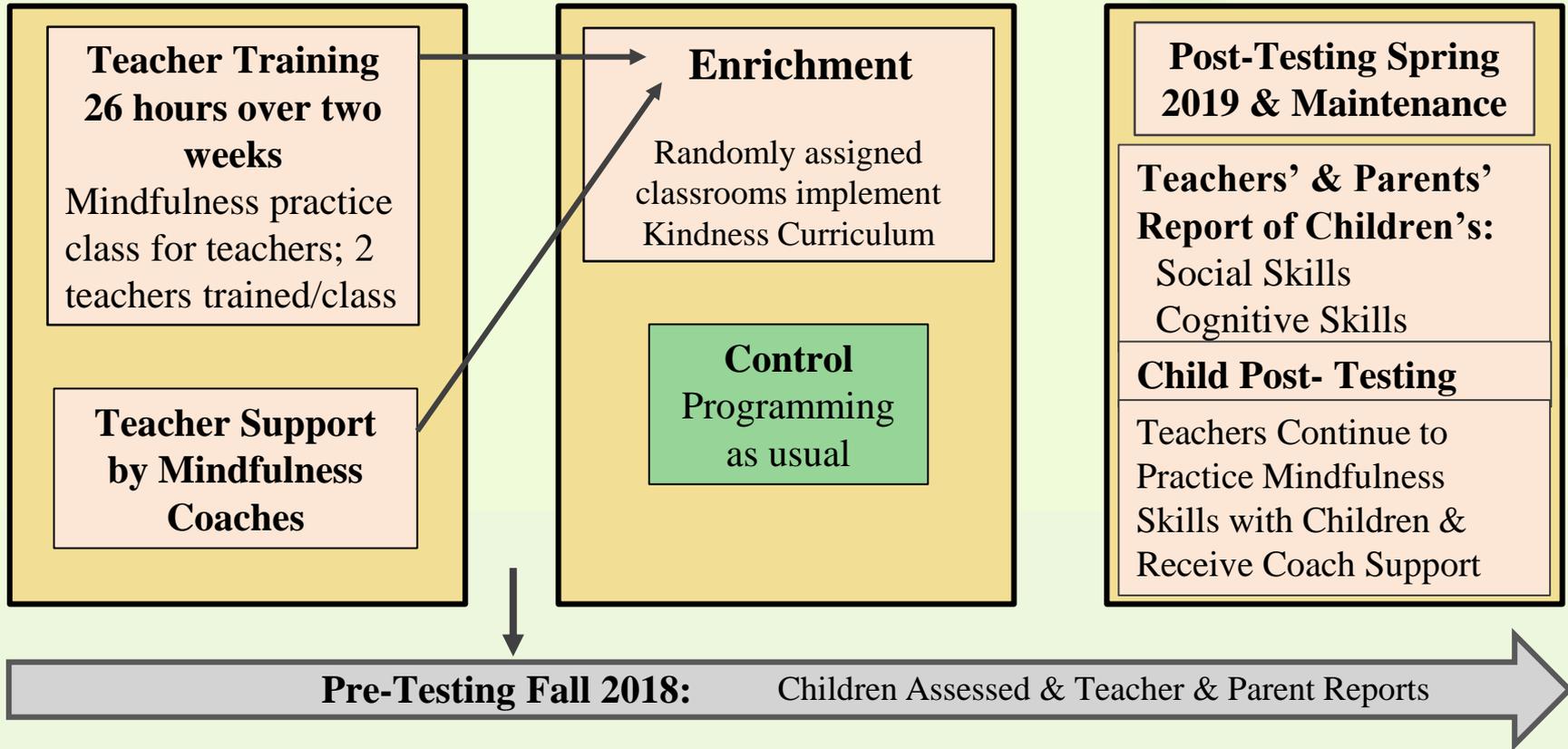
**Theme 8: Gratitude & Caring for Our  
World & Wrap Up**

# The Kindness Curriculum Themes are designed around these A to G Principles

- **Attention.** Children learn that what they focus on is a choice. Through focusing attention on a variety of *external* sensations (the sound of a bell) & *internal* sensations (feeling happy or sad), children learn they can direct their attention & maintain focus.
- **Breath & Body.** Children learn to use their breath to cultivate peace & quiet. The children rest on their backs with a stuffed toy on their belly. The toy provides an object to “rock to sleep” with the breath, while the breathing calms the body.
- **Caring.** Children learn to think about how others are feeling & cultivate kindness. Children experience books that teach about struggles, & brainstorm ways to help—even if just offering a smile.
- **Depending on other people.** We emphasize that everyone supports & is supported by others. Children learn to see themselves as helpers & begin to develop gratitude for the kindness of others.
- **Emotions.** Teachers & children take turns pretending to be mad, sad, happy or surprised, guessing which emotion was expressed & talking about what that emotion feels like in the body.
- **Forgiveness.** Young children can be particularly hard on themselves – and others – and we teach them that everyone makes mistakes. Children learn to forgive themselves & others.
- **Gratitude.** Children learn to recognize the kind acts that other people do for them. Then, they talk about being thankful to those people for how they help us.

# Study Design: 272 Children Overview

10 KC Enrichment classrooms  
6 Control classrooms



# Methodology: Participating Agencies

- From the **Community Early Learning Center**, all **6 preschool** and **8 4K classrooms** were invited to participate:
  - **UW-Oshkosh Head Start (Four 4-K & 2 preschool classrooms)**
  - **Appleton Even Start Family Literacy (2 preschool classrooms)**
  - **Bridges Child Enrichment Center (Four 4-K & 2 preschool classrooms)**
- In addition, the **Children's Center at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Fox Cities Campus (2 preschool classrooms)** also participated in the Project.
- **Ten of the 16 classrooms participated in a 12-week mindfulness-based Kindness Curriculum (KC)** developed by Healthy Minds Innovation (2017).
- **Parental consent to participate** given for **98%** of the children.



## Methodology: Collection of Parent-reported & Teacher-reported Measures

- **Teacher Rated Social Competence (TRSC)** data was collected in both fall and spring.
  - In fall, teachers were given the TRSC in late **September** and were asked to complete the questionnaire within two weeks.
  - In spring, the teachers were given the TRSC in late **February** and were asked to complete the questionnaire within two weeks.
- Teachers also completed the **BRIEF-P**, rating each child's executive function skills, when the school year began (**Fall, 2018**) and again in **Spring, 2019**.
- Parents were given the **Griffith Empathy Measure (GEM)** in October, 2018, and again in Spring 2019, with a note explaining the measure & requesting completion within two weeks.



# Child Demographics

*SES Categories based on the eligibility for free/reduced lunch		Time 1 (Fall)		Time 2 (Spring)		Overall
		Kindness Enrichment	Control	Kindness Enrichment	Control	
Overall		143 (59.8%)	96 (40.2%)	150 (61%)	96 (39%)	259
Gender	Female	70 (29.29%)	41 (17.15%)	74 (30.08%)	43 (17.48%)	140 (54%)
	Male	73 (30.54%)	55 (23.01%)	76 (30.89%)	53 (21.54%)	119 (46%)
SES*	Lower Income	90 (37.66%)	71 (29.71%)	89 (36.18%)	70 (28.46%)	169 (65.3%)
	Higher Income	53 (22.18%)	25 (10.46%)	61 (24.80%)	26 (10.57%)	90 (34.8%)
Age Group	<48 Months	50 (20.92%)	27 (11.30%)	61 (24.80%)	29 (11.79%)	94 (36.3%)
	4-5 Years	93 (38.91%)	69 (28.87%)	89 (36.18%)	67 (27.24%)	165 (63.7%)
Ethnicity	Non-White	70 (29.29%)	66 (27.62%)	72 (29.27%)	66 (26.83%)	148 (57.14%)
	Black	16 (6.69%)	13 (5.44%)	16 (6.50%)	14 (5.69%)	35 (13.5%)
	Latinx	23 (9.62%)	36 (15.06%)	24 (9.76%)	35 (14.23%)	61 (23.6%)
	Asian	21 (8.79%)	7 (2.93%)	21 (8.54%)	6 (2.44%)	30 (11.6%)
	Other/Mixed	10 (4.18%)	10 (4.18%)	11 (4.47%)	11 (4.47%)	22 (8.5%)
	White	73 (30.54%)	30 (12.55%)	78 (31.71%)	30 (12.20%)	111 (42.9)

# Study Measures

MEASURE	REPORTER	WHAT IT MEASURES	SUBSCALE/ No. of items
<b>Teacher-Rated Social Competence (TRSC)</b>	Teacher	<b>Prosocial behavior and emotion regulation</b> <i>(Post-test version also included assessment of changes in the child's behavior)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Prosocial behavior (5 items)</b></li> <li><b>Emotion Regulation (7items)</b></li> <li><b>Empathy scale</b></li> </ol>
<b>Impact on classroom</b>	Teacher	<b>Teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the curriculum and training</b> , whether the children remembered it, and whether it had a positive impact on the classroom	Eight rating scale items
<b>TS-Gold (Teaching Strategies Gold)</b>	Teacher	Measures the <b>knowledge, skills, and behaviors</b> most predictive of school success, including <b>social-emotional development, physical</b> , language, cognitive development & in the content areas of literacy, mathematics, and English-language acquisition	38 objectives; subscales for each area; this report focuses on two of the areas: <b>Social-emotional skills (3 objectives; 9 items)</b> and <b>physical development (4 objectives; 5 items)</b> .
<b>Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function—Preschool Version (BRIEF-P)</b>	Teacher	Executive function: The child's ability to <b>control their behavior, to respond in accordance with their environment</b> , to move between tasks flexibly, to <b>remember</b> and use instructions to complete a task. Teacher reports on <b>problems in multiple areas of children's executive functioning</b> .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Inhibitory Self-Control (16 items)</b></li> <li><b>Emotional Control (10 items)</b></li> <li>Shift Scale (10 items)</li> <li>Working Memory Scale (17 items)</li> <li>Plan/Organize Scale (10 items)</li> </ol>

# Study Measures Continued

MEASURE	REPORTER	WHAT IT MEASURES	SUBSCALE/No. of items
<b>Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE)</b>	Parent and/or Teacher	Social-emotional competency in seven areas: <b>Adaptive function, Self-regulation, Communication, Autonomy, Affect, Compliance</b> and <b>Interaction with people</b>	<b>Total score</b> (19 to 33 items, based on the child's age)
<b>Griffith Empathy Measure</b>	Parent	Child's ability to <b>recognize and understand another's emotional state</b> and to <b>respond appropriately to another's emotions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Cognitive empathy (6 items)</b></li> <li><b>Affective empathy (9 items)</b></li> </ol>
<b>Classroom Impact – Parent Survey</b>	Parent	Parents' perceptions of <b>the impact of the Kindness Curriculum</b> on their child(ren)	Four open-ended questions and four rating scale questions

# Comparisons of Improvement by Group

\*p ≤ 0.05; \*\*p ≤ 0.01; \*\*\*p ≤ 0.001

MEASURE	SUBSCALE/ INDEX	FINDINGS Number & Percentage of Children who Improved		
Teacher-Rated Social Competence (TRSC)	1. Prosocial Behavior	Kindness Group: n = 135 Improved: 105 (77.8%)	Control: n = 91 Improved: 59 (64.8%)	$\chi^2(1, 226) = 4.57, p = .032^*$
	2. Emotion Regulation	Kindness Group: n = 135 Improved: 95 (70.4%)	Control: 91 Improved: 62 (68.1%)	$\chi^2(1, 226) = .128, p = .720$
	3. Empathy scale	Kindness Group: 135 Improved: 108 (80.0%)	Control: 91 Improved: 54 (59.3%)	$\chi^2(1, 226) = 11.43, p < .001^{***}$
Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function—Preschool Version (BRIEF-P)	Plan/Organize Scale	Kindness Group: 136 Improved: 34 (25.0%)	Control: 94 Improved: 35 (37.2%)	$\chi^2(1, 230) = 3.961, p = .047^*$
	Emotional Control	Kindness Group: 136 Improved: 44 (32.4%)	Control: 94 Improved: 34 (36.2%)	$\chi^2(1, 230) = .361, p = .548$
	Inhibitory Self-Control Index	Kindness Group: 136 Improved: 36 (25.6%)	Control: 94 Improved: 43 (45.7%)	$\chi^2(1, 230) = 9.157, p = .002^{**}$

# Comparisons of Improvement by Group (Continued)

\*p ≤ 0.05; \*\*p ≤ 0.01; \*\*\*p ≤ 0.001

MEASURE	SUBSCALE/ INDEX	FINDINGS: Number & Percentage of Children who Improved (Note return rate lower on parent-reported measures)		
<b>Griffith Empathy</b>	<b>Cognitive Empathy</b>	<b>Kindness Group: 96 Improved: 58 (60.4%)</b>	<b>Control: 69 Improved: 28 (40.6%)</b>	$\chi^2(1, 165) = 6.33, p < .012^{**}$
<b>Ages &amp; Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE)</b>	<b>Total Score</b>	<b>Kindness Group: 82 Improved: 45 (54.9%)</b>	<b>Control: 66 Improved: 19 (28.8%)</b>	$\chi^2(1, 148) = 10.14, p < .001^{***}$
<b>TS-Gold Fall to Post-Kindness Curriculum</b>	<b>1. Social Emotional Average</b>	<b>Kindness Group: 107 Improved: 105 (98.1%)</b>	<b>Control: 84 Improved: 74 (88.1%)</b>	$\chi^2(1, 192) = 8.05, p = .005^{**}$
	<b>2. Physical Average</b>	<b>Kindness Group: 107 Improved: 104 (97.2%)</b>	<b>Control: 85 Improved: 62 (72.9%)</b>	$\chi^2(1, 192) = 23.80, p < .001^{***}$
	<b>3. Overall Score</b>	<b>Kindness Group: 107 Improved: 107 (100.0%)</b>	<b>Control: 85 Improved: 75 (88.2%)</b>	$\chi^2(1, 192) = 13.28, p < .001^{***}$

# Teacher Rated Social Competence (TRSC)

TRSC is a measure reported by teachers that focuses on prosocial behavior, emotion regulation, and empathy displays for each child.

