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Examining the Effects of a Classroom-Based Mindfulness & Self-Compassion Training on Youth's Socio-Emotional Health Following the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Exploratory Study

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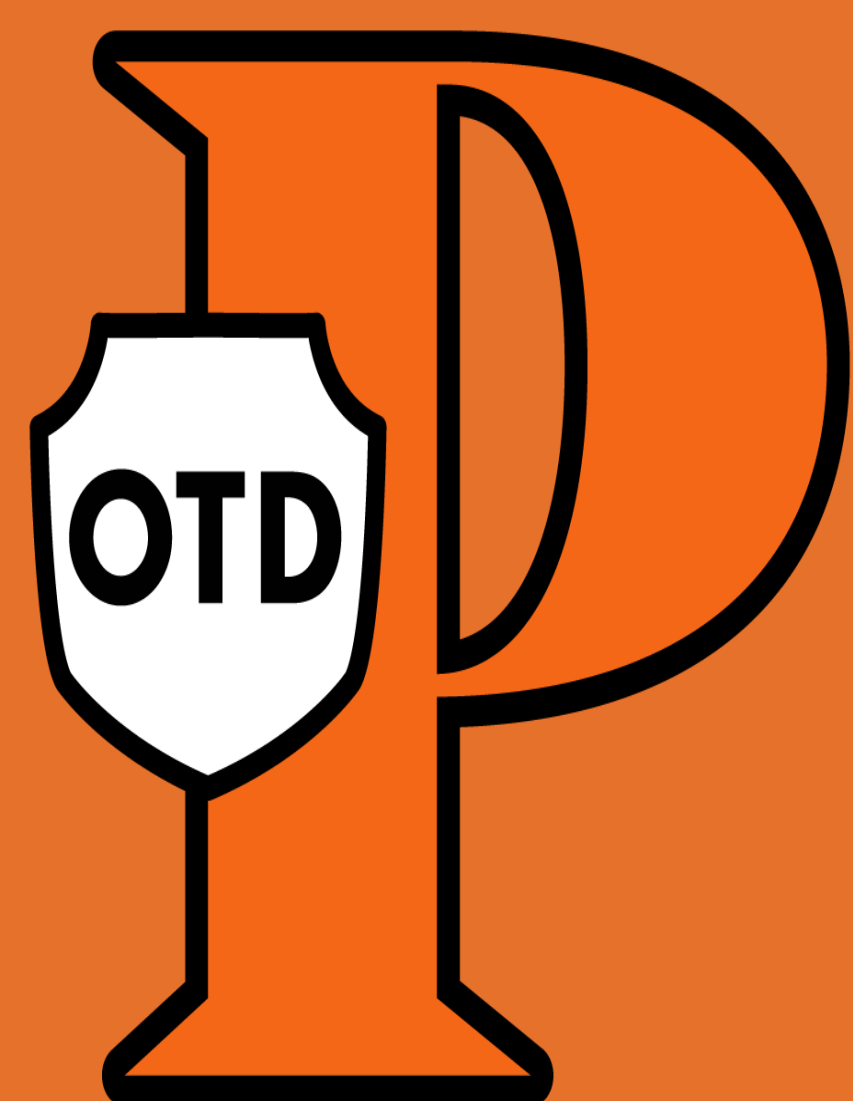
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**Examining the Effects of a Classroom-Based Mindfulness
& Self-Compassion Training on Youth's Socio-Emotional
Health Following the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Exploratory
Study**

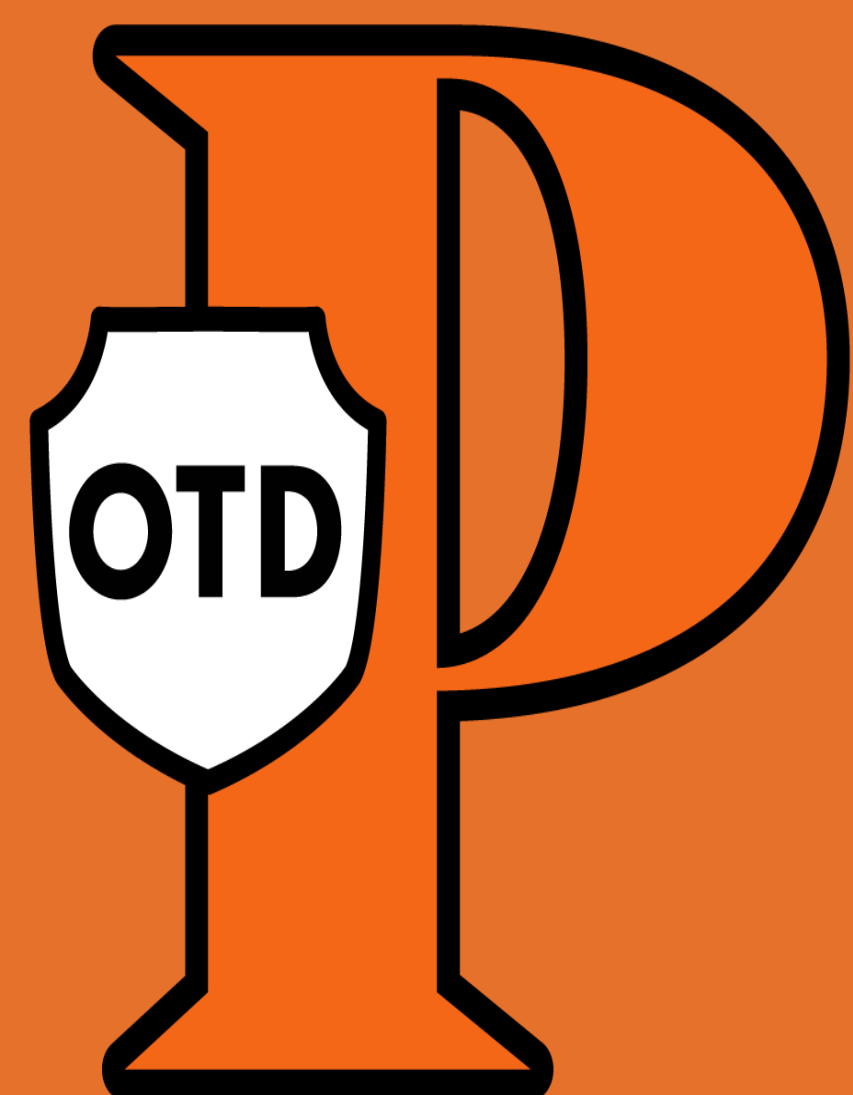
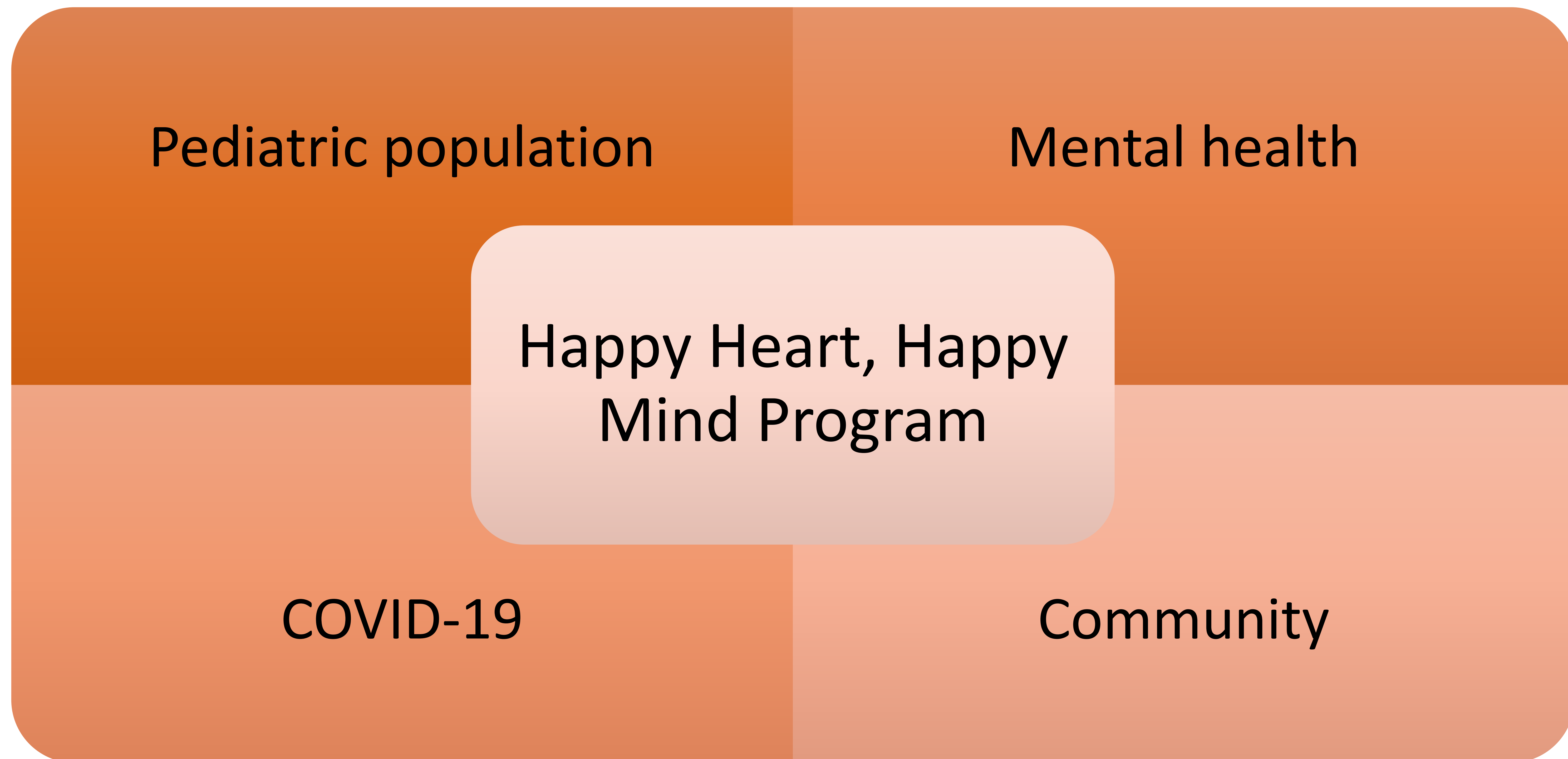
Jessica Carranza, OTD/S, MPH



