

ESTABLISHING CONNECTIONS WITH MINDFUL INTERACTIONS:
IMPACT OF PARENT EDUCATION ON PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-AWARENESS
AND MINDFUL PARENTING PRACTICES

by

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ABSTRACT

AMANDA LOUISE BARRETT. Establishing connections with mindful interactions:
Impact of parent education on perceptions of self-awareness and mindful parenting
practices.

(Under direction of DR. CYNTHIA BAUGHAN)

This study examined the impact of mindfully-based parent education plus text messaging support on parent perceptions of their connection with their child and on their perceptions of their own self-awareness and awareness of their parenting values and beliefs. The purpose of this study was to increase parents' self-awareness (i.e., ability to tolerate emotional pain, attention to detail, easily distracted), awareness of their parenting (i.e., perceptions, values, and beliefs on parenting), and to strengthen the perceived connections they have with their children through mindful interactions. Increased self-awareness and stronger parent-child connections can create a strong foundation for social-emotional and cognitive development to occur. Using a mindfully-based social-emotional curriculum under an evidence-based multi-tiered social-emotional framework, parent education sessions were held and the impact was measured by comparing the results of pre/post surveys that were completed by participants. Results demonstrated a moderate impact on parents' self-awareness, awareness of parenting values and beliefs and their perceived connection with their child after receiving the education. Informal reporting from parents elicited a strong interest in learning more about how to increase their self-awareness and how to strengthen their connection with their child. Participants reported that the supportive text messages using the BLOOMZ application was helpful, motivating and intentional.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Conscious, present, intentional, and mindful interactions help to establish a safe and secure foundation from which a solid connection between a parent and a child can form (Duncan, Coatsworth, & Greenberg, 2009). Kabat-Zinn (2003) defines mindfulness as “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experiences moment-by-moment” (p. 145). Solid parent-child connections are defined as listening with full attention when interacting with their child, cultivating emotional awareness and self-regulation in parenting, and bringing compassion and nonjudgmental acceptance to parenting interactions (Duncan et al., 2009). Mindful and responsive connections between a parent and a child can establish a secure attachment between the pair. Enhancing the quality of the parent-child connection allows for strong automatic emotional reactivity neuropathways in the brain to be established. It is this type of brain activity that lays the foundation for positive social-emotional (SE) and cognitive development to occur (Cohen & Semple, 2009).

Psychological disorders and negative psychological and physical responses to stress are now being treated with mindfully-based practices with a great rate of success (Baer, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1990). The promising results from these mindful intervention programs have encouraged researchers to apply these practices to parenting and parent-child connections. Researchers are using these techniques to help parents understand the interpersonal and intrapersonal processes that occur when parenting. Coatsworth,

Duncan, Greenberg, and Nix (2009) describe the *intrapersonal* process as the part of parenting that is self-reflective. Parental intrapersonal processes are the attitudes, values, and expectations that parents have about their children and parenting. Intrapersonal processes also incorporate a parent's response and ability to relate to those internal responses. *Interpersonal* parenting processes are defined as the way parents are fully present when interacting with their children and the way parents bring an attitude of acceptance, compassion, and kindness to those interactions, thus fostering solid connections (Coatsworth et al., 2009). Dix (1991) explains that parenting is an emotional experience and that virtually all facets of parenting are influenced by parents' emotional regulation, engagement, and activation. When parents are aware of their interpersonal and intrapersonal processes, they are more likely to model appropriate emotional reactions and responses during emotionally heightened situations while maintaining a strong connection with their child.

This model and connection have the potential to create a solid foundation of SE development for children. Children who have been taught how to appropriately respond to social and emotional challenges are able to be emotionally close to others, have a low amount of unresolvable social conflict, can openly communicate, and are able to self-regulate (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). These children are more likely to experience emotional well-being, positive social behaviors, academic success and strong peer relationships (Hemmeter, Ostrosky, & Fox, 2006). Children who have not been taught how to appropriately respond to social and emotional challenges often struggle academically, exhibit a lack of impulse control and self-regulation, and have weaker peer relationships. This study examined the impact of mindfully-based parent education that

was designed to share information with parents on how to be more self-aware of their actions and of their parenting values while strengthening their perceived connection with their child. Strengthening the parent-child connection can lead to a stronger foundation for SE and cognitive development to occur. Mindful, responsive, and intentional interactions between a parent and a child increases the likelihood that their child will be more socially and cognitively competent later in life.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Our country is facing record incarceration rates, increased health risks, a struggling economy, and a decline of high school graduates (Moffitt et al., 2011). Moffitt et al. (2011) state that immature development of social emotional competencies is one of the factors at the root of these challenging issues. Neuroscientists have uncovered that early experiences in a person's life have the ability to change brain structure and architecture leading to lasting effects on social emotional development and other developmental domains (Caine & Caine, 1991). Without positive and mindful early childhood experiences and strong interpersonal connections with an important person(s), a young child's foundational SE and cognitive development can be thwarted.