“Does the child listen carefully to others?”

**Prosocial behavior**

“Does the child handle disagreements in a positive way?”

**Emotion regulation**

“Does the child show empathy and compassion for others’ feelings?”

**Empathy**

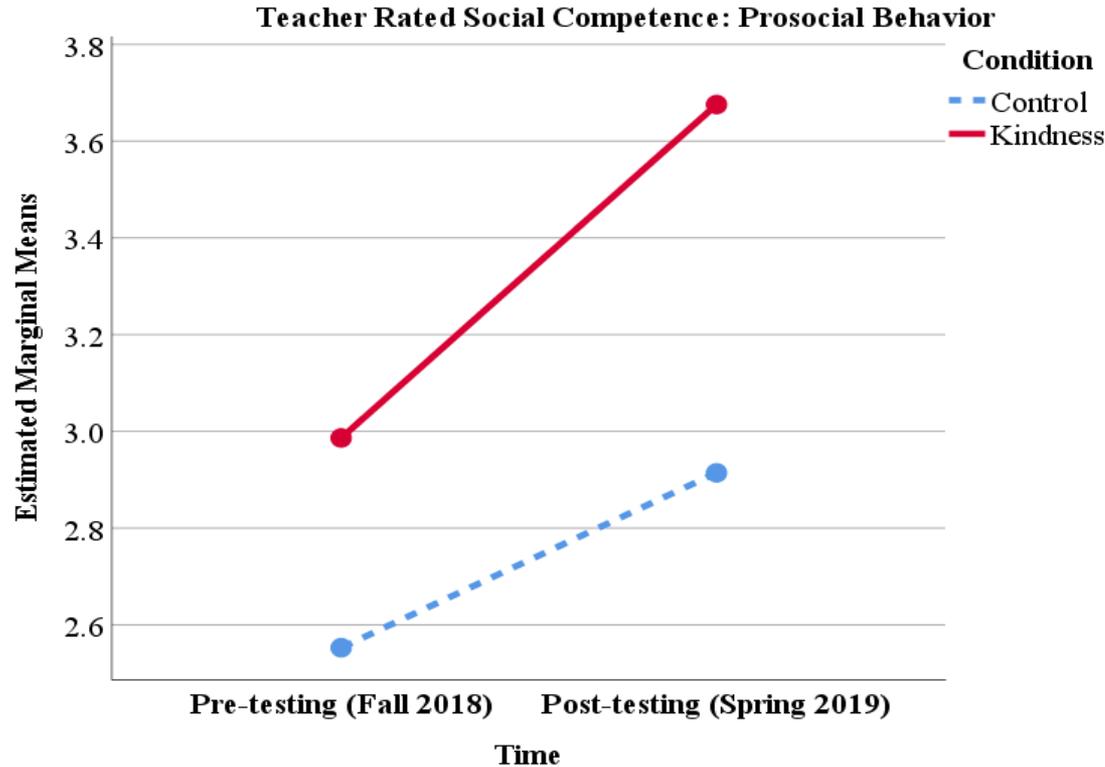


From 0=almost never to 5=almost always



	0	1	2	3	4	5
	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Almost Always
<b>Compared to other boys/girls of about the same age, how often does this child:</b>						
<b>Please circle the number below.</b>						
	Almost Never	Rarely	Some Times	Often	Very Often	Almost Always
1. Show empathy and compassion for others’ feelings.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Provide help, share materials, and act cooperatively with others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Take turns, play fair, and follow the rules of the game.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Listen carefully to others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. Initiate interactions and join in with others in an appropriate and positive manner.	0	1	2	3	4	5

# Results: Teacher Rated Prosocial Behavior



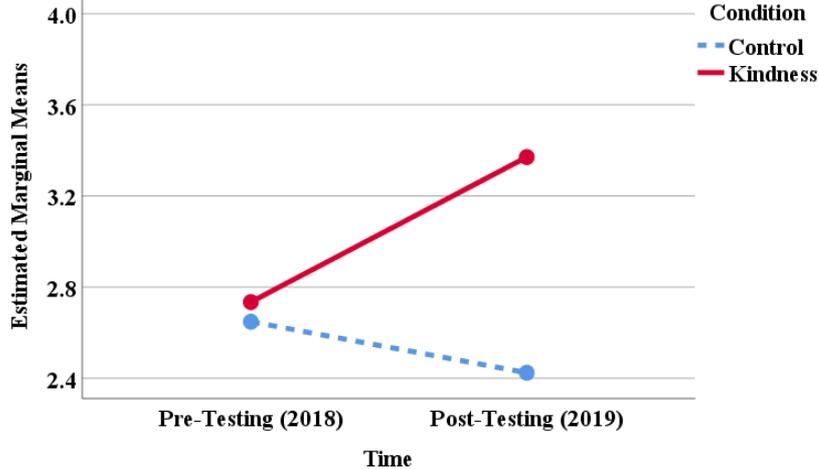
Children who received the Kindness Curriculum had higher ratings of **Prosocial Behaviors** overall and improved more after learning the Kindness Curriculum.

Time x Condition:  $F(1, 224) = 5.83, p = .017$   
Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 224) = 16.39, p < .001$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 224) = 59.91, p < .001$

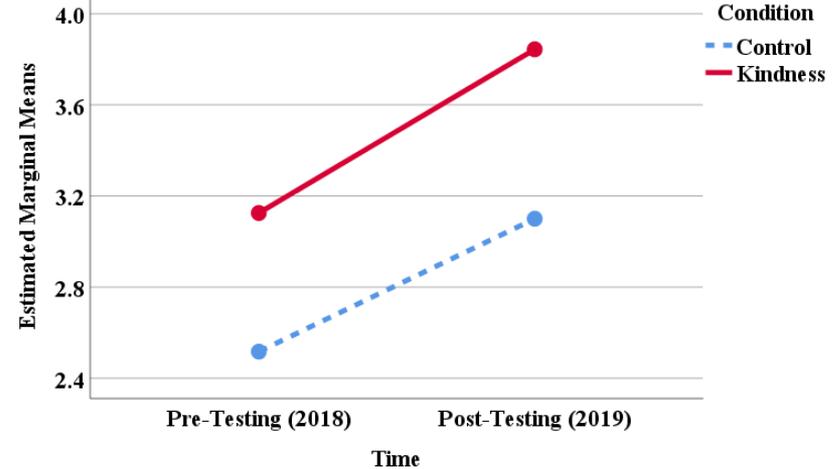


# Results: Teacher Rated Prosocial Behavior Varied with Age

Teacher Rated Social Competence: Prosocial Behavior  
Age Group = Younger



Teacher Rated Social Competence: Prosocial Behavior  
Age Group = Older

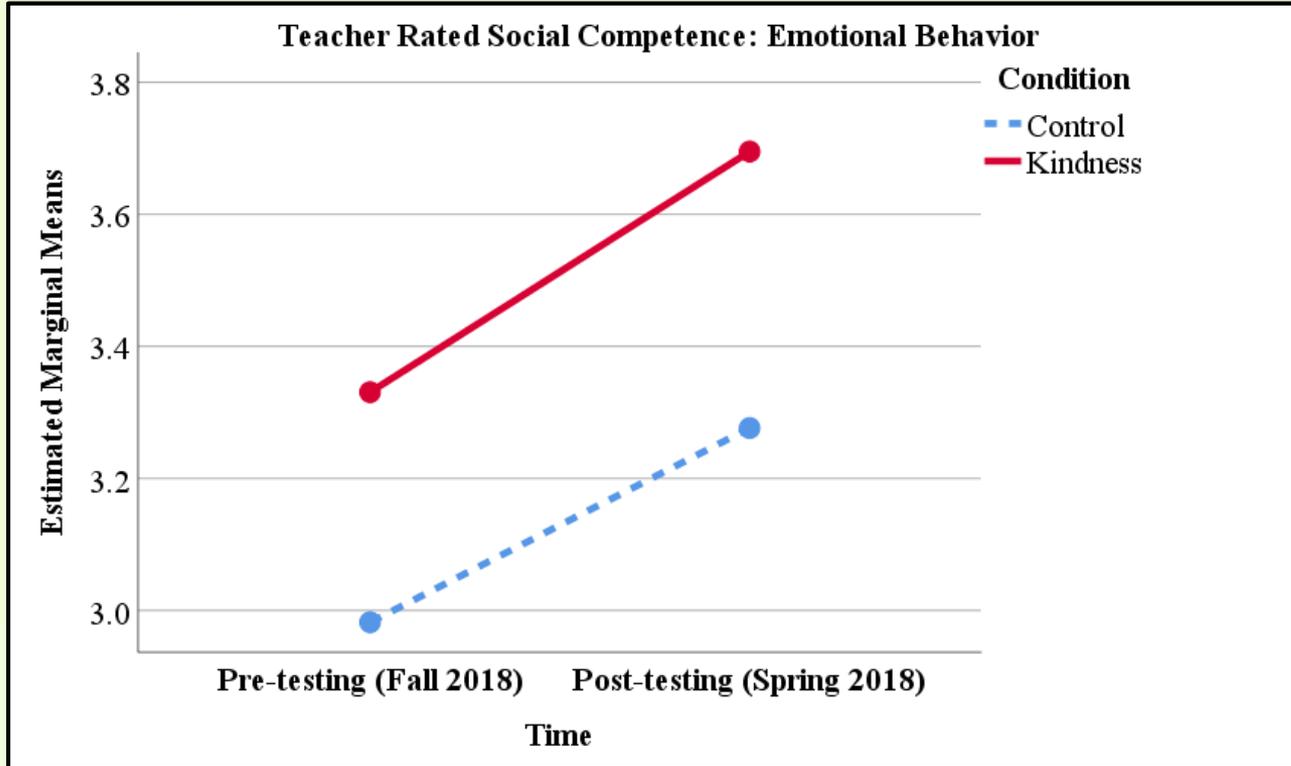


As noted, children who received the Kindness Curriculum displayed better **Prosocial Behavior** than those in the control group, and this was even more striking by age.

Although both groups of *younger* children started at the same level, those in the Kindness group improved significantly, and those in the Control group did not, decreasing somewhat instead.

**Time x Condition:**  $F(1, 222) = 11.84, p < .001$   
**Time x Condition x Age:**  $F(1, 222) = 6.29, p = .013$   
**Main Effect Time:**  $F(1, 222) = 35.11, p < .001$   
**Main Effect Condition:**  $F(1, 222) = 13.99, p < .001$

# Results: Teacher Rated Emotional Behavior



Children who received the Kindness Curriculum had higher ratings of **Emotional Behaviors** overall than children in the Control condition.

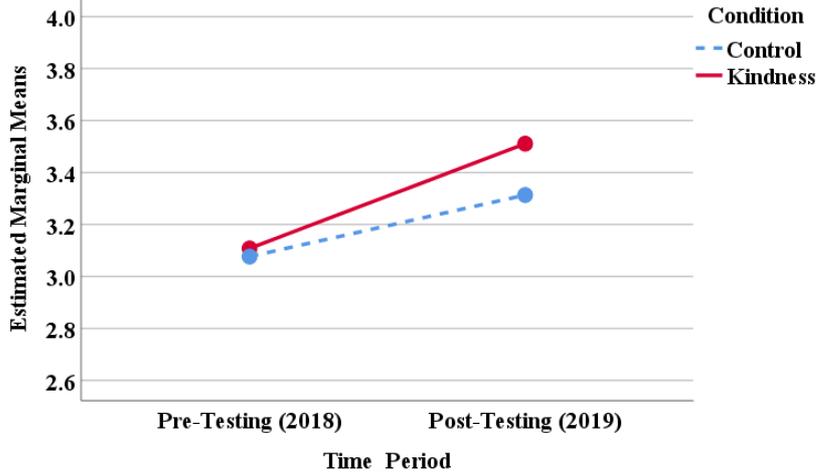
Both groups improved over time, but Control group children did not reach levels comparable to the Kindness group.

Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 224) = 7.56, p = .006$

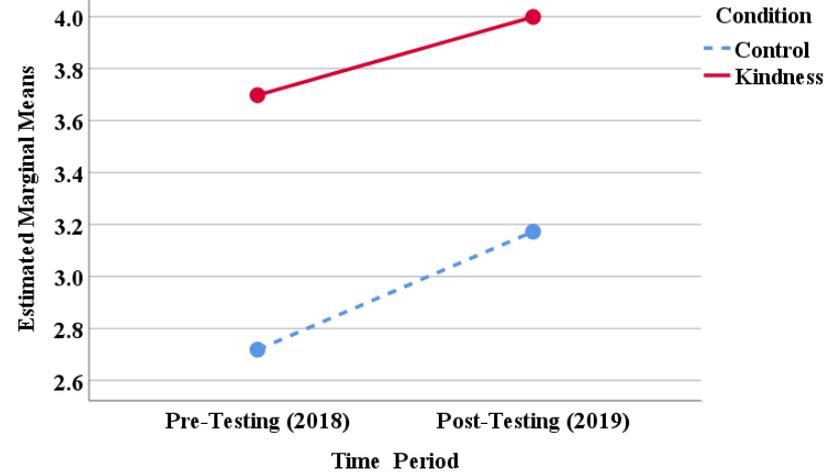
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 224) = 34.26, p < .001$