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Background

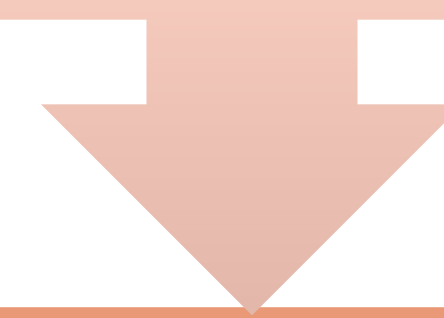


Literature Review and Needs Assessment

Needs assessment at PJUSD summer 2022



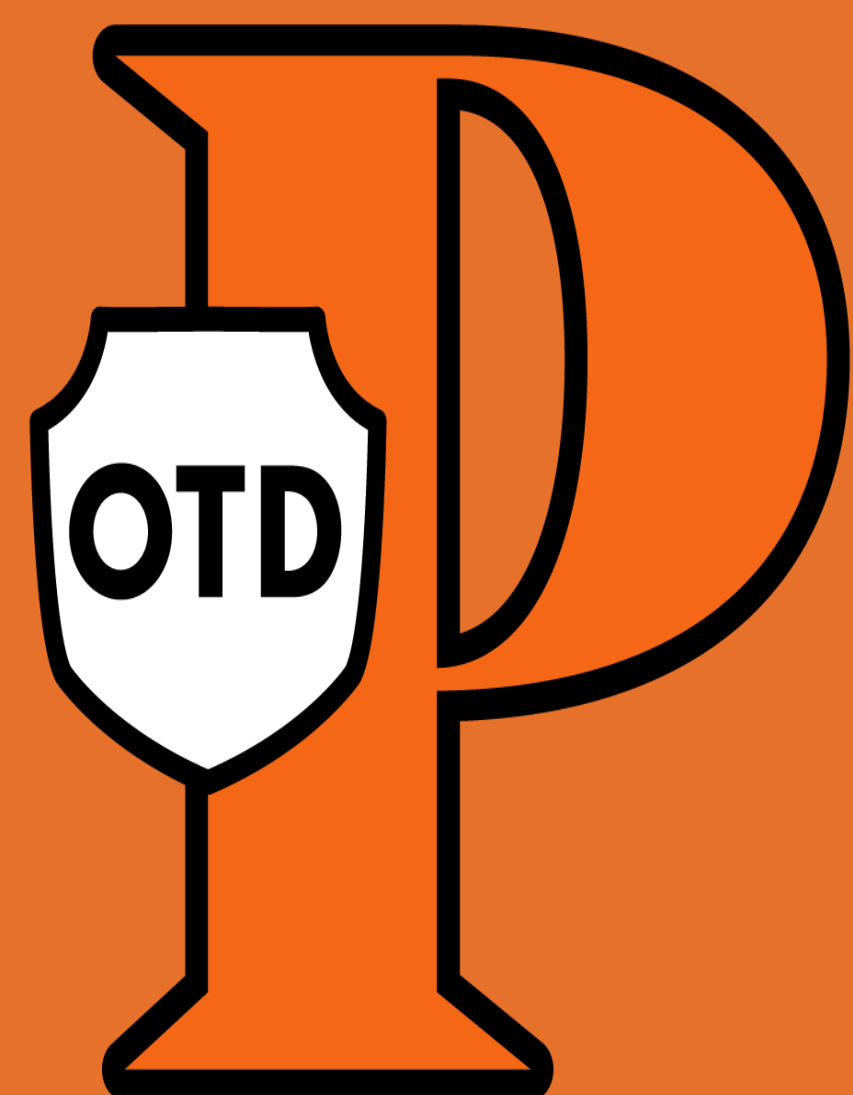
Increase in anxiety and depression among middle school youth



Needs assessment aligned with literature review themes

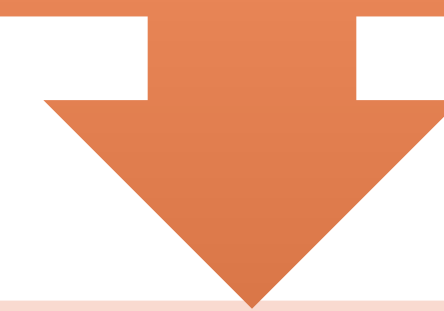


Higher rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide among middle and high school youth
(Anderson et al., 2022) & (Jones, Mitra, & Bhuiyan, 2021)