Spilt, Koomen, and Harrison (2015) explain that individual differences are seen in children's SE and cognitive development largely due to their level of attachment to their mother. Specifically, securely attached children have more rewarding interactions with mothers and receive more sensitive instruction and feedback from mothers (much like those promoted in mindful-based approaches). In contrast, insecurely attached children exhibit less interest in available activities, appear to be more occupied by feelings of anxiety, and are more distracted during interactions related to available activities (Spilt et

al., 2015). The mother-child connection appears to affect the quality of children's experiences (Pianta, 2006). Early responsive parent-child connections can have lasting effects and positively impact later life outcomes. Fabrizio, Stewart, Ip, and Lam (2014) found that these connections appear to be a long-term powerful protective factor, extending into adolescence, which is a critical risk period for negative academic and behavioral outcomes.

Combating the national issues that Motiff et al. (2011) describe may begin with parents establishing secure attachments to their children. Mindfully-based approaches have demonstrated an ability to enhance these connections, especially when infused with existing empirically validated parenting programs, such as the *Strengthening Families Program: For Parent and Youth 10-14* (Coatsworth et al., 2009) and *The Circle of Security Intervention* (Marvin et al., 2002). Teaching parents how to be aware, mindful, and conscious of their own views towards their children and parenting while becoming more present, intentional, and nonjudgmental when interacting with their children facilitates positive SE and cognitive development. An abundance of research has demonstrated the positive impact of strong parent-child connections on child development (e.g., Coatsworth et al., 2009; Cohen & Sempel, 2009; Duncan, et al., 2015; Hemmeter et al., 2006; Conscious Discipline, 2015; Motiff et al., 2011; El, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010).

At the center of all parent-child connections and a parent's role in life is an emotional base of logical thought. Brain structure and architecture is shaped by emotions produced in the centrally located limbic system (Caine & Caine, 1990). The limbic system and emotions are connected to every neuropathway the brains elicits (Caine &

Caine, 1990). A person's experiences are influenced and organized by emotions and mindsets involving expectancy, personal biases and prejudices, self-esteem, and the need for social interaction (Caine & Caine, 1991). Personal recognition of how emotional reactions are tied to interpersonal and intrapersonal processes will change an individual's level of self-awareness. Mindful, self-aware, responsive interactions between a parent and a child create opportunities for the parent to model appropriate emotional reactions that can positively impact later life outcomes (Duncan et al., 2015).

1.2 Research Questions

To examine the impact of mindfully-based parent education with text messaging support on parent perceptions of their self-awareness, perceptions of their own parenting values and beliefs, and their perceptions of their connection with their child, the following questions were asked: 1.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own self-awareness? 2.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own parenting values and beliefs? 3.) What is the impact of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their connection with their child?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To identify relevant literature regarding the impact of mindful connections between parents and children on SE development, the following EBSCOhost research databases were searched: PsycINFO, ERIC, JSTOR, and SAGE. The terms *social emotional development in early childhood, mindfulness at home, mindfulness at school, mindful parenting, mindful teaching, Conscious Discipline, SEFEL in schools, the Teaching Pyramid, parent training, family engagement at school, self-regulation in young children, significance of teacher/child relationships, and influence of parent/child relationships at school* were used to explore the literature. In addition, the academic search engine Google Scholar was explored and ancestral searches of journal articles were conducted to locate further resources for the literature review.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the Bowlby-Ainsworth Ethological/Cognitive Theory of Attachment (1991) and the brain-based research from the works of Caine and Caine (1990). Bowlby and Ainsworth's theory of attachment (1991) describes the implications and importance of parent-child dyads experiencing and administering responsive interactions. They continue to explain that these interactions should occur during critical developmental periods between parent and child, resulting in a securely formed attachment from which future cognitive development can occur (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). This theory aligns well with mindful-based approaches to

interpersonal and intrapersonal connections. Attachment theory essentially explains the ‘how and when’ intentional, conscious, and mindful interactions need to occur to build strong foundational opportunities for development. A lack of these interactions can lead to an insecure attachment and create disconnect between parent and child, thus forming a weak foundational base for cognitive development to occur (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991).