# Results: Teacher Rated Emotional Behavior Varied by Socioeconomic Status

Teacher Rated Social Competence: Emotional Behavior  
SES Group = Lower



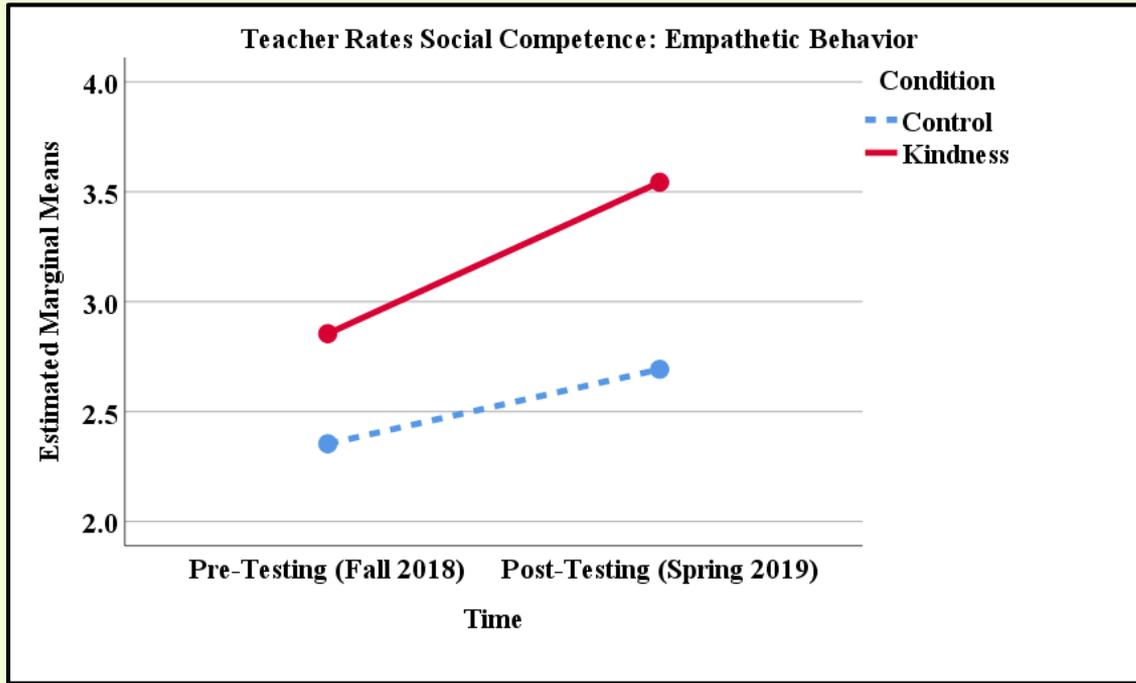
Teacher Rated Social Competence: Emotional Behavior  
SES Group = Higher



Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 11.49, p < .001$   
SES x Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 6.91, p = .009$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 222) = 32.06, p < .001$

Children in the Kindness group had higher scores on **Emotional Behavior** overall. Lower SES children improved with Kindness training. Overall, children in higher SES groups had stronger ratings of **Emotional Behavior** than children in lower SES groups.

# Results: Teacher Rated Empathetic Behavior



Children in the Kindness group had higher ratings of **Empathetic Behaviors** overall and improved more after participating in the Kindness Curriculum.

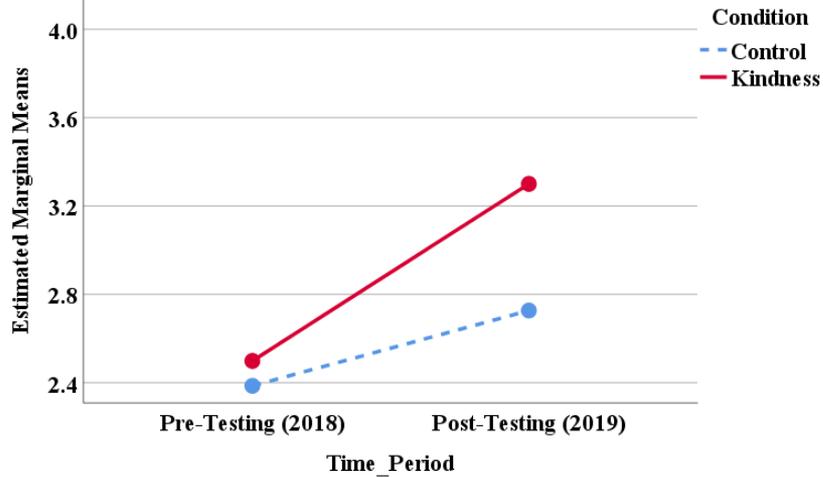


**Time x Condition:**  $F(1, 224) = 7.83, p = .006$   
**Main Effect Condition:**  $F(1, 224) = 19.23, p < .001$   
**Main Effect Time:**  $F(1, 224) = 67.49, p < .001$

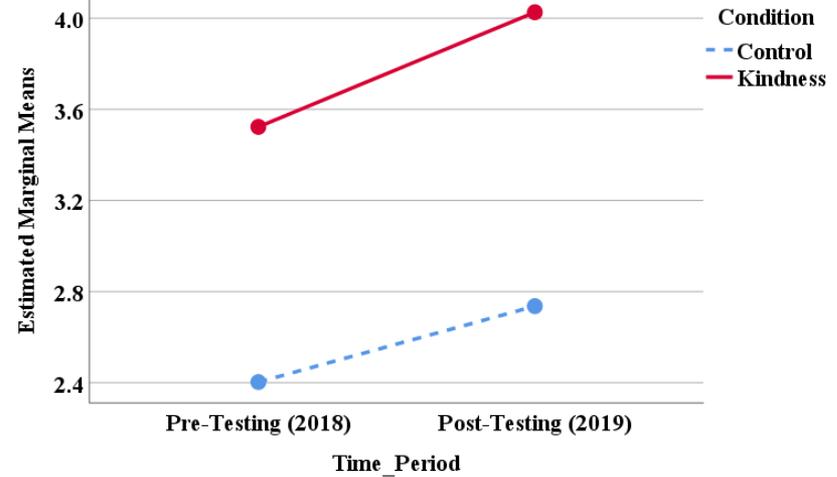


# Results: Teacher Rated Empathetic Behavior Varied with Socioeconomic Status

Teacher Rated Social Competence: Empathetic Behavior  
SES Groups = Lower



Teacher Rated Social Competence: Empathetic Behavior  
SES Group = Higher



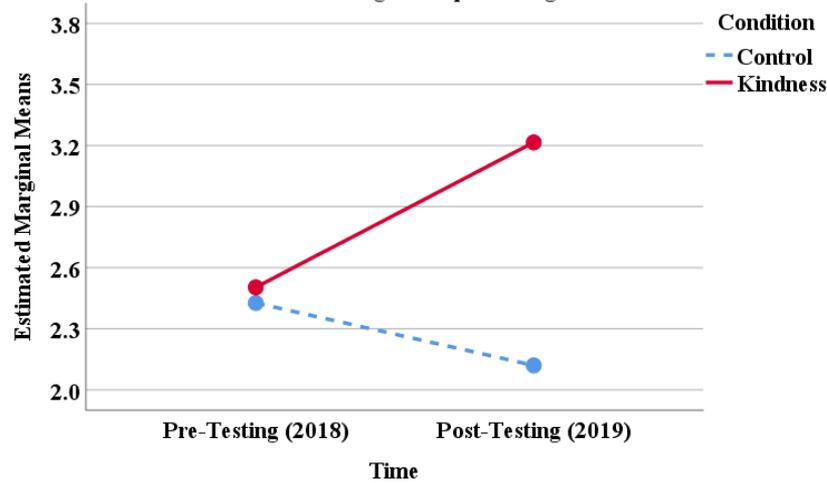
SES x Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 7.15, p = .008$   
Time x Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 5.34, p = .022$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 222) = 52.56, p < .001$   
Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 23.04, p < .001$

Children from Lower SES Groups showed stronger **Empathetic Behavior** after receiving the Kindness Curriculum than did children in the Control group.  
Children in the Kindness Curriculum group had higher ratings on **Empathetic Behavior** overall.

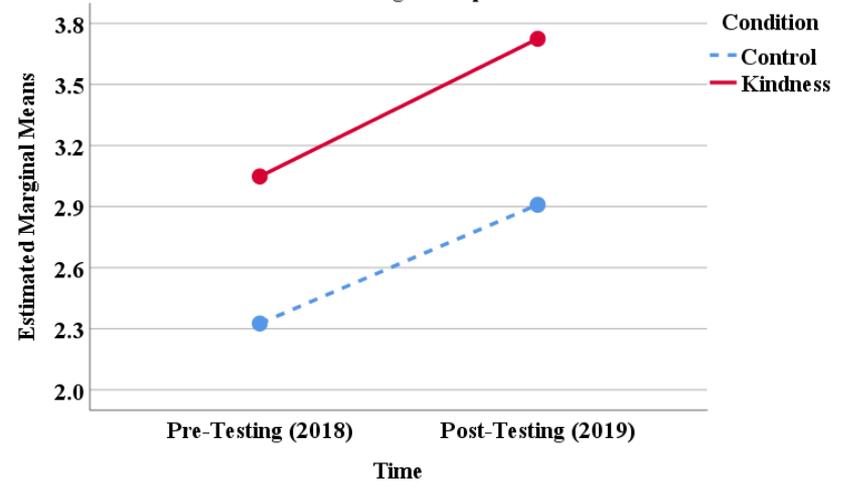


# Results: Teacher Rated Empathetic Behavior Varied with Age

Teacher Rated Social Competence: Empathetic Behavior  
Age Group = Younger



Teacher Rated Social Competence: Empathetic Behavior  
Age Group = Older

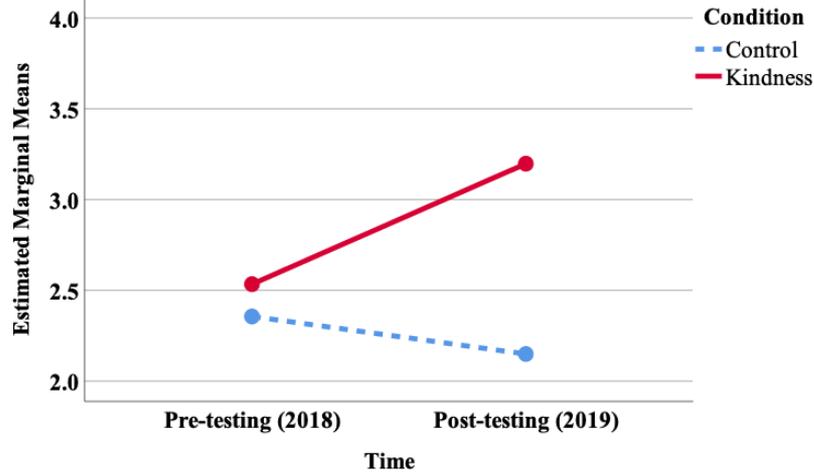


Children who received the Kindness Curriculum displayed better **Empathetic Behavior** than those in the Control group, and this was even more evident by age. Although both groups of *younger* children started at about the same level, those in the Kindness group improved significantly, while those in the Control group did not, in fact decreasing somewhat.

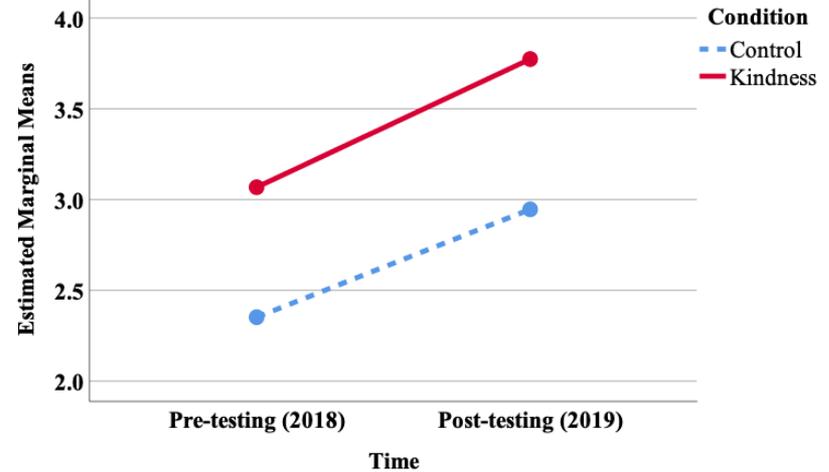
**Time x Condition:**  $F(1, 222) = 17.79, p < .001$   
**Time x Condition x Age:**  $F(1, 222) = 12.34, p < .001$   
**Main Effect Condition:**  $F(1, 222) = 16.72, p < .001$   
**Main Effect Time:**  $F(1, 222) = 39.92, p < .001$

# Results: Teacher Rated Empathetic Behavior Varied among Preschool and 4K Classrooms

Teacher Rated Social Competence: Empathetic Behavior  
Pre\_vs\_4K = Preschool



Teacher Rated Social Competence: Empathetic Behavior  
Pre\_vs\_4K = 4K



As noted, children who received the Kindness Curriculum displayed better **Empathetic Behavior** than those in the Control group. This was also evident when grouping by preschool classrooms vs 4K. Although both groups of *preschool* children started at about the same level, those in the Kindness group improved significantly, while those in the Control group did not, in fact decreasing slightly.