Literature Review and Needs Assessment

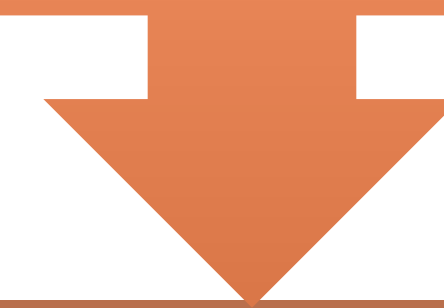
Gap analysis: need for more socio-emotional educational resources



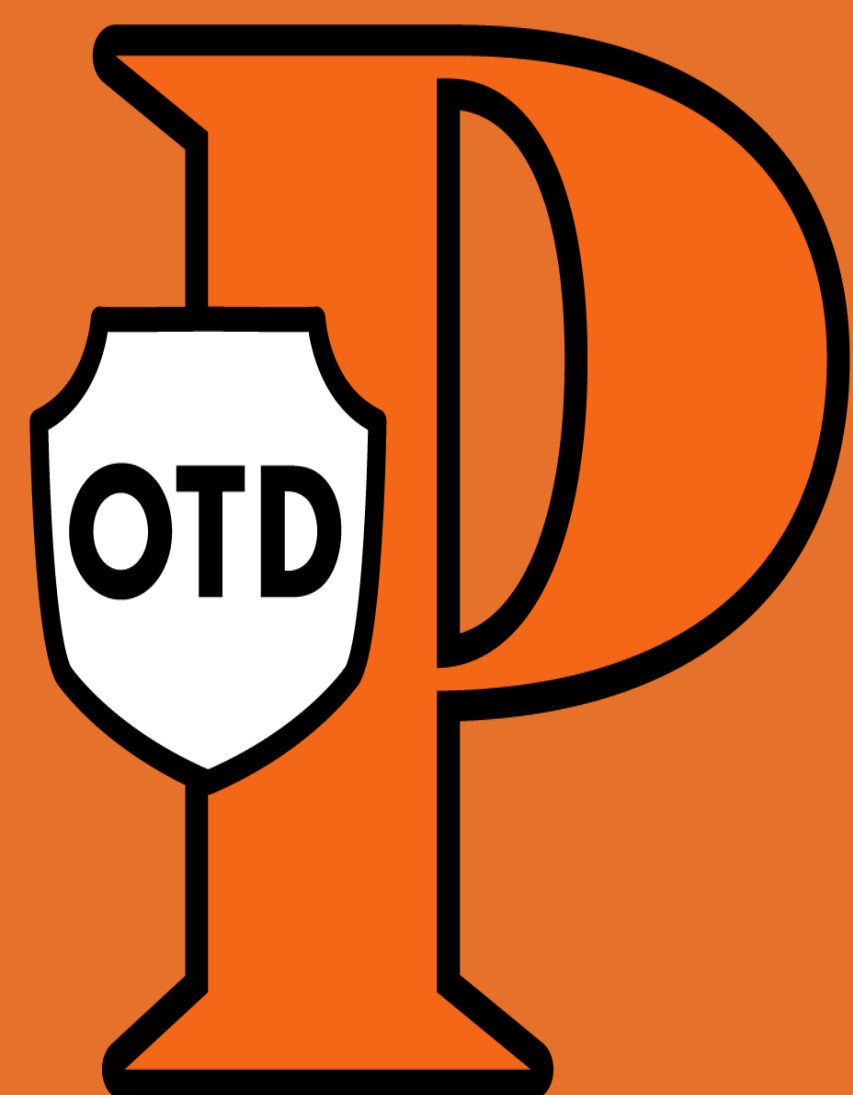
Potential solutions: mindfulness and self-compassion



More research needed to study effects on adolescents (Neff, 2019)



Development of the Happy Heart, Happy Mind Program

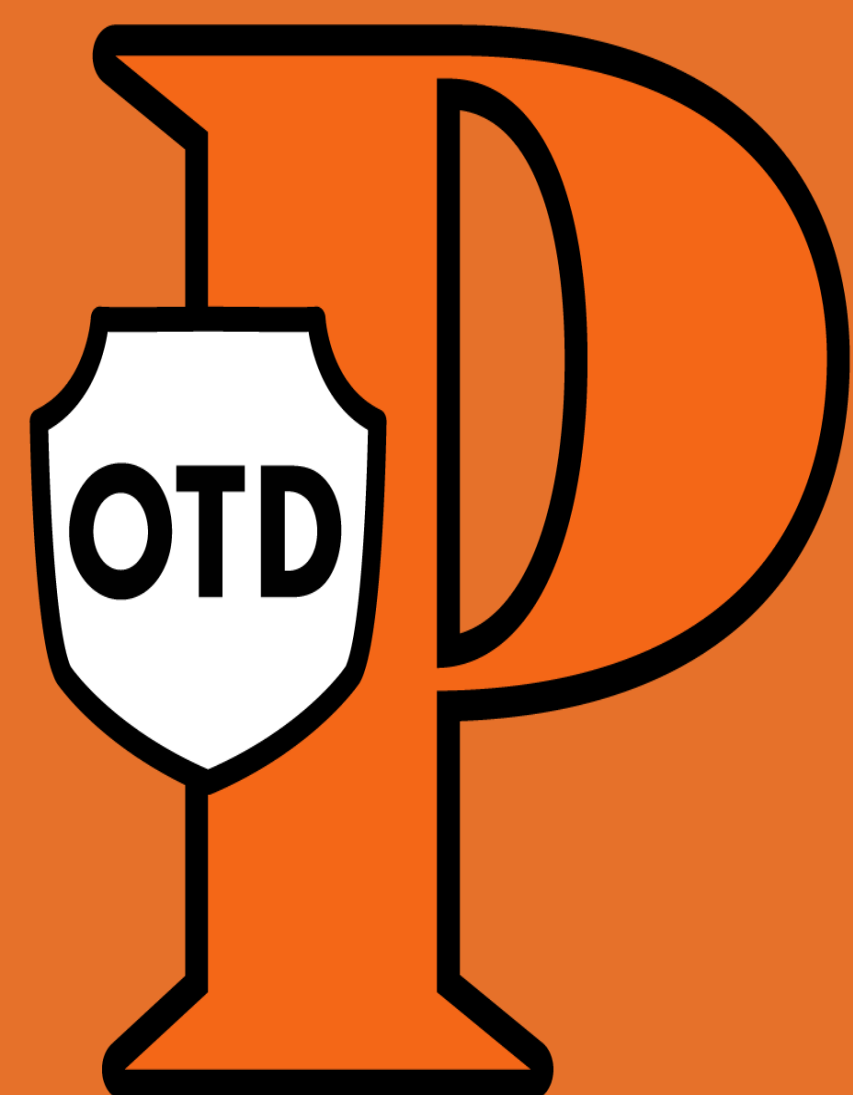


Program Purpose

Explore the effects of a six (6) week self-compassion and mindfulness training program to improve socio-emotional health outcomes among a group of middle school students at PJUSD following the COVID-19 pandemic

Study goal #1: Explore the impact of COVID-19 among youth mental and social health