Brain-based theories of development explain ‘why’ the type of interactions matter. Caine and Caine (1990) have examined the effects of relational interactions and connections on brain development. This research has led to the discoveries of how emotions, stress, and threats affect learning processes, memory systems, and motivation in children (Caine & Caine, 1990). Siegel (2006) stated that memory shapes how we experience the present and how we anticipate the future, readying us in the present moment for what comes next based on what we experienced in the past. Experiences are what activate the firing of neurons thus creating new connections in the brain (Siegel, 2006). Broder (2010) affirmed that social experiences are what make the brain function and facilitate brain adaptation and change. Complex levels of interactions and experiences will lead to better brain functioning as an individual ages (Broder, 2010).

Emotions are connected to each experience an individual has. The brain’s emotional center is tied to a person’s executive brain functioning, where the ability to learn and process information is located (Bailey et al., 2011). Wolfe & Brandt (1998) state that emotions, learning, and memory are closely linked as different parts of the brain are activated in the learning process. Positive emotions drive attention, which in turn drives both learning and memory (Wolfe & Brandt, 1998). Accordingly, Caine and Caine

(1990) asserted that what a person learns is influenced and organized by emotions and mind-sets involving expectancy, personal biases and prejudices, self-esteem, and the need for social interaction creating automatic responses to varying experiences. Parents, educators, and other practitioners have a responsibility to create an emotional climate that is supportive and marked by mutual respect and acceptance in order to elicit a higher order thinking response to stress (Caine & Caine, 1990). Mindfully-based approaches are consistent with the theory of attachment and brain-based theories of development.

2.2 Mindful Interactions Lead to Secure Attachments and Stronger Brain Development

Kabat-Zinn (2003) defined mindfulness as “the awareness that arises through paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally” (p.145). Mindfully-based psychotherapies are supported by a large body of empirical data demonstrating their successful treatment of a wide variety of psychiatric illnesses and in managing chronic pain, anxiety, and stress (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Kabat-Zinn (2009) states that by adopting the philosophies of mindfulness and applying them to parenting, an individual makes a conscious effort and choice to practice moment-to-moment awareness of one’s own thoughts and emotions along with those of the child, fostering a stronger connection and attachment. Kabat-Zinn (2009) defines mindful parenting via five core aspects: (a) listening with full attention; (b) emotional awareness of self and child; (c) nonjudgmental acceptance of self and child, including greater awareness of expectations and attributions; (d) self-regulation in the parenting relationship; and (e) adopting compassion toward oneself as a parent and toward the struggles one’s child experiences. The responsive nature of mindfulness encourages the development of a strong parent-child connection and allows cognitive and SE

development to occur in a positive, reinforcing environment. The act of being mindful allows emotional and perceptive judgements in any given situation to be withheld, thus allowing for an open and receptive relationship to develop.

Coatsworth et al. (2010) report a range of effects from mindful parenting interventions such as improvements in parent anger management and self-reported positive and negative affective behavior exhibited towards children. Duncan et al. (2015) found that mindful parenting practices demonstrated a reduction in co-parenting disagreements and parenting stress. Finding ways to help families create environments based on the internal resources of secure attachment and connection instead of external rewards and punishments result in the creation of the stronger neuropathways that are required to exercise higher executive functioning (Caine & Caine, 1991). This approach to the development of secure attachments and higher executive functioning skills is based on the philosophy of mindfulness and brain-based research.

The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2011) suggests it is important to note that the brain regions and circuits associated with executive functioning have extensive interconnections with deeper brain structures that control the developing child's responses to threat and stress which will dictate later life automatic, unconscious responses to emotional stress. Prolonged exposure to stress has the potential of altering brain structure and how a child, once grown, reacts and responds to stressful situations (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2011). Creating pathways that elicit appropriate and safe responses to emotional stress have demonstrated to be the biological foundation to strong interpersonal and school readiness skills (Blair, 2002). Executive frontal lobe functions like planning, organizing, time management, impulse