Time x Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 17.79, p < .001$

Time x Preschool vs 4K:  $F(1, 222) = 10.52, p = .001$

Time x Condition x Pre vs 4K:  $F(1, 222) = 12.34, p < .001$

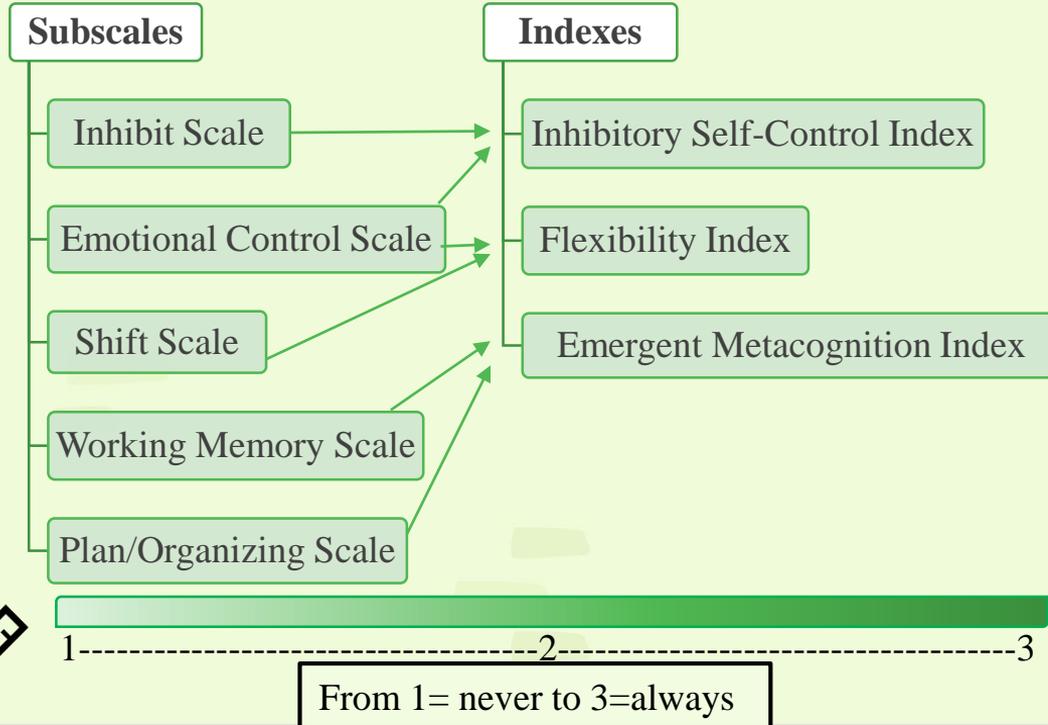
Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 222) = 16.72, p < .001$

Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 222) = 39.92, p < .001$

Main Effect Preschool vs 4K:  $F(1, 222) = 6.91, p = .009$

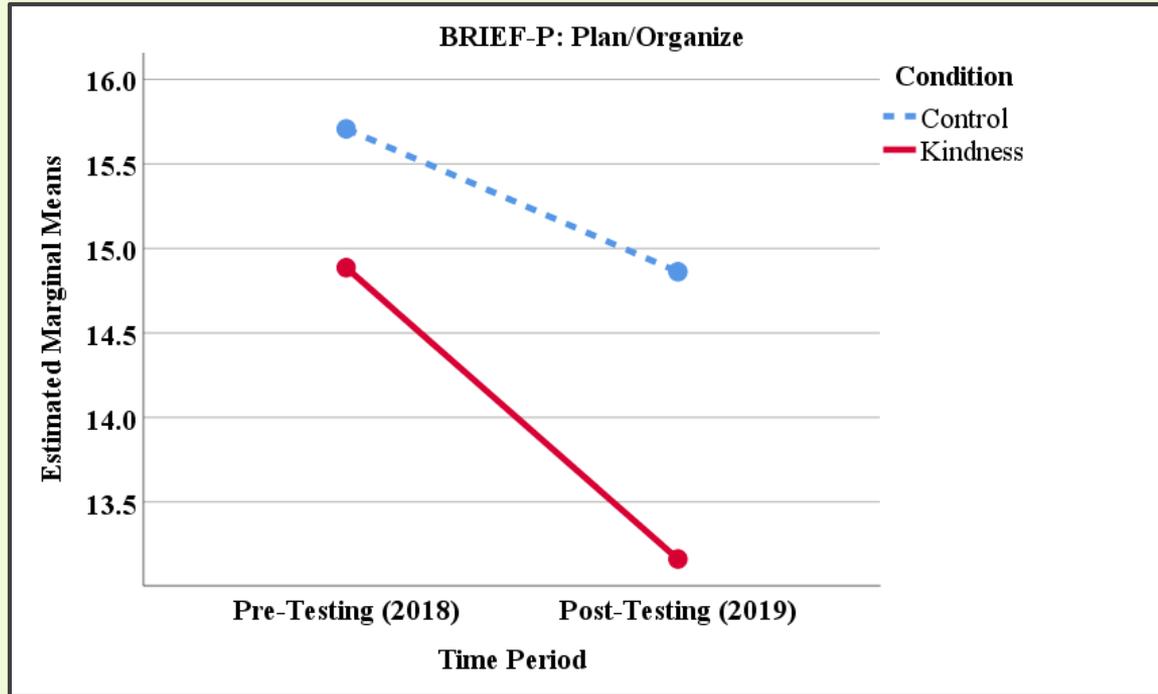
# Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function—Preschool Version (BRIEF-P)

BRIEF-P is used to assess multiple areas of children's executive functioning. Teachers are asked to report how often particular behaviors have been a *problem in the past 6 months*.



*Higher scores indicate a difficulty for the child in one or more areas*

# Results: BRIEF-P Plan/Organize: Lower is BETTER!



Children who participated in the Kindness Curriculum improved significantly on the **Plan/Organize** subscale (problems decreased) → that is, they displayed *stronger skills* in selecting the appropriate steps to accomplish the task & organizing the information provided than did the Control group.



Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 228) = 4.26, p = .040$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 228) = 11.07, p = .001$

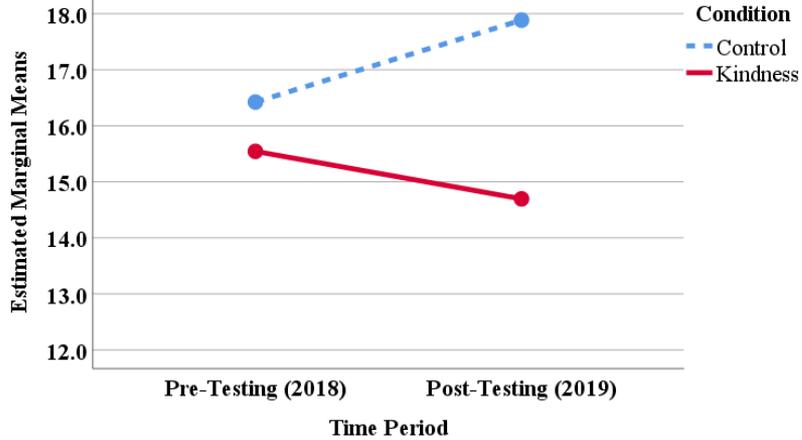
Remember: lower scores are better!



# Results: BRIEF-P Plan/Organize Varied with Age

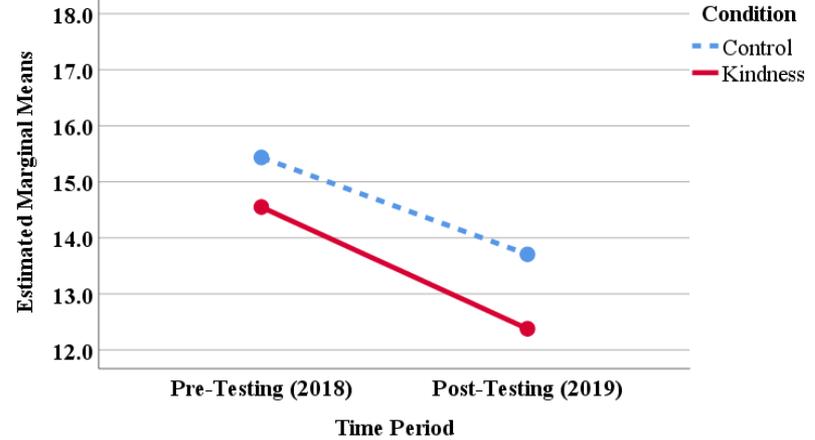
BRIEF-P: Plan/Organize

Age Group = Younger



BRIEF-P: Plan/Organize

Age Group = Older



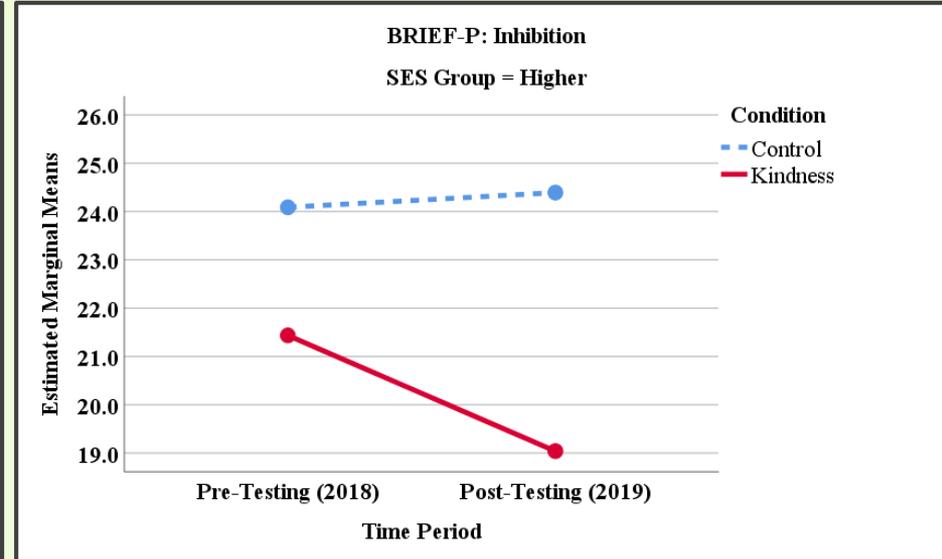
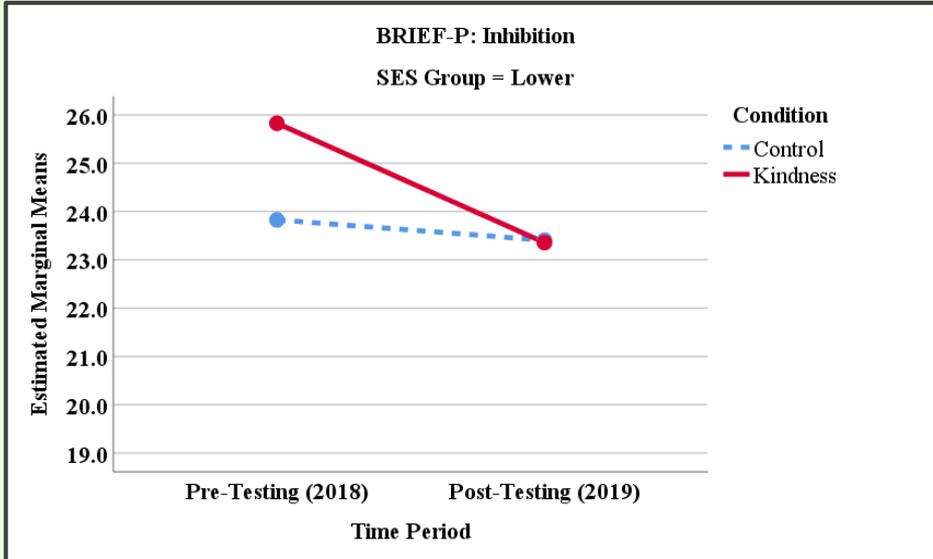
The impact of the Kindness Curriculum was most evident for children in the older age group. Children in the older age group (4-5 years old) improved significantly in **Planning/Organizational Skills** when they received Kindness Curriculum training. The younger Kindness Group improved over time, although those in the Control group did more poorly.

ME Time:  $F(1, 226) = 3.88, p = .050$   
Time x Age:  $F(1, 226) = 7.31, p = .007$   
ME Cond:  $F(1, 226) = 5.73, p = .017$   
ME Age:  $F(1, 226) = 10.45, p = .001$

Remember: lower scores are better!



# Results: BRIEF-P Inhibition Varied with Socioeconomic Status



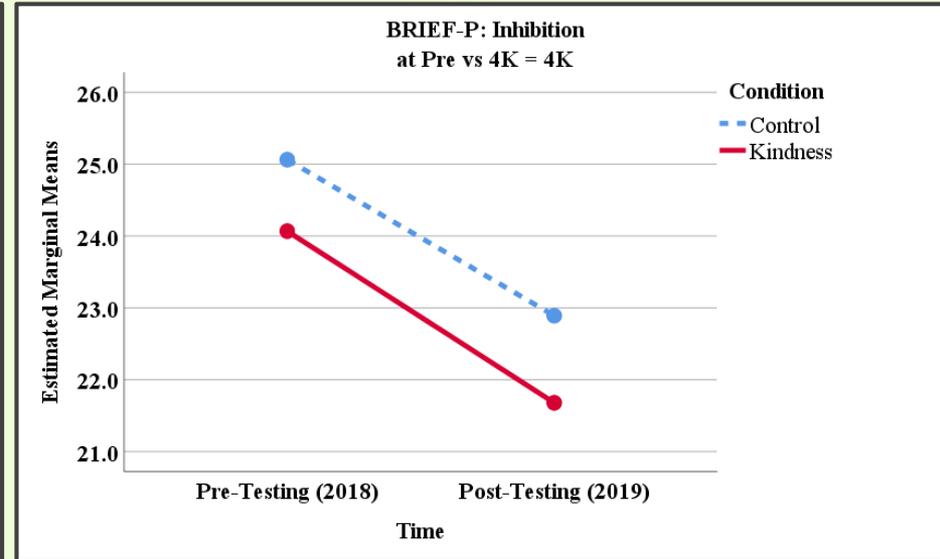
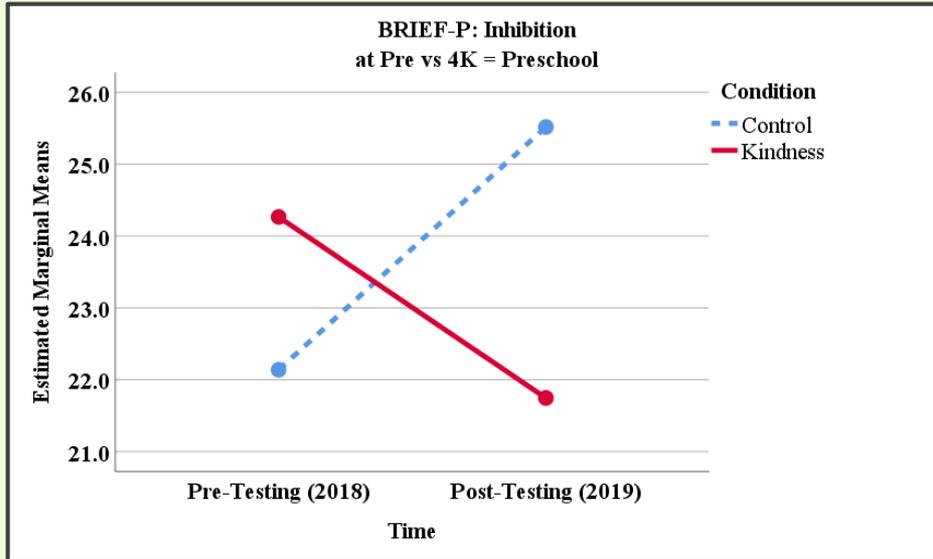
Lower SES children improved more in **Inhibition**, indicative of controlling impulses and behavior, when they received Kindness Curriculum training, than those in the Control group. The higher SES Kindness group also improved in inhibition over time, while those in the Control group did not, continuing to show difficulties over time.