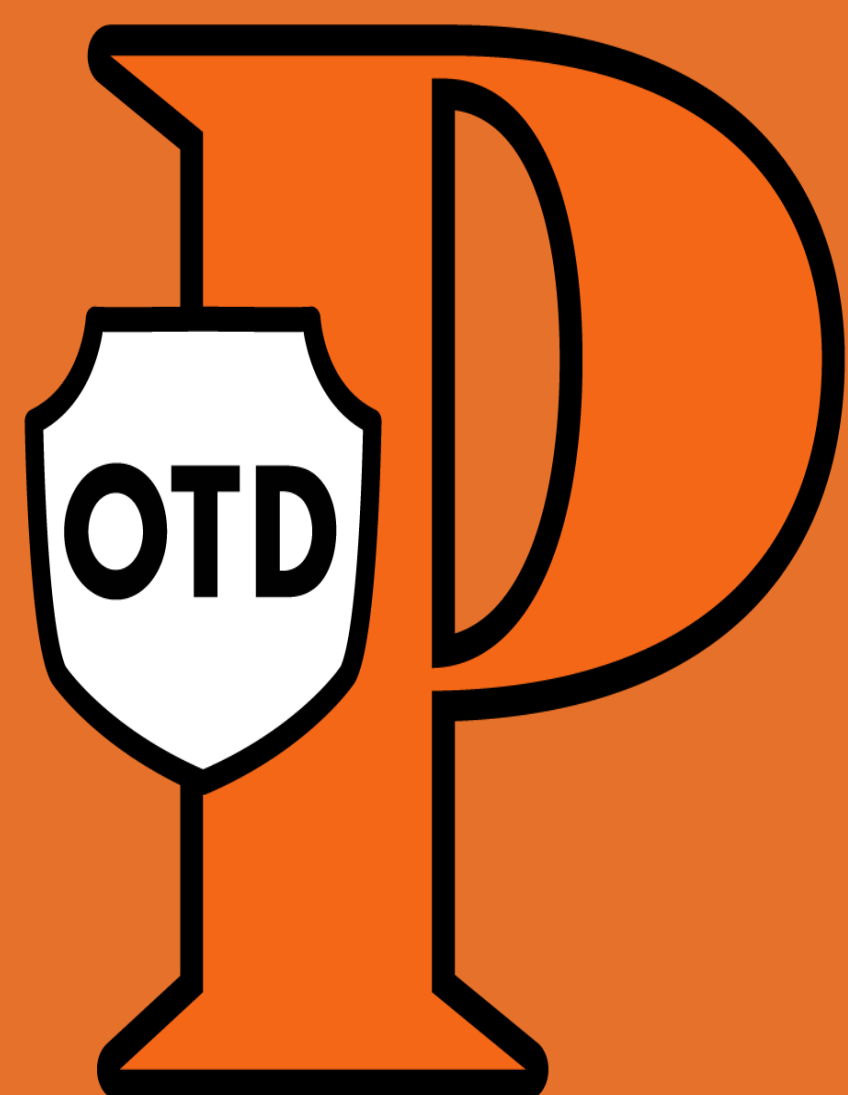
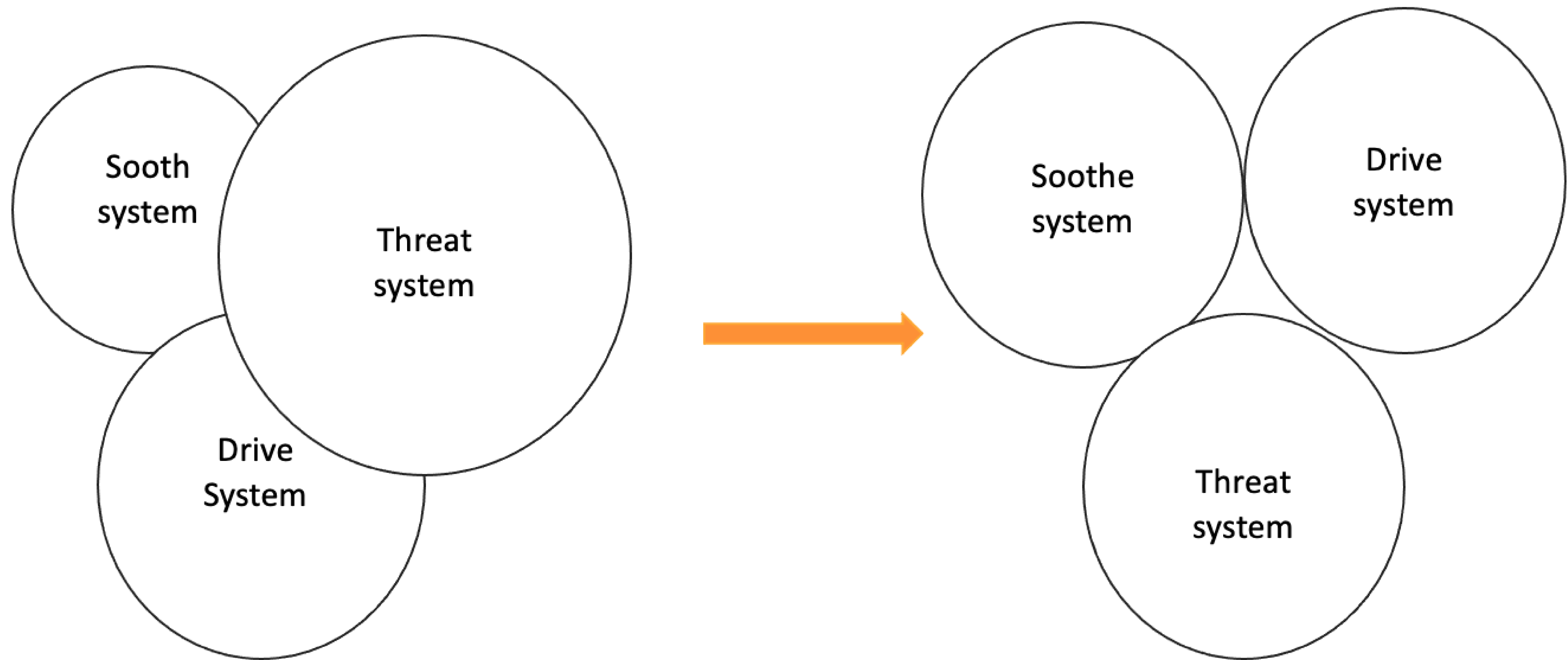
Study goal #2: Explore the effects of a mindfulness and self-compassion program among youth



