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Inspiring Creativity Through Mindfulness in the Primary Classroom

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Inspiring Creativity Through Mindfulness in the Primary Classroom

Young students need to know self-regulation strategies in order to handle their emotions and be ready to learn. However, many children enter the classroom without these skills. They cause frustration for their teachers by constantly calling out, angrily hitting, or quietly withdrawing. These children are not ready to learn—their nervous systems are too busy engaging in the fight, flight, or freeze response. Students that experience trauma are particularly susceptible to these responses. When brains are working on this level, new learning is almost impossible. Teachers can use mindfulness strategies to give students the tools they need to self-regulate so their thinking becomes clearer and their true creative potential can shine.

This session begins with a general overview of the brain and how it works. Then, research will show how mindfulness in classrooms positively affects student learning. Last, attendees will learn research-based mindfulness practices they can adopt or adapt for their own classrooms. Practices include child-friendly yoga poses to build body awareness, breathing to calm the mind, and creating an area in the classroom for re-regulation. We will also explore tools that make the abstract concepts of mindfulness more concrete for young learners, such as Hoberman spheres, mind jars/calming bottles, and Zones of Regulation resources. Furthermore, we will share appropriate books for read-alouds, which can provide a springboard for class conversations about feelings and the brain. Attendees will leave with a list of resources they can investigate for further professional development, as well as a calming bottle made during the session.