**SES x Condition:  $F(1, 224) = 4.59, p = .033$**

**Remember: lower scores are better.**



# Results: BRIEF-P Inhibition Varied with Preschool vs 4K



The impact of the Kindness curriculum on **inhibition** was particularly noteworthy for preschoolers: The Kindness group improved significantly whereas the Control group showed more problems over time. The 4K Kindness Group also improved in **Inhibition** over time, as did the Control group, but not to the levels of the Kindness group.

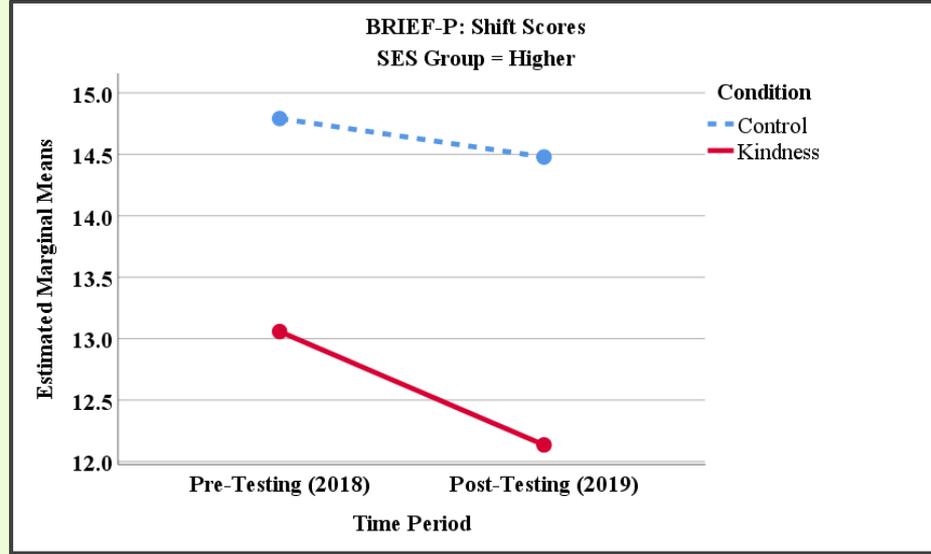
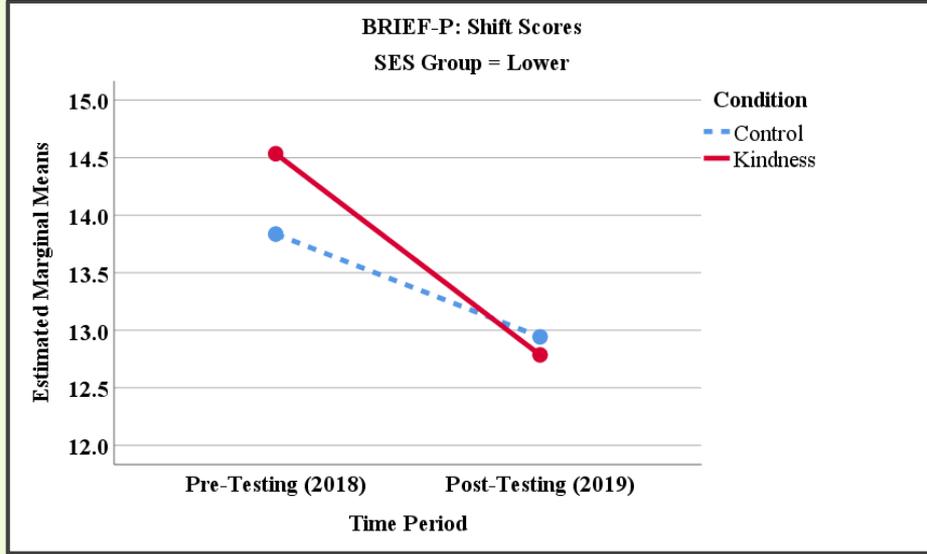
**Time x Condition:**  $F(1, 225) = 4.63, p = .032$

**Time x Condition x Pre vs. 4K:**  $F(1, 225) = 4.00, p = .047$

**Remember: lower scores are better.**



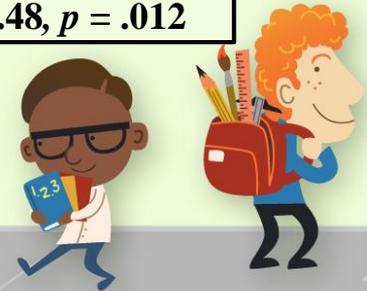
# Results: BRIEF-P Shift Scores Varied by Socioeconomic Status



The impact of Kindness training was most striking for children in the lower SES groups. Lower SES children improved more on the **Shift** scale, which measures the ability to solve problems or shift flexibly as the situation demands, when they received Kindness Curriculum training than those in the Control group. The higher SES Kindness Group started stronger, and improved over time, while the Control group did not.

**SES x Condition:**  $F(1, 225) = 3.72, p = .055$   
**Main Effect Time:**  $F(1, 225) = 6.48, p = .012$

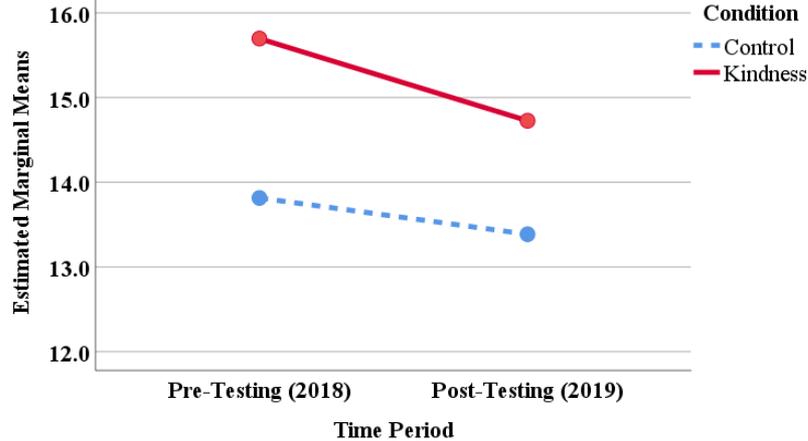
**Remember: lower scores are better.**



# Results: BRIEF-P Emotional Control Varied by Socioeconomic Status

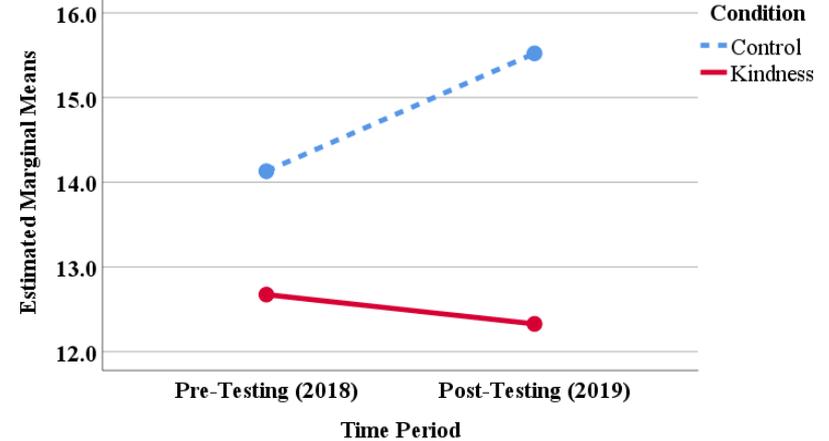
BRIEF-P: Emotional Control

SES Group = Lower



BRIEF-P: Emotional Control

SES Group = Higher



Lower SES children improved in **Emotional Control** when they received Kindness Curriculum training, though still not as strong as those in the Control group. Higher SES children in the Kindness group did very well with **Emotional Control**, while those in the Control group had more problems over time.

SES x Condition:  $F(1, 228) = 8.32, p = .004$

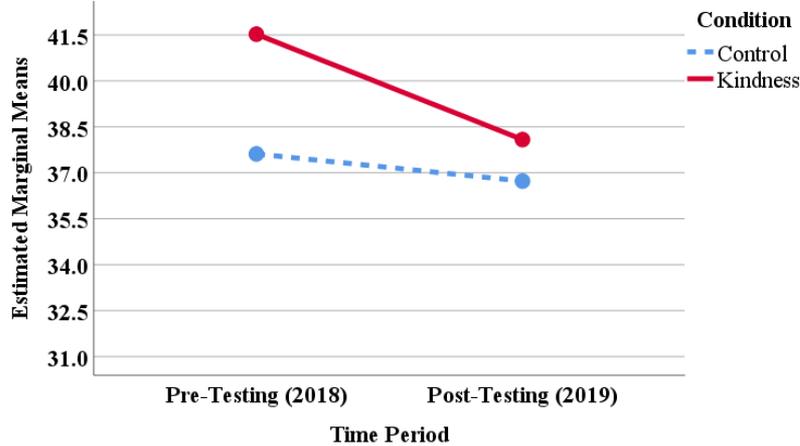
**Remember: lower scores are better.**



# Results: BRIEF-P Inhibitory Self-Control Index Varied with Socioeconomic Status

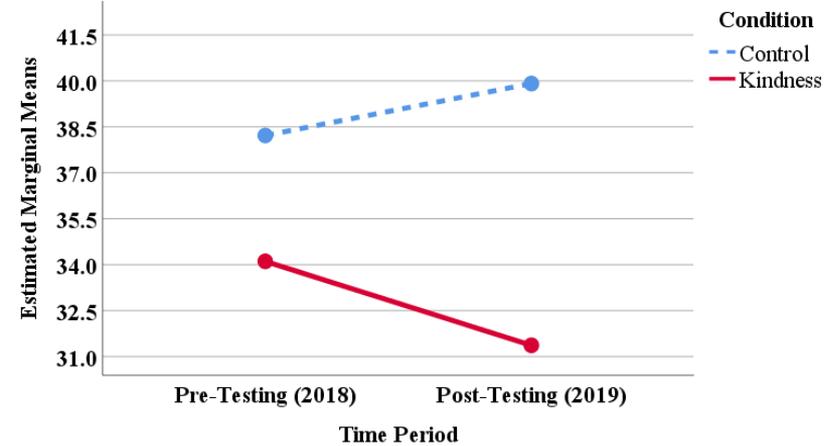
BRIEF-P: Inhibitory Self-Control Index (ISC)

SES Group = Lower



BRIEF-P: Inhibitory Self-Control Index (ISC)

SES Group = Higher



The impact of Kindness training was strong for children in the lower SES group: Lower SES children improved in their **Inhibitory Self-Control** skills, composed of Inhibit and Emotional Control scales, while those in the Control group did not. Higher SES children showed better inhibitory control overall and improved over time, whereas those in the Control group did not improve.

SES x Condition:  $F(1, 225) = 6.81, p = .010$

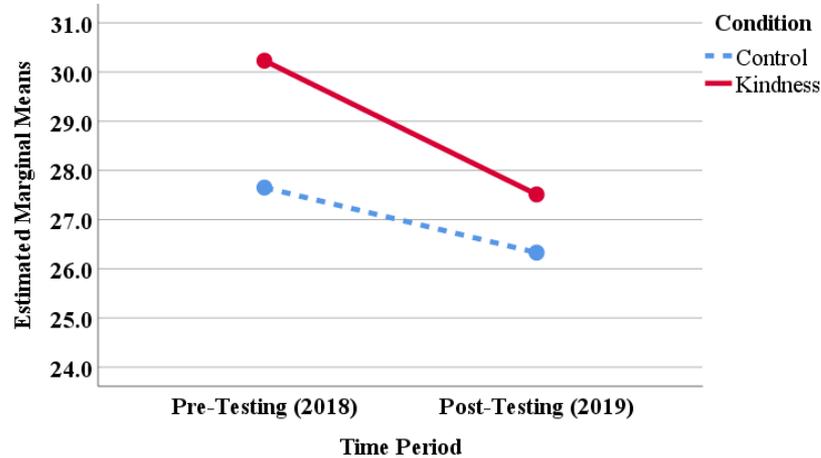
Remember: lower scores are better.



# Results: BRIEF-P Flexibility Index Varied by Socioeconomic Status

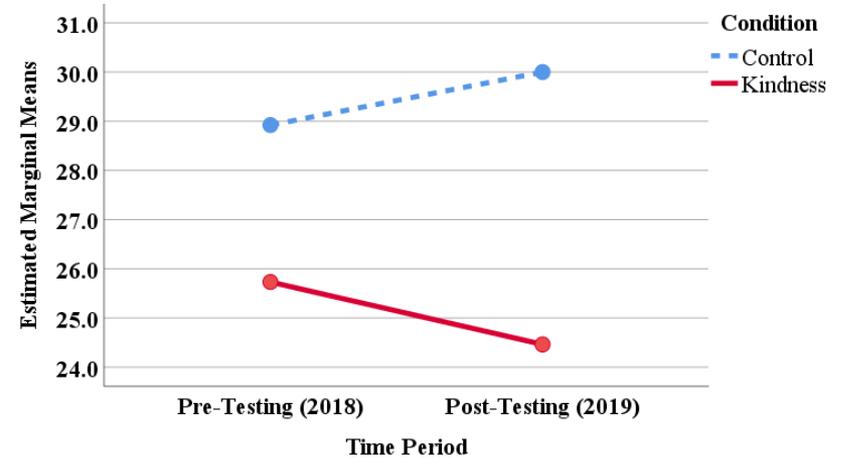
BRIEF-P: Flexibility Index (FI)

SES Group = Lower



BRIEF-P: Flexibility Index (FI)

SES Group = Higher



The impact of Kindness training was most striking for children in the **lower SES group**. Lower SES children improved more than the Control group on the **Flexibility Index (FI)**, which is composed of the Shift and Emotional Control scales, when they received Kindness Curriculum training. Higher SES children in the KC group had better FI scores overall and maintained them over time; the Control group did not do as well or improve over time.