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Guiding Theory



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Program Topics

Session 1: Defining
Mindfulness and
Self-Compassion

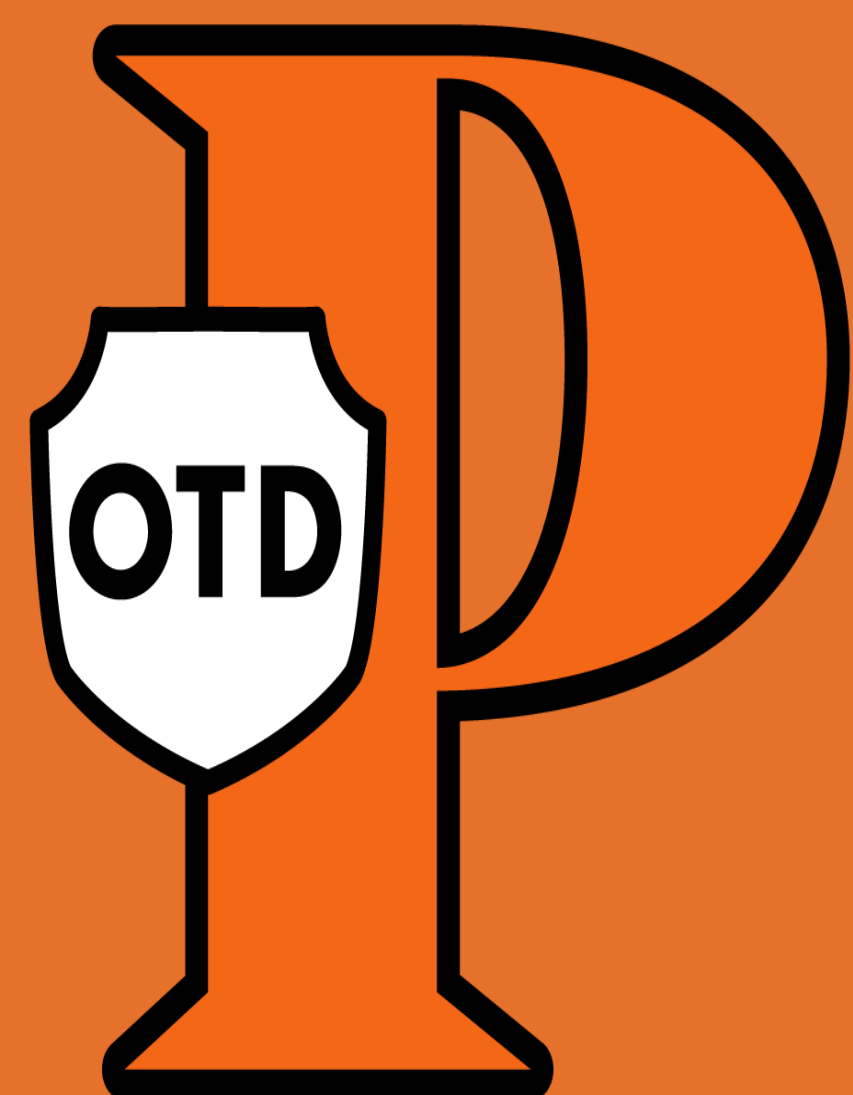
Session 2: Letting Go
of Resistance

Session 3: Calming
Down Our Threat
System

Session 4: Calming
Down Our Threat
System

Session 5: Building
Up Our Soothing
System

Session 6: Taking it
Forward



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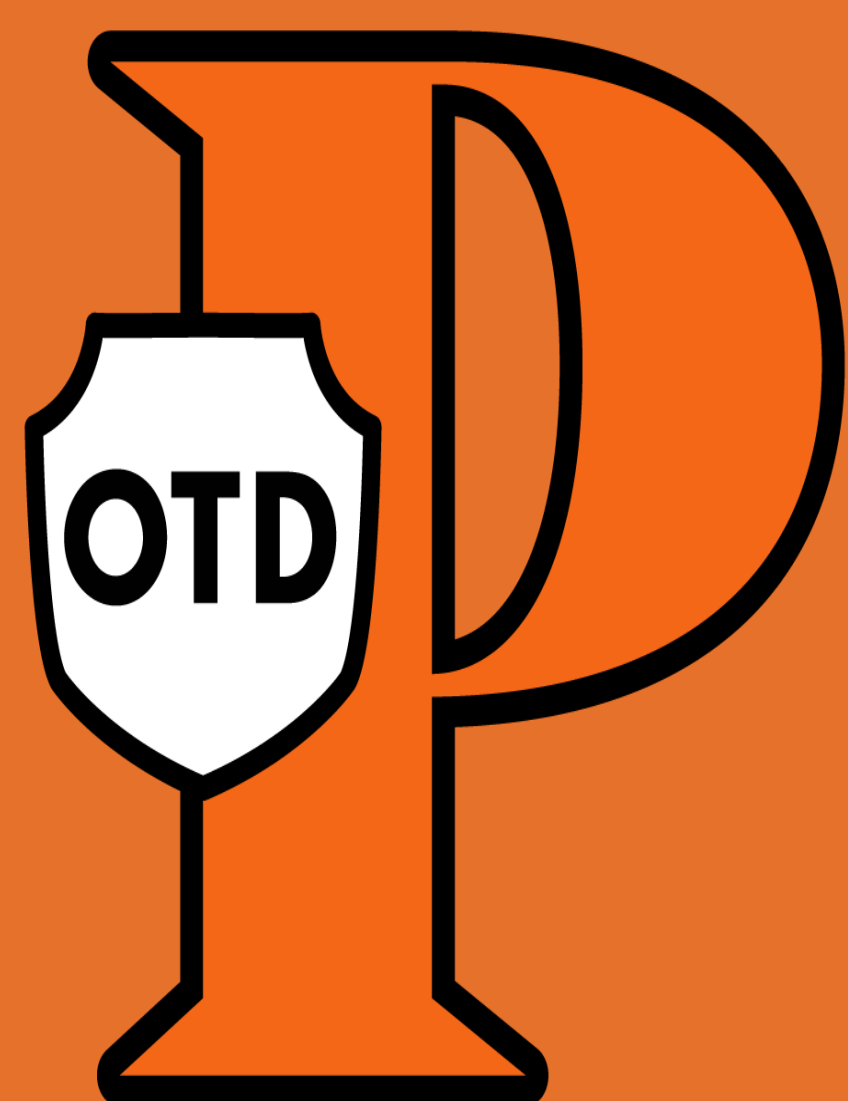
What Does Self-Compassion Mean to You?



"Loving myself"



"Being brave and strong like a sword."