control, emotional regulation and literacy are processes that adults often take for granted. Adults often times expect children to have mastered this functioning at an early age, when in reality it will not be mastered until the child reaches their early 20's (Duncan et al., 2015). Adults must lend their own executive functioning skills to a young child in order for positive pathways for a strong working memory, emotional competence and flexibility in thinking to develop (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2011). A secure attachment and strong interpersonal connections between parent and child encourage the positive SE and cognitive development needed to attain these essential life skills. Intentional and mindfully-based connections between children, families and educators allows knowledge to be shared and received on a individual, personal, and meaningful level. Caine and Caine (2006) suggest when an individual is personally invested in the information being taught, application of the new knowledge is easier to implement. Personal interest and motivation lead to mindful learning opportunities while strengthening an individual's executive functioning (i.e., area of the brain where thinking, memory, physical movement and coordination and synthesis of emotions takes place) (Caine & Caine, 2006). Families that have intentional and responsive interactions, are able to make teaching, sharing and developing SE skills more purposeful for their children (Caine & Caine, 2006). Educators have a unique opportunity to help children and families strengthen their own interpersonal relationships through mindfully-based social emotional learning (SEL) curricula. SEL, as defined by The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), a leading organization for SEL, is "the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage

emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2016).” Not all SEL curricula are mindfully-based; some are based in mindlessness.

Mindless approaches to learning are adult led; demonstrate a power-assertive role over the child; employ rote and repetitive instruction; lack individualization, personal creativity and innovation; and the rules and routines are more likely to govern behaviors, irrespective of the current circumstances (Caine & Caine, 2006; Capel, 2012; Duncan et al., 2009). For example, Duncan et al. (2009) conducted a pilot randomized study with 65 families testing an adapted version of the Strengthening Families Program (SFP): For Parent and Youth 10-14 that blended mindfulness practices and principles into the program and compared the blended results to the original program results while including a delayed intervention control group. The SFP is a program that trains parents and children separately, then brings them together to practice what they have learned. The approaches taught focus on enthusiastically paying attention to children’s behaviors, actively listening, and consistent discipline with logical consequences and time outs. In the original SFP, these tasks were taught to parents and children with a mindless-based approach (i.e., participants were told to routinely notice things to make the noticing habit until it becomes natural or mindless). Duncan et al. (2009) infused mindfulness into the SFP and found that these practices enhanced parent-youth relationships and program outcomes for families.

These findings help us understand why mindless, routine based approaches to parenting may limit parent-child connections. Mindless approaches to learning hinder personal and authentic development resulting in habit forming and automatic processing

to solve problems. This approach can limit an individual's ability to successfully implement and apply new knowledge (Langer, 1992). These approaches can sabotage executive functioning by activating a survival response, a response that diminishes higher-order functioning and replaces it with fear, helplessness, fatigue and excessive stress (Caine & Caine, 2006). Frequent activation of the survival response to stress through mindless practices can have long term effects on a child such as higher than normal cortisol levels, diminished self-esteem, decreased academic performance and weakened interpersonal relationships (Capel, 2012; Caine & Caine, 2006; McCabe & Frede, 2007).

In contrast, mindfully-based approaches to learning generate sensitive, responsive connections between an adult and child; demonstrate a present-focused awareness of how children are gathering and processing information; promote intrinsic motivation to succeed; and do not pass judgement, but rather acknowledge emotions and are relationship-oriented (Capel, 2012; Duncan et al., 2009; Nasution et. al., 2011). Mindful SEL curricula allow children to continuously discover new solutions and change perceptions when faced with new or familiar challenges through the act of scaffolding (Conscious Discipline, 2015). Frequent scaffolding opportunities create pathways in the brain that are authentic and meaningful to that child (Conscious Discipline, 2015), thus increasing the likelihood of successful implementation of new skills (Caine & Caine, 2006). Mindfully-based SEL focuses on the adult's self-awareness and on the adult's awareness of their perceptions of the environment they are engaged in by first allowing them to recognize their own automatic responses to stress (Duncan et al., 2009; Coatsworth et al., 2009). For example, when parents feel the need to control their child (a

parent-oriented goal) without stopping to take their child's feelings, needs or wants into consideration (not child-oriented), parents are not taking a relationship-oriented perspective.

Mindfulness teaches adults how conscious, presently aware and responsive connections create strong brain architecture and processes in children by modeling self-regulation, body awareness, conscious empathy (i.e., not taking on the pain of others), and emotional literacy (Cohen & Semple, 2009; Duncan et al., 2009). Mindful practices initiated by the adult, then taught to the child, produce an environment where children, regardless of ability, will have more opportunity for academic success, improved cognition, robust interpersonal relationships and a stronger self-awareness (Capel, 2012; Duncan et al., 2009). Helping policy makers, educators, and families understand the positive impact of such practices has been at the forefront of recent initiatives.