**SES x Condition:  $F(1, 228) = 6.81, p = .010$**

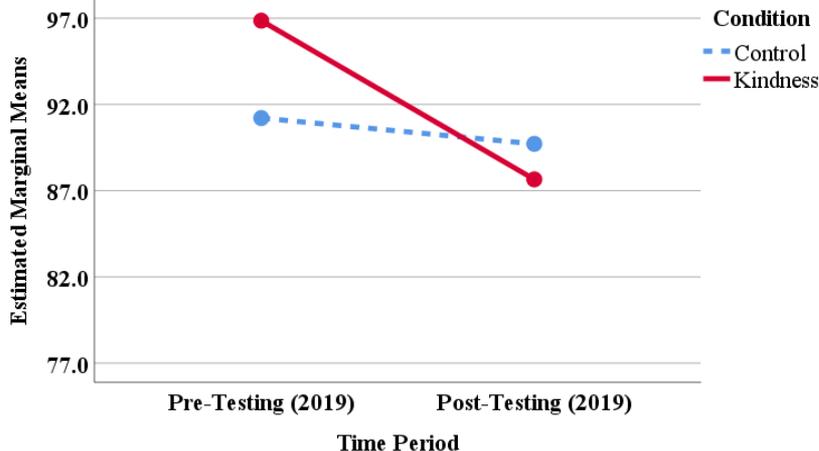
**Remember: lower scores are better.**



# Results: BRIEF-P Global Executive Composite (GEC) Varied by Socioeconomic Status

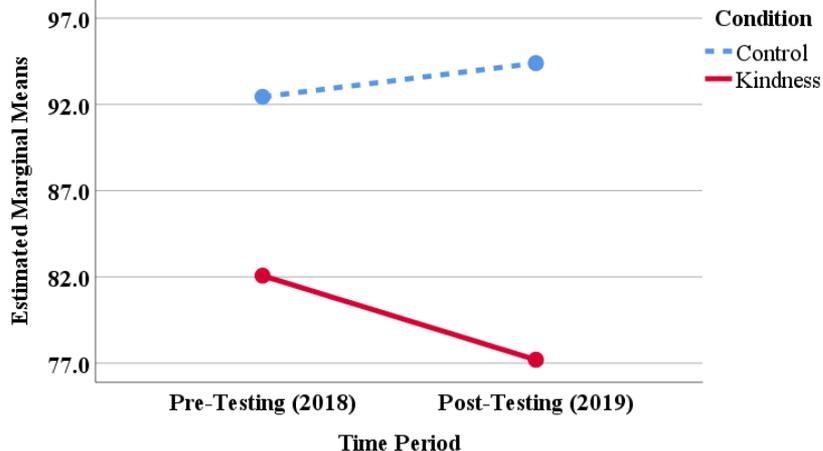
BRIEF-P: Global Executive Composite (GEC)

SES Group = Lower



BRIEF-P: Global Executive Composite (GEC)

SES Group = Higher



The impact of the Kindness curriculum was most evident for children in the **lower SES group**. Lower SES children improved more in their **Global Executive Composite (GEC)** scores, a combination of all executive function skills, when they received Kindness training than those in the Control group. Higher SES children in the Kindness group had better executive function skills overall than those in the Control group, and improved over time.

SES x Condition:  $F(1, 228) = 4.24, p = .041$

**Remember: lower scores are better.**



# Griffith Empathy

The Griffith Empathy measure is designed for parents to rate their children's empathy.

## Cognitive Empathy subscale



- Measures children's ability to recognize and understand another's emotional state
- "My child can't understand why other people get upset"

## Affective empathy subscale



- Measures children's ability to respond appropriately to another's emotions
- "My child seems to react to the moods of people around them"

Below are a collection of statements, think of each item in terms of your child(ren)'s behavior. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following items by placing the appropriate number in the space provided.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9  
I-----I-----I-----I-----I-----I-----I-----I-----I-----I  
Strongly            Disagree            Neither            Agree            Strongly  
Disagree            Disagree or            Disagree or            Agree

1. My child becomes sad when other children are sad.	
2. My child gets upset seeing another child being punished for being naughty.	
3. My child seems to react to the moods of people around them.	
4. My child gets upset when another person is acting upset.	
5. My child cries or gets upset when seeing another child cry.	
6. My child gets sad when watching sad movies or TV.	
7. My child becomes nervous when other children around them are nervous.	
8. My child acts happy when another person is acting happy.	
9. My child can continue to feel OK even if people around are upset.	
10. My child can't understand why other people get upset.	

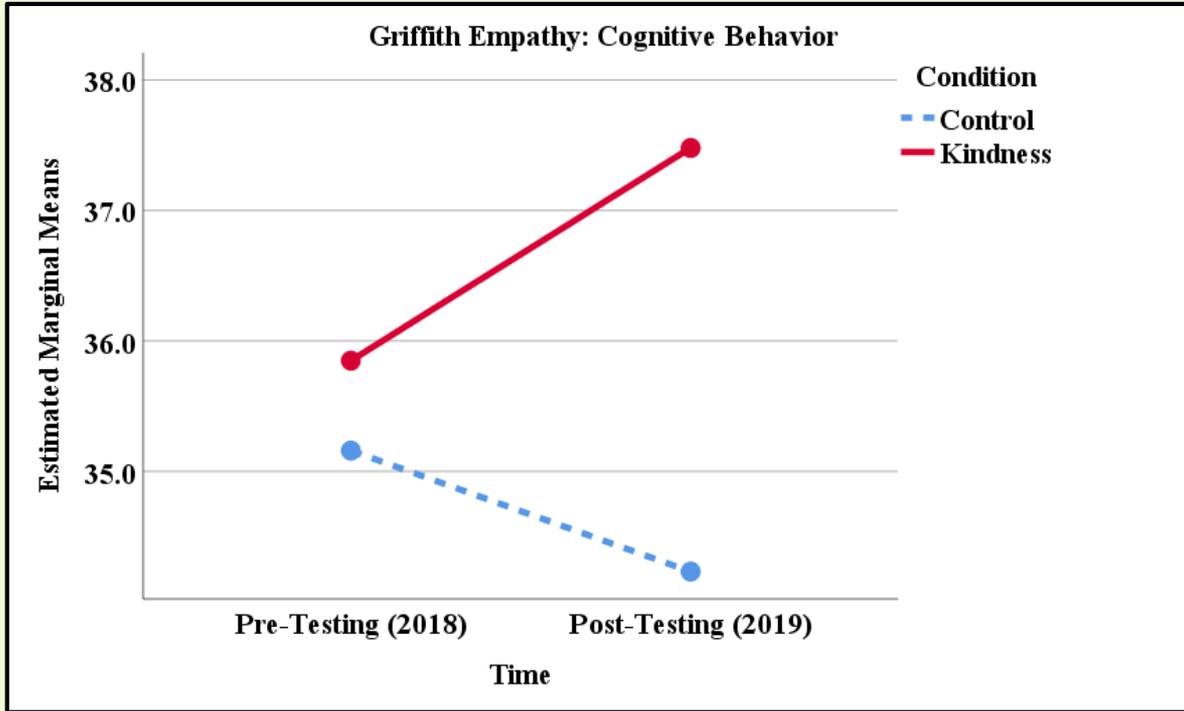


1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

From 1=strongly disagree to 9=strongly agree



# Results: Griffith Empathy Measure – Cognitive Empathy



Children who received the Kindness Curriculum improved in **Cognitive Empathy skills** after participating in the Kindness Curriculum, whereas those in the Control group showed decreases over time.



Time x Condition:  $F(1, 163) = 4.96, p = .027$



# Ages & Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE)

The ASQ:SE is designed to evaluate a child's **social-emotional competency** in seven areas: **adaptive functioning, self-regulation, communication, autonomy, affect, compliance, and interaction with people.**

A parent or teacher completes the questionnaire appropriate to the child's age (forms range from 6 to 60-months).

The ASQ-SE includes items such as:

“Does your child explore new places, such as a park or a friend's home?”

“Does your child destroy or damage things on purpose?”

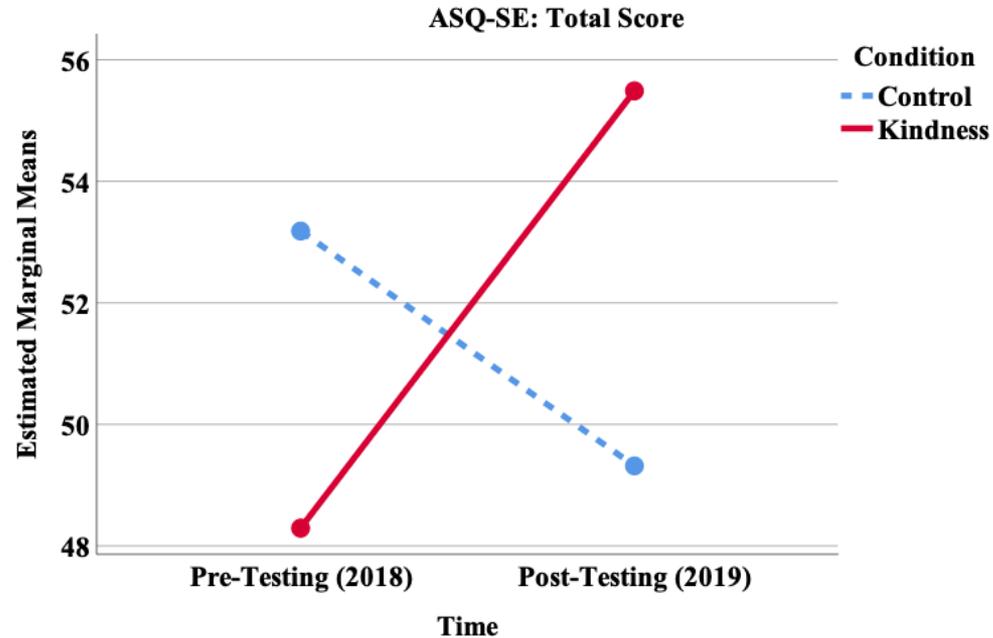
Open-ended questions like “What things do you enjoy most about your child?”



From never to rarely to sometimes to most of the time



# Results: ASQ-Social Emotional – Total Score



Children in the Kindness Group significantly improved in **social emotional competency** after receiving the Kindness Curriculum, whereas those in the Control group decreased on the ASQ-SE total score.

Time x Condition:  $F(1,146) = 4.93, p = .028$



# Teaching Strategies-GOLD (TS-GOLD)

- Measures the **knowledge, skills, and behaviors** most predictive of school success. Teachers at the CELC agencies use the TS-Gold regularly to track children's developmental progress.
- Provides **developmental progressions and learning objectives** in the areas of social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development, and in the content areas of literacy, mathematics, and English-language acquisition.
- Indicators and examples enable teachers to rate children's knowledge, skills, and behaviors on a 10-point scale of "Not Yet" (1-point) to level 9 (10-points)
- The progressions use colored bands to show widely held expectations for various ages. At a glance, these colored bands show educators and families which **skills and behaviors are typical for children of a particular age or class/grade.**



## Objective 1 Regulates own emotions and behaviors

### a. Manages feelings

Not Yet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		<b>Uses adult support to calm self</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calms self when touched gently, patted, massaged, rocked, or hears a soothing voice</li> <li>Turns away from source of overstimulation and cries, but is soothed by being picked up</li> </ul>		<b>Comforts self by seeking out special object or person</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gets teddy bear from cubby when upset</li> <li>Sits next to favorite adult when sad</li> </ul>		<b>Is able to look at a situation differently or delay gratification</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the block area is full, looks to see what other areas are available</li> <li>Scowls, "I didn't get to paint this morning." Pauses and adds, "I have an idea. I can paint after snack."</li> </ul>		<b>Controls strong emotions in an appropriate manner most of the time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asserts, "I'm mad. You're not sharing the blocks! I'm going to play with the ramps."</li> <li>Says, "I'm so excited! We're going to the zoo today!" while jumping up and down</li> </ul>	
	Red		Orange		Yellow	Green		Blue	
	Purple								

Rating scale  
 Indicators (in bold)  
 Examples (bulleted)  
 Expectations for ages and for classes/grades

Birth to 1 year



1 to 2 years



2 to 3 years



Preschool 3 class



Pre-K 4 class

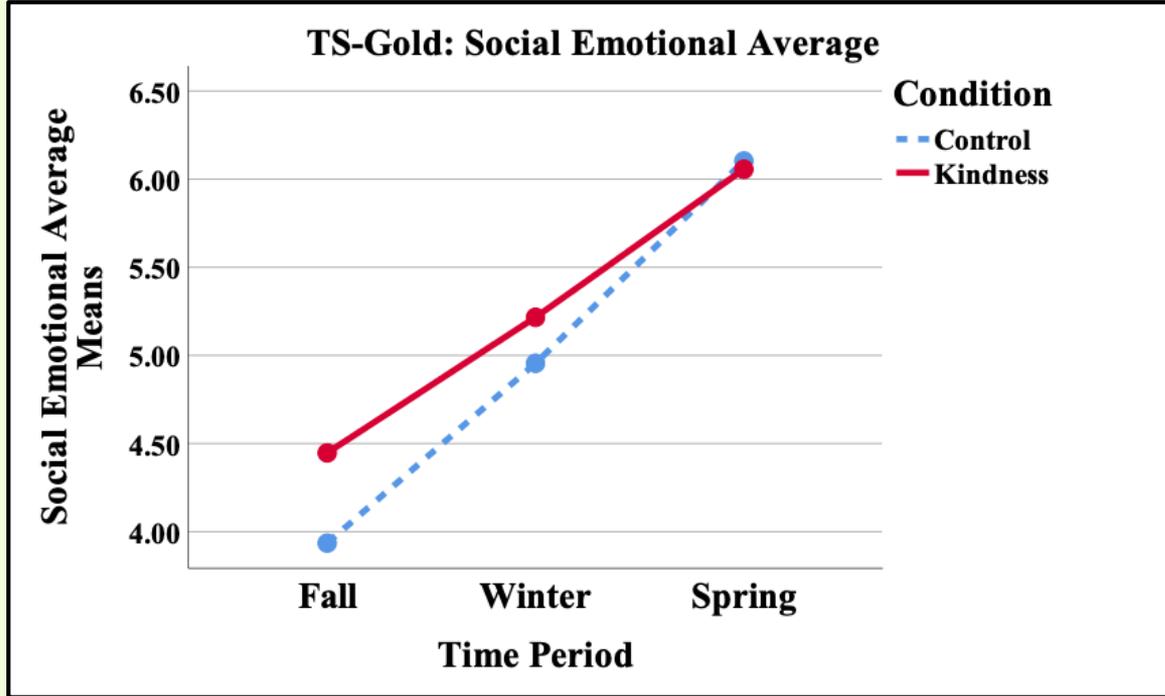


Kindergarten



**Sample from TS-GOLD: Shows objective, item, & expectations (color bands)**

# Results: TS-GOLD Social-Emotional Skills



- Children in the Kindness group showed higher **Social Emotional Skills** overall and improved significantly after learning the Kindness Curriculum.
- Note that the Kindness Curriculum was completed near the time of the Winter TS Gold Assessment. By Spring, children in the Control condition caught up.