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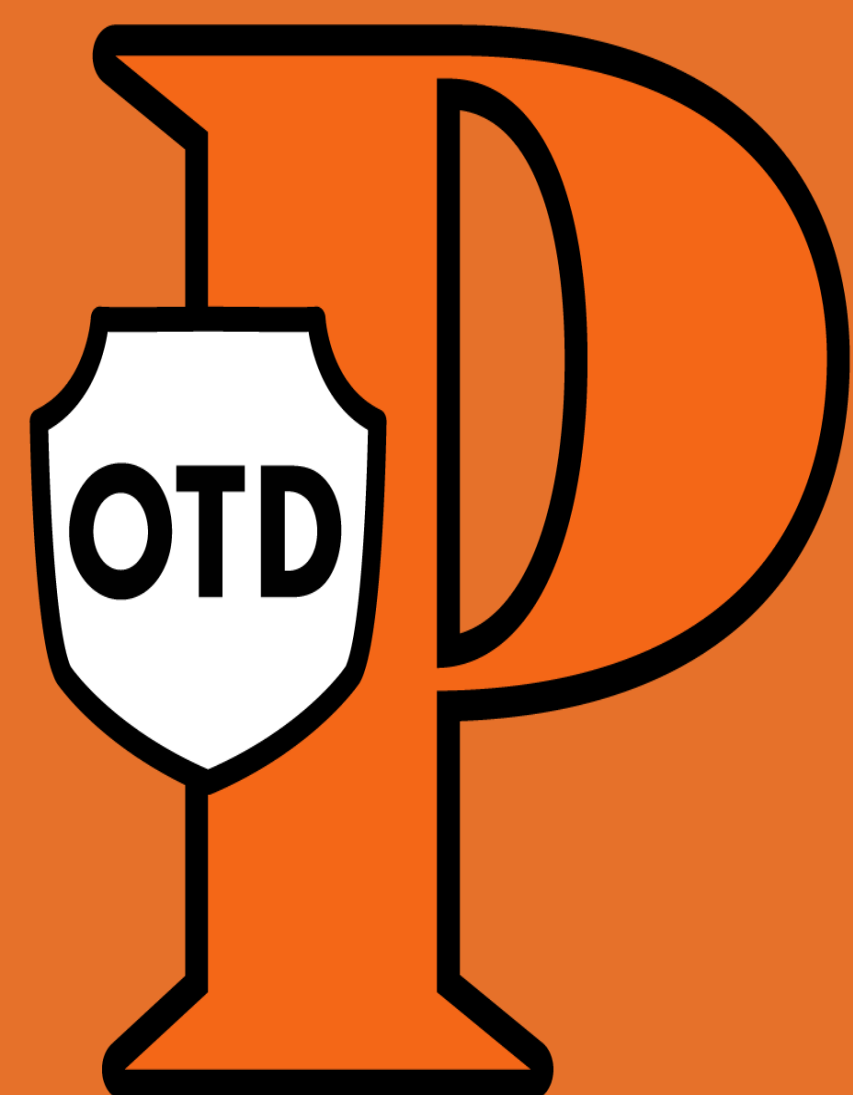
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Outcomes: Impact of COVID-19

47% reported “little impact” on mental health

35% reported “major impact” on social life

29% reported challenges in school, friends/family, and leisure activities



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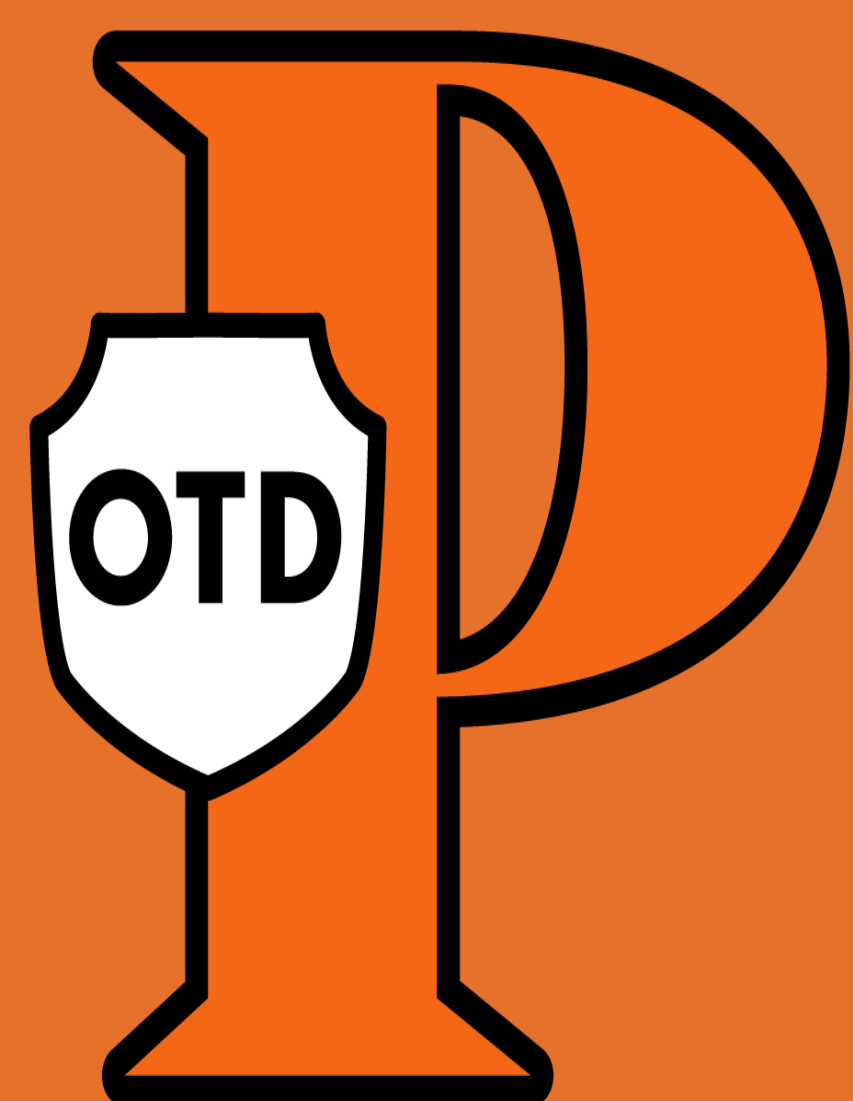
Outcomes: Self-Compassion and Mindfulness

Minimal positive changes among students' perception of mindfulness and self-compassion

17% increase about the benefits of mindfulness and self-compassion from pre to post survey

44% of students enjoyed the program and findings consistent with teacher feedback

Common themes included fun and pleasant experience, useful self-management strategies



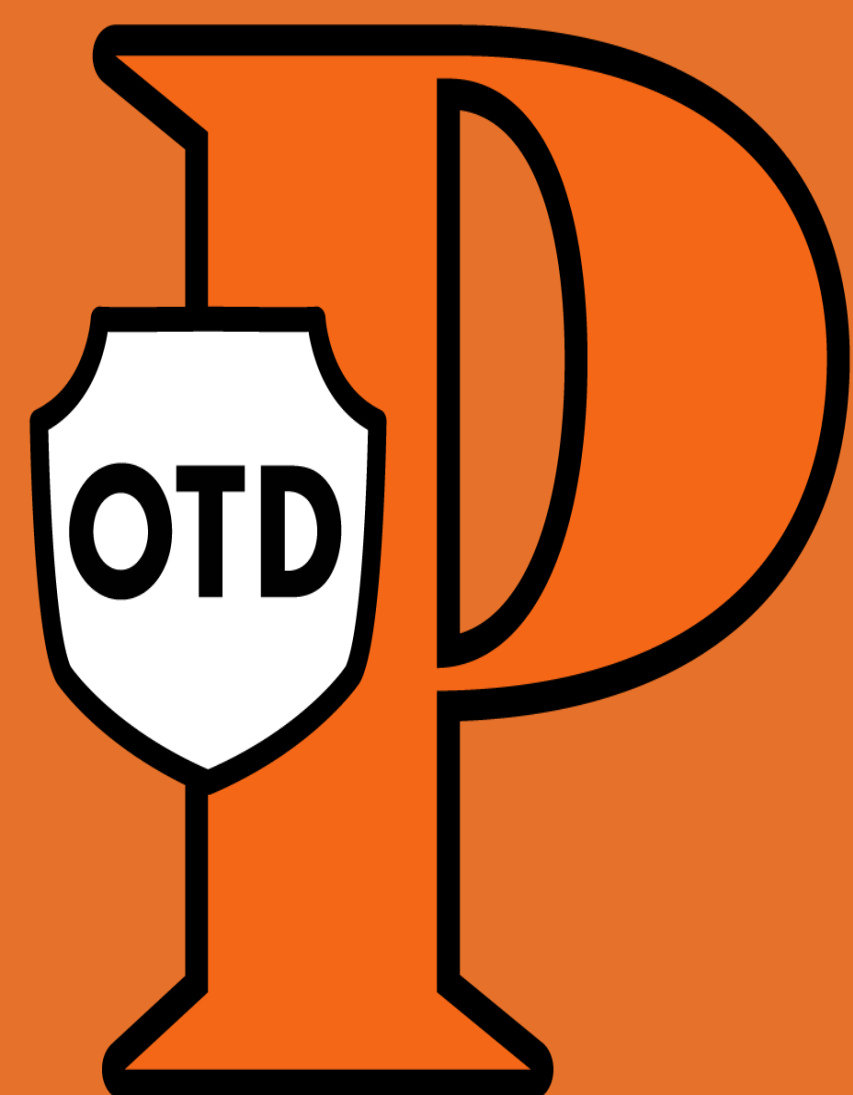
Outcomes: Self-Compassion and Mindfulness