2.3 State and National Impact of SEL and Interpersonal Connections

The North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation's initiative, The First 2000 Days, is pushing for policy changes based on current brain-based research (North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation, 2016). The First 2000 Days initiative uses this research to illustrate the importance of enriched early experiences in the first two thousand days of life when the brain has the most neuroplasticity and when secure attachments should be formed. The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers (2010), reported that the current Common Core Standards acknowledge the critical importance of emphasizing social and emotional development in the early grades and that SEL is an integral part of a child's development. The Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study by Motiff et al. (2011), demonstrated

that childhood self-control predicts physical health, substance dependence, personal finances, and criminal offending outcomes. In this study, researchers followed 1,037 children born in one city in a single year, from birth to 32 years of age, with a 96% retention rate. Findings indicated that a lack of self-control in early childhood predicted poor later life outcomes, such as poorer health, less wealth, and higher rates of criminal behaviors. Mottiff et al. (2011) examined the influence and the timing of implementation of targeted versus universal SEL prevention and intervention programs aimed at curbing these outcomes. Findings indicated implementing a universal SEL approach during early childhood and then again in adolescence proved to bring the biggest return on investment compared to targeted harm reduction programs aimed specifically at adolescents.

Today, many children are spending less time at home and more time in child care settings (McCabe & Frede, 2007). The impact of this shift of care has changed how children develop cognitive and SE skills. Since the 1970's and 1980's, concerns about the connection between the increase of non-maternal early care and educational settings and challenging behaviors have been on the rise (Belsky & Revive, 1987). The quality of care, time spent in non-maternal care, and higher levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, have all been linked to challenging behaviors in children (McCabe & Frede, 2007). Young children and families are experiencing fewer opportunities to establish strong connections and attachments, combating differing childrearing lessons between home and school, and are being subjected to more life stressors (McCabe & Frede, 2007).

To diminish the negative later life outcomes of such challenges, SEL researchers have been examining studies like the Perry Preschool Project, the Chicago Longitudinal Study and the Abecedarian project, to uncover why participants exhibited stronger

positive later-life outcomes in comparison to those who did not participate in these projects (as cited in McCabe & Frede, 2007). These studies demonstrated strong family-school partnerships, high family involvement at school and family education on SE development improved later life outcomes, such as school readiness, graduation rates, interpersonal relationships, sustainable employment and incarceration rates (Motiff et al., 2011; McCabe & Frede, 2007). SEL affects many areas of a child's life. Learning to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors are all part of SE development (Elias et al., 1997). The approach taken to teach these skills may be the key to helping children create lifelong healthy responses to future experiences.

2.4 A Multi-tiered Framework for SEL: The Pyramid Model

Researchers of SEL have examined how to encourage the development of strong neurological responses to challenging situations (e.g. poverty, chronic stress) like the ones experienced by the participants in the Perry Preschool Project, the Chicago Longitudinal Study or the Abecedarian Project. CASEL (2003) has been instrumental in guiding SEL research. CASEL is one of the nation's leading organizations advancing the development of academic, social, and emotional competence for all children. CASEL's leadership and expertise in the field has led many researchers to use CASEL's practices to substantiate their SEL curricular frameworks. CASEL has consolidated a list of identifiable and mindfully-based SE skills that most SEL programs use to support their frameworks. These skills are: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2013).

Based on these skills and CASEL's SEL research, two federally funded research and training centers, The Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI), have created a multi-tiered pyramid model: Teaching Pyramid Model for SEL (TACSEI, 2011). CSEFEL is now supported and funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau Administration on Children, Youth and Families and the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (CSEFEL, 2011).

The Social and Emotional Foundation for Early Learning (SEFEL) Teaching Pyramid conceptual model is defined as "a model for promoting young children's social-emotional development and addressing children's challenging behavior and its link to critical outcomes for children, families and early childhood programs" (Hemmeter et al., 2006, p. 583). Hemmeter et al. (2006) explain that this multi-tiered approach is different from other tiered approaches as it targets the SE development of all children, regardless of cognitive or developmental abilities, under one umbrella. The pyramid model guides intervention designs for supporting the social and emotional development of all young children that are and are not involved in formal early childhood education. The SEFEL model is a strengths-based approach that has been designed to prevent and attenuate children's problem behaviors, especially those responses that interfere with teaching and learning (Dunlap et al., 2006; Fox, Carta, Strain, Dunlap, & Hemmeter, 2010). There are four tiers to the SEFEL pyramid model as described by TACSEI (2011) below:

- **Yellow Foundation:** The foundation for all practices in the pyramid involves the systematic and sustainable implementation of the model by the workforce using it.