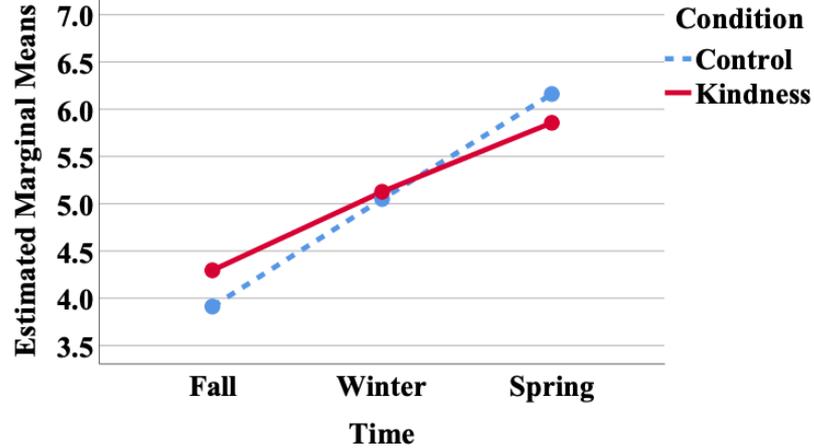


**Time x Condition:  $F(1, 191) = 12.86, p < .001$**   
**Main Effect Condition:  $F(1,191) = 3.65, p = .058$**   
**Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 191) = 5.87, p < .001$**

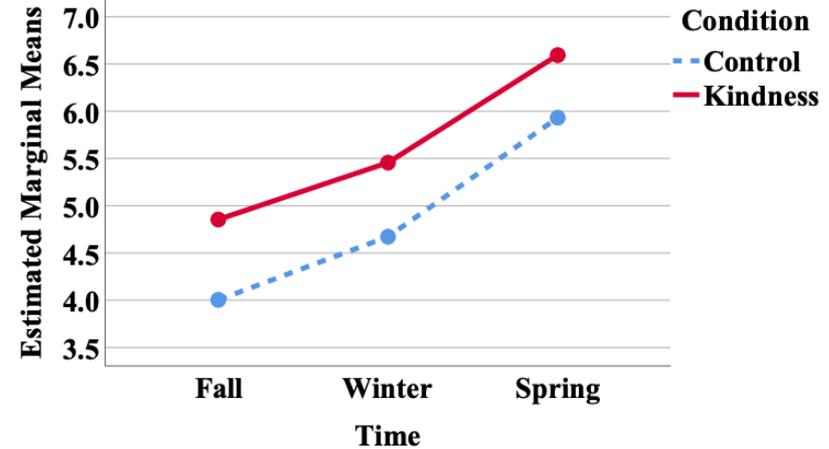


# Results: TS-GOLD Social-Emotional Skills Varied with Socioeconomic Status

TS-GOLD: Social-Emotional Average  
SES Group = Lower



TS-GOLD: Social-Emotional Average  
SES Group = Higher



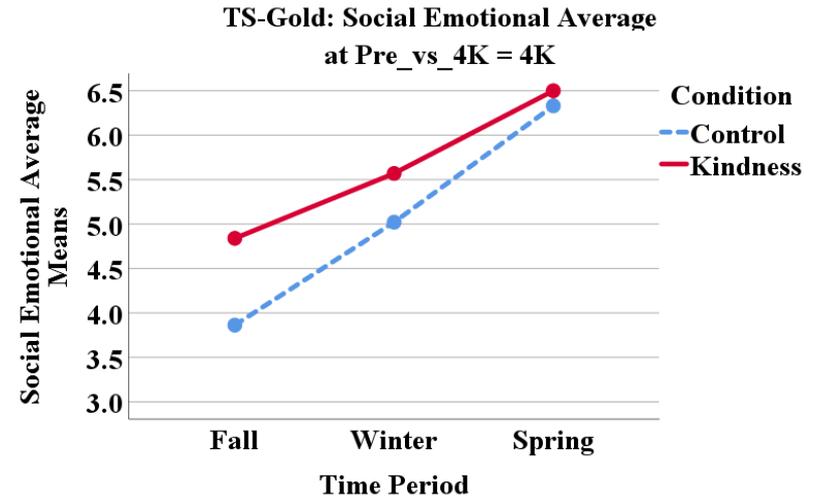
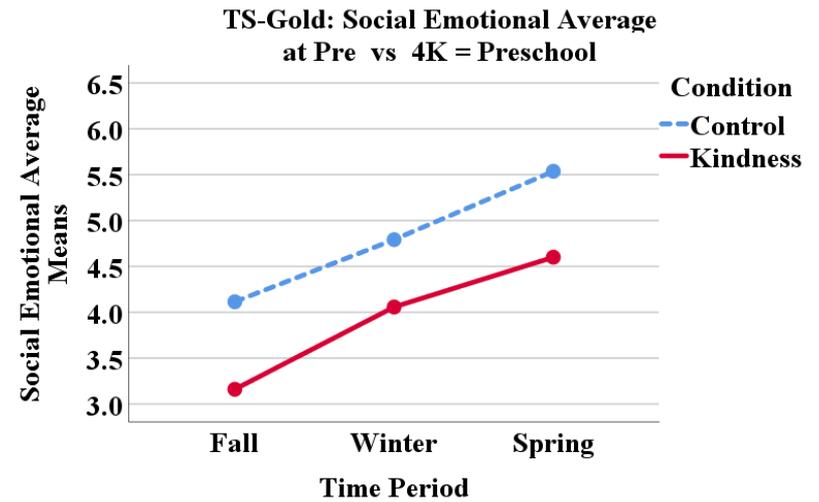
Higher SES children in the Kindness group showed stronger **Social Emotional Control** than those in the Control group over time. All lower SES groups improved over time, though the Kindness group did not differ from the Control group.

Time x Condition:  $F(1, 191) = 4.91, p = .008$   
ME Condition:  $F(1, 191) = 8.30, p = .004$   
SES x Condition:  $F(1, 191) = 13.79, p = .013$   
ME Time:  $F(1, 191) = 357.21, p < .001$

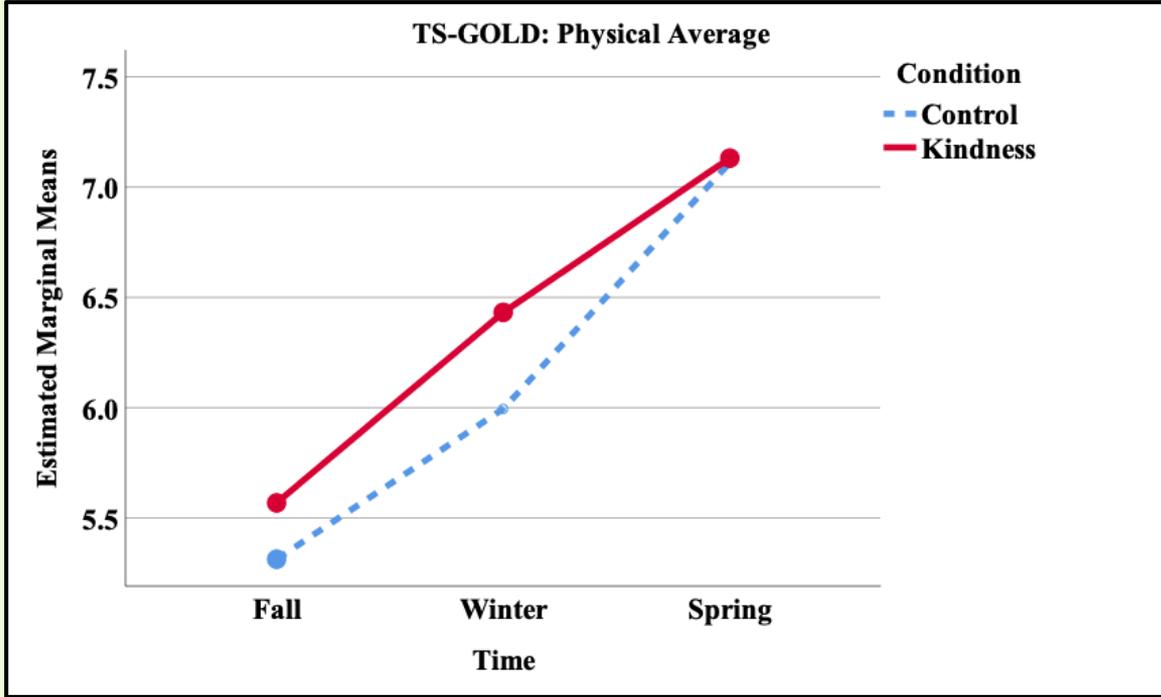
# Results: TS-GOLD Social-Emotional Skills Varied with Preschool vs 4K

The impact of the Kindness curriculum was most evident in the 4K classrooms. Children in 4K showed higher **Social Emotional Control** when they received Kindness Curriculum training than children in the Control group. Among the preschool classes, the Control group scored higher on social emotional control, though all groups improved over time.

Time x Condition x Pre-K vs 4K:  $F(1, 191) = 5.06, p = .007$   
Pre-vs-4K x Condition:  $F(1, 191) = 40.62, p < .001$   
Time x Condition:  $F(1, 191) = 4.50, p = .012$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 191) = 329.05, p < .001$



# Results: TS-GOLD Physical Skills



Children who received the Kindness Curriculum had higher ratings of **Physical Development & Health** overall than did children in the Control group through Winter. The Winter assessment was closest to the completion of the Kindness Curriculum.

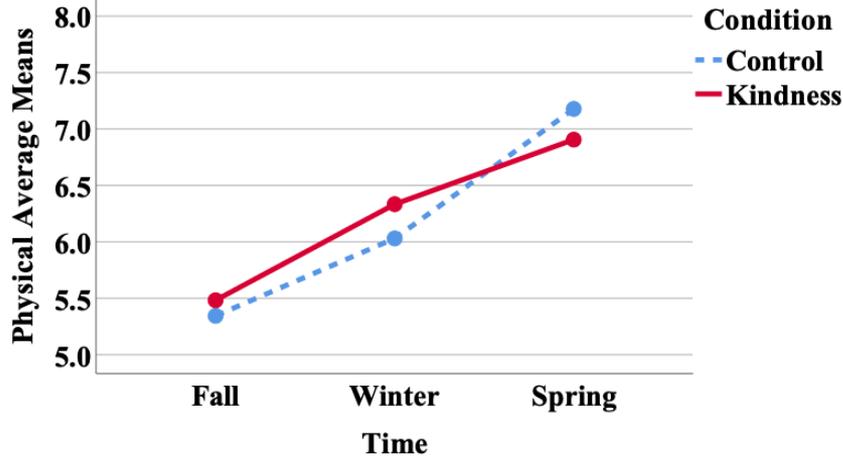


Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 192) = 3.90, p = .050$   
Time x Condition:  $F(1, 192) = 2.78, p = .097$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 192) = 2.67, p < .001$