Students expressed least beneficial aspects of the program

Common themes included program length, difficulty expressing feelings, and not enough activities

Similar findings from teacher feedback

Useful feedback to enhance and improve future program implementation



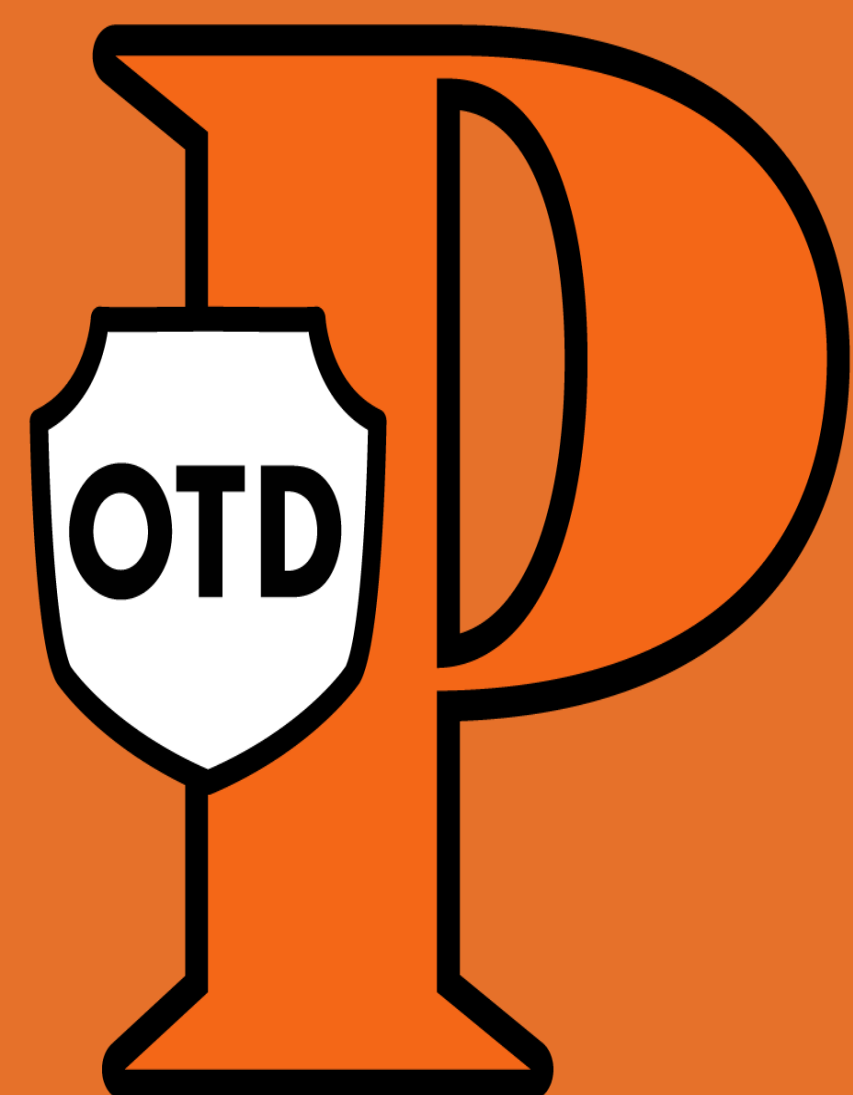
Discussion

Results must be warranted with caution due to study limitations

Small sample size and lack of randomization

Testing bias and participant attrition rate

Other program implementation challenges



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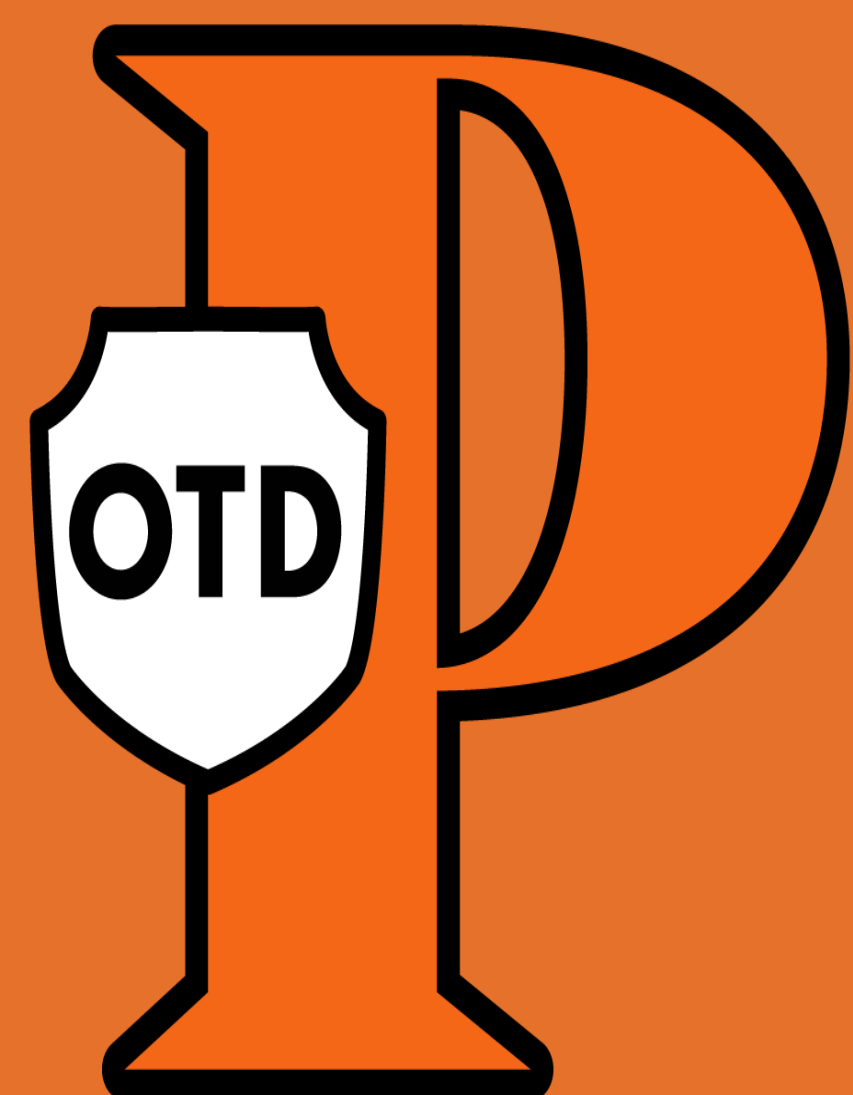
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Impact