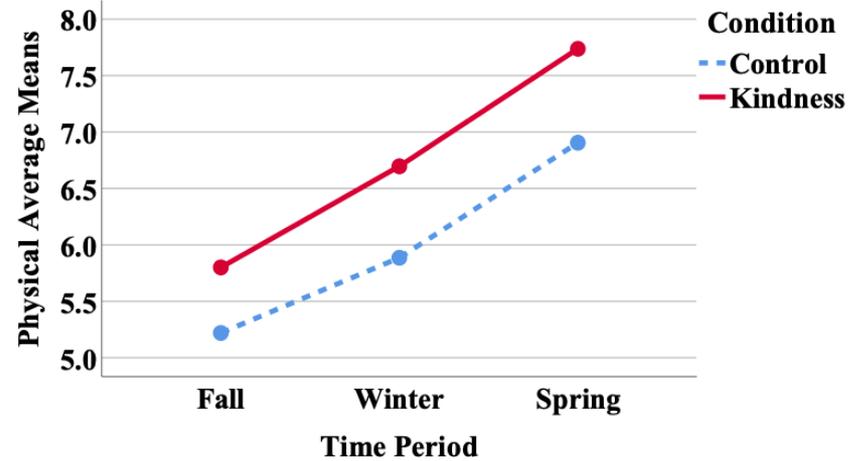


# Results: TS-GOLD Physical Skills Varied with Socioeconomic Status

TS-Gold: Physical Average  
SES Group = Lower



TS-Gold: Physical Average  
SES Group = Higher



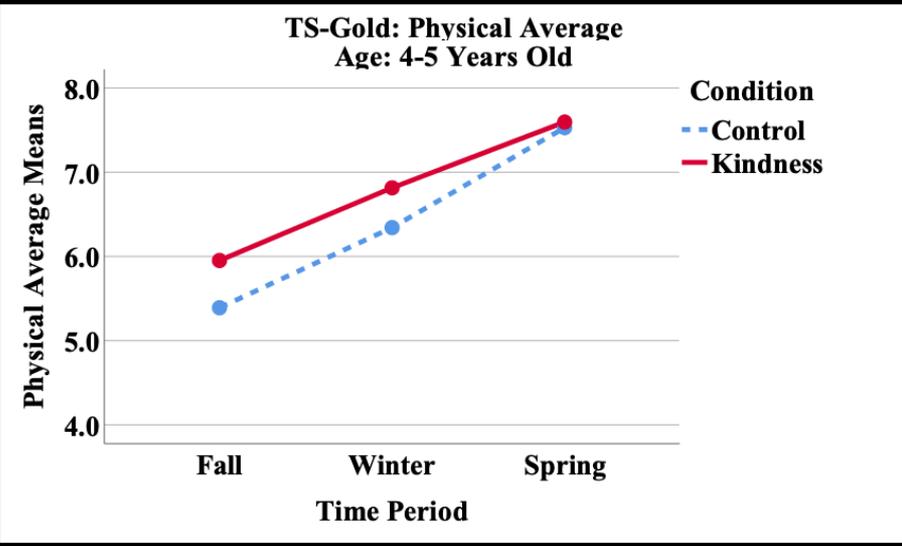
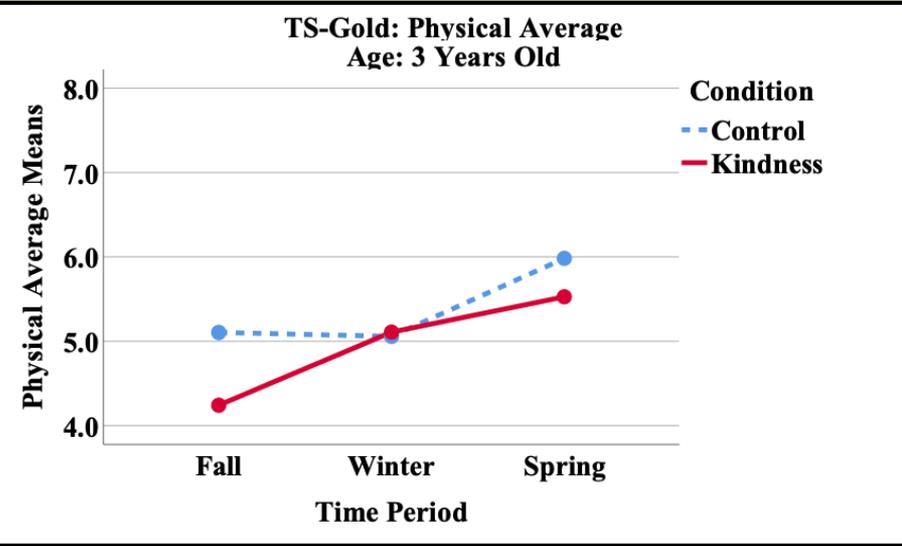
The impact of the Kindness curriculum was most evident for children in the higher SES group. Higher income children in the Kindness group had higher **Physical Skills** scores than those in the Control group over time. All groups improved over time.

Time x Condition x SES:  $F(1, 192) = 4.33, p = .014$   
Main Effect Condition:  $F(1, 192) = 8.69, p = .004$   
SES x Condition:  $F(1, 192) = 6.41, p = .012$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1, 192) = 385.50, p < .001$

# Results: TS-GOLD Physical Skills Varied with Age

The impact of the Kindness curriculum was most evident for children in the older age group. Children in the older age group (4-5 years old) had higher **Physical Skills** when they received Kindness Curriculum training than those in the Control group through Winter. The younger Kindness group improved over time, as did all groups.

Time x Condition x Age:  $F(1,192) = 10.99, p < .001$   
Time x Condition:  $F(1,192) = 9.13, p < .001$   
Age x Condition:  $F(1,192) = 20.6, p < .001$   
Main Effect Time:  $F(1,192) = 320.2, p < .001$



# Teacher-Reported Impact on Classroom

This measure used 8 questions (ratings & comments) to assess teachers' impressions of:

- If the teachers found the curriculum **useful**
- If the children **remembered** the lessons
- If the Kindness Curriculum (KC) had a **positive impact** on the classroom
- If KC training **prepared** the teachers for implementation of the curriculum & helped in developing personal mindfulness practices
- The **support** from the *mindfulness coaches*
- If the teachers anticipated using the Kindness Curriculum in the **following year**

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*We value your feedback and appreciate any examples you can share regarding the impact of the Kindness Curriculum on your teaching and classroom. We also would like to know your impressions of having the mindfulness coaches available for support.*

Please indicate your agreement with each of the statements below, using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I found the Kindness Curriculum to be useful in my classroom. \_\_\_\_\_  
Please comment:
2. The children seemed to remember key concepts (e.g., kindness to others) from the Curriculum. \_\_\_\_\_  
Comments or examples:
3. The training helped prepare me to use the Curriculum. \_\_\_\_\_  
Any areas where more training would be useful:
4. The mindfulness training helped me to develop my own personal mindfulness practice. \_\_\_\_\_  
Comments or examples:



1-----2-----3-----4-----5

From 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree



# Results: Impact on Classroom – Teachers’ Ratings

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
Usefulness of KC	3.92	0.67
Children remembered the <b>Key Concepts</b>	3.88	0.68
<b>Training – prepared to teach KC</b>	3.46	1.72
<b>Training - develop Personal Mindfulness</b>	3.33	1.72
<b>KC - Positive Impact</b>	4.13	0.74
<b>Coaches - support in the Class</b>	4.29	0.75
<b>Coaches – support for the Self</b>	3.71	1.36
<b>Using the KC Next Year</b>	4.38	0.83

All Means are above 3 on the 5-point rating scale, with strongest ratings of the benefits of mindfulness coaching in the classroom & endorsement of using the KC next year. The lowest mean was for development of teachers’ own personal mindfulness practices—still positive, but perhaps good awareness that mindfulness is a practice that takes time to develop & teachers likely vary in their interest & opportunity to do so.



# Results: Teacher Comments about Impact on Classroom

Most teacher comments were positive or offered feedback on implementing the curriculum in the future. Here are some of the comments that teachers provided.

## **I found the Kindness Curriculum to be useful in my classroom:**

- “I like the concepts taught – refer to concepts from the curriculum often”
- “I am excited to have the training so I can feel more confident at my presentation of it.”
- “The children really enjoyed it and learned a lot.”

## **The children seemed to remember key concepts from the curriculum:**

- “Being kind, kindness garden, belly buddies”
- “When revisiting [lessons], surprised by how much they remembered”
- “They would continue to ask to do some [Kindness Curriculum activities]”

## **The training helped prepare me to use the Curriculum:**

- “The training is great, but more time is needed to teach the children”

## **The mindfulness training helped me to develop my own personal mindfulness practice:**

- “I try to be more mindful about my own emotions”

## **The Kindness Curriculum had a positive impact on my classroom environment:**

- “The children were really engaged in most lessons”

## **The mindfulness coaches provided me with helpful support in the classroom:**

- “[Coaches] always checked in and willing to lend a hand”

## **The mindfulness coaches provided me with helpful support with my own mindfulness practice**

- “Was not always able to take them up on their offers, but I knew they were there for me.”

## **I’m looking forward to using the Curriculum in my classroom again next year:**

- “I look forward to using [the curriculum] again”

# Parents' Impressions of Kindness Curriculum Impact on Their Children

## Sample Items

Parents were asked to share their perceptions of the impact of the Kindness Curriculum on their children

Four open-ended questions & four rating scale questions assessed parents' perceptions of the Kindness Curriculum & use of KC materials at home.

	Never				Often
1. How often does your child <b>talk about things</b> they learned in the Kindness Curriculum at home (e.g., kindness to others, the earth, or to the self)?	0	1	2	3	4
• If your child talks about the Kindness Curriculum, can you think of any examples of what they have talked about?					
2. How often do you see your child <b>use mindfulness/kindness activities</b> at home (e.g., pinwheel, "mind jar", the Caring Song)?	0	1	2	3	4
• If your child uses mindfulness/kindness activities at home, what kinds of things have you seen them do? Please describe in a few words:					
3. Since beginning the Kindness Curriculum, how often do you see your child display kindness to others or kindness to you (e.g., hold doors for others, pick up trash from the floor)?	0	1	2	3	4
• If you have seen your child display kindness to others or kindness to you, please tell us about it:					



0-----1-----2-----3-----4

From 0=never to 4=often



## Results: Impact on Child – Parents' Ratings

Item **converted to 1-5 scale	Mean	Std. Dev.
<b>Talk about things</b> learned in KC	3.09	1.25
<b>Use</b> mindfulness/kindness activities	3.06	1.31
<b>Display</b> kindness	4.02	0.98
<b>Change in behavior</b>	3.17	1.20

All Means are above 3 on a 5-point rating scale, with strongest ratings for children displaying acts of kindness to others after participating in the Kindness Curriculum. It is good to see that parents noticed the impact of Kindness Curriculum. We hope our online resources for families help parents to support children as they practice their mindfulness skills at home and other places.



# Results: Parent Comments about Impact on Their Children

**Most parents' comments were positive and showed that the children brought lessons from the Kindness Curriculum home! Here are some of the comments that parents provided, organized by question.**

**If your child *talks about the Kindness Curriculum*, can you think of any examples of what they have talked about?**

- "...pretends to read a paper and asks me Kindness Curriculum questions. It's so cute!"
- "He will say things like 'if there is only one, I should share it so they are happy too'"
- "Telling others to take a breath when upset"
- "Demonstrated her breathing exercises, uses her bottle with the glitter when she feels upset"

**If your child *uses mindfulness/kindness activities at home*, what kinds of things have you seen them do?**

- "[He] uses the mind jar at home"
- "[He] sings songs learned through the Kindness Curriculum"
- "When stressed he will often say 'this is a small problem, we can fix this'"
- "[He] uses breathing activities"
- "Going away to calm down"
- "Singing about emotions. Deep breathing"

**If you have seen your child *display kindness to others* or kindness to you, please tell us about it:**

- "Giving toys to her nieces and nephews. Help clean the mess her niece and nephew left"
- "Talks about being helpful by helping me put my shoes on, picking up garbage, for example. Giving more hugs and saying, 'I love you', or 'I missed you today'"
- "Cleans up when asked; says thank you to others and notices good behavior in others"

**Have you noticed any *changes in your child's behavior* since they have been participating in the Kindness curriculum?**

- "He seems to be more aware of his own emotions as well as how others around him are feeling. He can name his emotions (especially frustration) better and more reliably than at the beginning of the year"
- "Meltdowns don't seem to happen as frequent and are a shorter time span"

# Key Takeaways

**After receiving the Kindness Curriculum, children of both lower and higher Socioeconomic Status as well as children in both preschool (3-4 years) & 4K (4-5 years) classrooms showed improvement in:**

- **Prosocial Behavior, Emotional Behavior, & Empathetic Behavior**
- **Planning & Organizing Skills: Improved ability to anticipate future events and use goals to guide behavior**
- **Executive function skills such as mental flexibility and inhibiting impulsive responses (self-control)**
- **Social-Emotional Skills: Improved ability to experience, express, and manage emotions**
- **Physical Skills: Improved physical health and development related to physical activity**

**The results also suggest that children as young as 3-year-olds can positively benefit from the mindfulness-based Kindness Curriculum (e.g., in prosocial skills and self-control).**

**\*\*\*Children in the Control Condition also showed improvement in some areas in these high-quality classrooms; but adding the Kindness Curriculum gave the teachers even more ways to help the children!**



# Important Considerations

- Both parents and teachers reported **positive impact** of the Kindness Curriculum.
- Parents reported that children showed **stronger understanding of empathy** and skills in empathizing with others. They also gave powerful examples of Kindness lessons and mindfulness concepts that children used at home.
- Some teachers chose to repeat lessons and reinforce concepts after the Kindness Curriculum was completed. Repeating lessons and concepts in this way may be very important. The findings that the control group's TS Gold scores (a developmental assessment) sometimes caught up to the Kindness group by Spring (several months after the KC) could suggest that **reinforcing and repeating mindfulness lessons is important to children practicing and maintaining skills they have acquired.**



## Results as Compared to Flook et al.'s 2015 Study

- **Flook and colleagues (2015) found improvement** by the Kindness Curriculum (KC) group on the **teacher reported social competence (TRSC)** measure in **prosocial behavior, emotional regulation, and total scores** compared to the Control Group.
- Similarly, in **our Kindness Project study**, we found significantly **greater improvement** by the Kindness Curriculum (KC) group on the **teacher reported social competence (TRSC)** measure in **prosocial behavior, emotional regulation, as well as in *empathetic regulation***.
- In addition, we demonstrated that **even 3-year-olds benefited from the KC**, for example improving significantly in **prosocial behavior and empathetic behavior** compared to younger children in the control group.
- We also found strong benefits of the Kindness training for **children from lower income families in empathetic behavior** compared to the control group.



# Considerations When Interpreting the Findings

- Results often showed that the **Kindness Curriculum** group **began at a stronger point** than the Control group. This was attributed to **the teachers receiving mindfulness training in June**, five months before beginning the Kindness Curriculum. Teachers were encouraged to develop their own mindfulness practices, as regular practice is integral to building one's mindfulness skills and integrating them into one's daily activities, such as teaching. Thus, we anticipated that children in their classrooms may have experienced some **benefits of the training before the Curriculum began**.
- The agencies that participated in the Kindness Project already had high-quality programming and many used the **Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence** (Fox et al., 2009), yet the **Kindness training** showed **added benefits**.
- Two of the agencies served children exclusively from lower-income families, one serving families who were also just beginning to gain proficiency in English. All of the agencies served children with special needs and children who are English Language Learners. Mindfulness training through the Kindness Curriculum is an **excellent enrichment tool** for many learners!



# Future Implications

- Results showed that the **Kindness Curriculum (KC)** had measurable positive effects on the social-emotional skills and executive function abilities of children. The investment in the Kindness Curriculum showed social as well as academic benefits to children, and implementation of mindfulness practices was valued by teachers and parents as well.
- Even **children as young as 3 years-old** can benefit from the Kindness Curriculum and begin building mindfulness skills.
- With the many found positive social benefits, **investing in mindfulness-based programs**, such as the Kindness Curriculum, is beneficial for young children and should be implemented and carried out in pre-schools and 4K programs.



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