A mindfulness and self-compassion training program may be beneficial in enhancing social and emotional health among youth

Study findings are important for the occupational therapy profession

Need for more high-quality studies to maximize impact

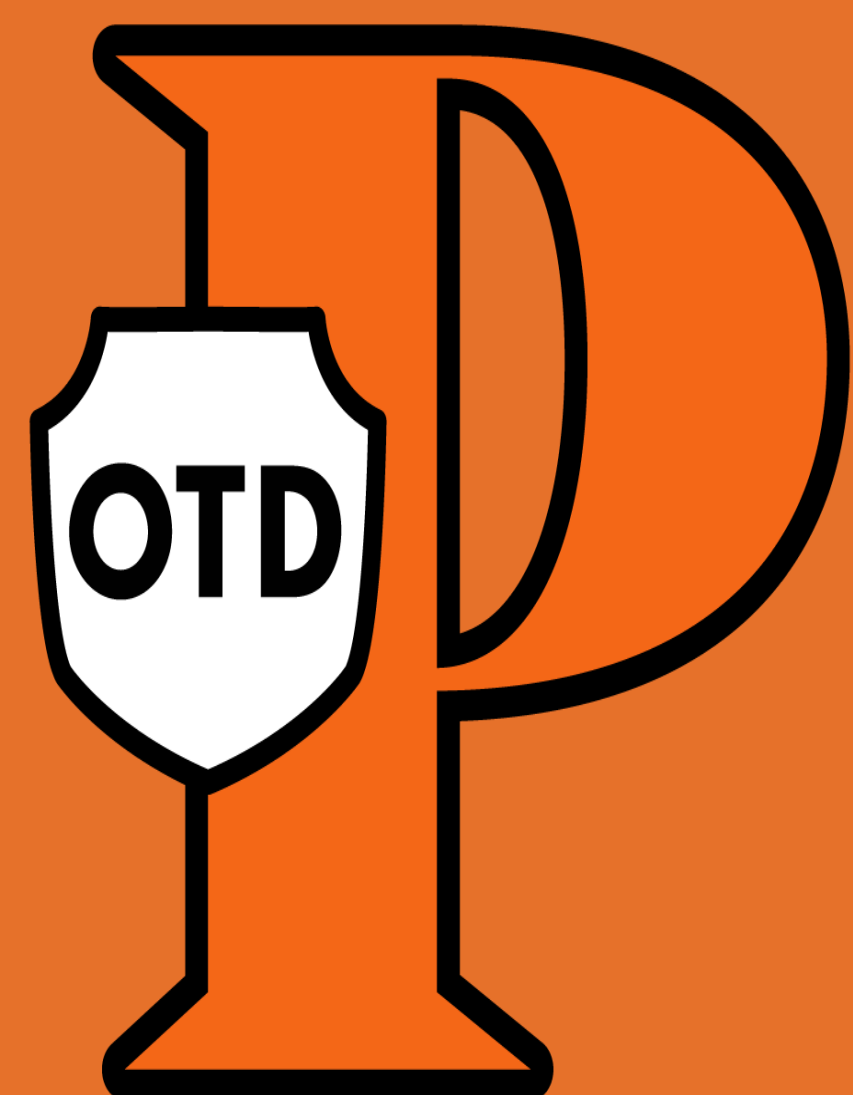
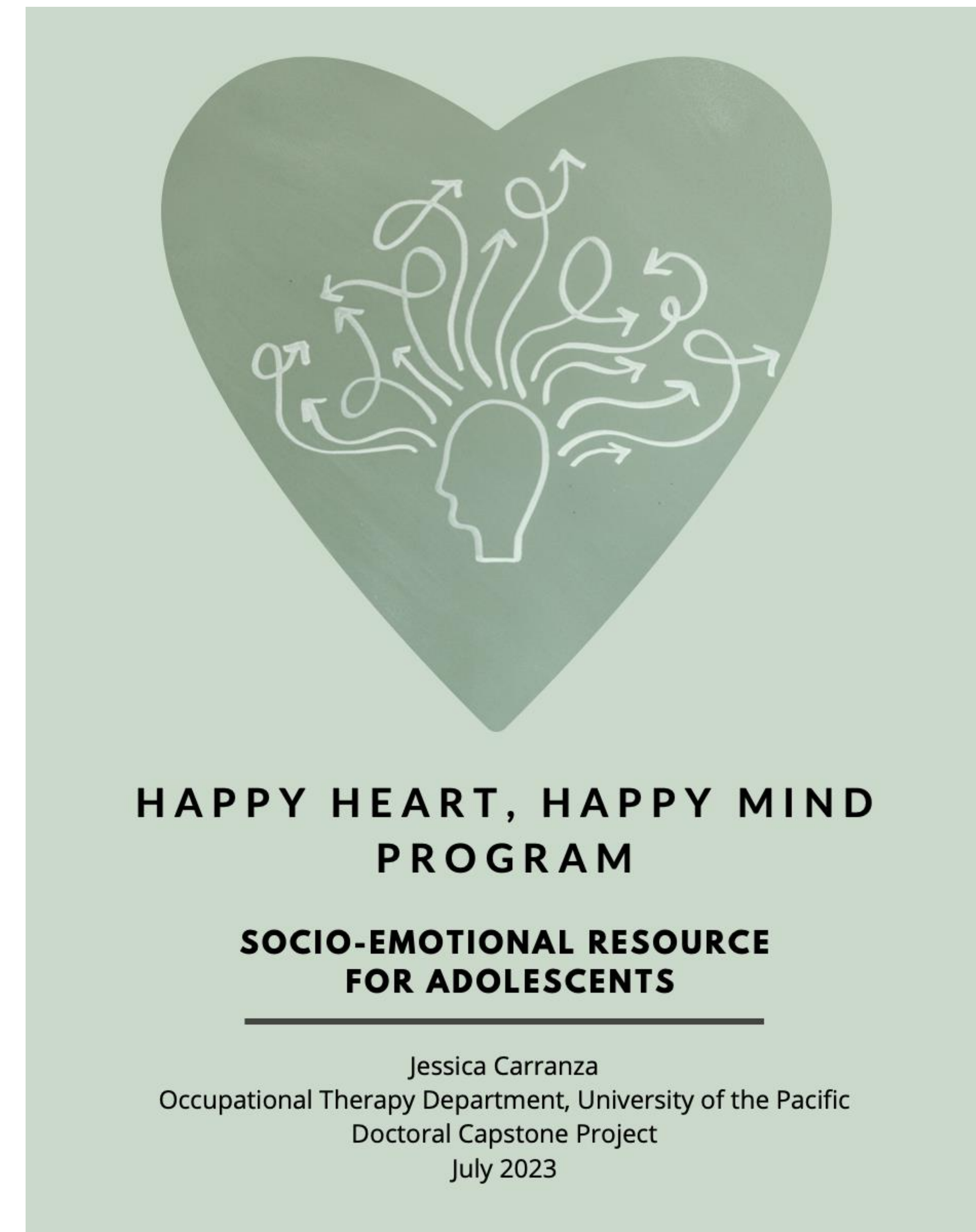


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