- Blue Tier: Universal supports are provided to all children through nurturing, responsive relationships and high quality environments; extend this relationship building to include children's families.
- Green Tier: Targeted SE strategies to prevent specific problems are created and implemented, though not necessary for all children; development of such strategies is a team approach that includes the family.
- Red Tier: Individualized and intensive interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviors; functional behavioral assessment is conducted to address challenging behaviors and the team develops and implements strategies based on analysis.

The blue tier's focus on creating connections and establishing secure attachments among children, families, and educators was central to this study. The SEFEL model's definition of how to create connections is closely related to mindfully-based approaches to SEL. The SEFEL model states to create strong connections and secure attachments with children, adults must elicit interactions that support children's play, are responsive to children's conversations, acknowledge communication attempts of children with and without special needs, and provide specific praise and encouragement of appropriate behavior thus creating self-awareness and self-management (CASEL, 2013; Hemmeter et al., 2006). This component and its practices have the potential to increase the frequency of interactions between children and adults. Effective execution of this level can increase child engagement fostering strong SEL skills, aid in decreasing problem behaviors, strengthen kindergarten readiness skills, support the formation of secure attachments and have a positive effect on later life outcomes (Hemmeter et al., 2006).

Developing mindfully-based connections between children and adults at the universal level increases the effectiveness in supporting young children's SE development (Hemmeter et al., 2006). Hemmeter et al. (2006) state to establish secure attachments and connections, professionals must intentionally invest time and effort in learning about a child's attributes, likes and dislikes, and abilities while possessing an understanding of the child within the context of his or her family and community. These researchers express the importance of establishing a strong connection with children's families as well. Professionals must provide families with information about how to support their children's SE development (Hemmeter et al., 2006). Sharing this information with families on a regular basis increases the connection opportunities between parents and children. Research findings demonstrate that when families receive training on SE development in addition to the implementation of appropriate curricula in early childhood settings, a positive effect on children's SE competence is significantly greater than when the same curriculum is implemented without training and support for families (Webster-Stratton et al., 2001, 2004).

2.5 Conscious Discipline as a Mindful Approach to SEL

There are several SEL curricula that use the SEFEL framework and have a strong family component. However, the piece that most SEL curricula are missing is a focus on mindful connections (Duncan et al., 2009). This approach to connections, when supported by the SEFEL framework, has the potential to produce stronger parent-child attachments, lay a solid foundation for development, and positively increase interpersonal connections (Caine & Caine, 2006). One mindfully-based SEL curriculum that aligns with the SEFEL model is Conscious Discipline (CD) (Conscious Discipline, 2015).

Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive SE intelligence program for families, educators and practitioners that integrates all domains of development (e.g., social, emotional, physical, cultural, and cognitive) by using a brain-based and mindful approach to learning centered on connection, self-awareness, authenticity and intentionality (Conscious Discipline, 2015). CD uses a tiered model called the brain-state model that focuses on establishing strong connections between adults and children (Conscious Discipline, 2015). This tiered model is consistent with the CSEFEL framework because it requires adults to establish strong authentic connections with children as laid out in the blue tier of the SEFEL model (Conscious Discipline, 2015).

Hickman (2009) compiled the SEFEL model's inventory of practices and illustrated how CD principles and practices align with the SEFEL model (See Appendix A for an adapted version of the alignment of the CSEFEL Inventory Practices and Conscious Discipline). Hickman's (2009) SEFEL/CD alignment of practices table demonstrates how a mindful and authentic connection between an adult and a child can help form strong neuropathways allowing for self-control to be established while creating an atmosphere for optimal learning to occur through a sense of safety and security. CD teaches adults how to develop, model and teach self-discipline and control to children rather than having discipline be something that is done to a child (Conscious Discipline, 2015).

Using the CD brain state model to establish solid, authentic connections starts with the adult understanding how internal emotional states dictate the behaviors in all of us. Our emotions are tied to our automatic responses to stress that were formed during early childhood in our brain architecture (Duncan et al., 2009; Conscious Discipline,

2015). CD teaches adults how to become mindfully aware of those responses and then learn to make a conscious choice to change the response. CD offers adults “seven powers” (i.e., perception, unity, free will, attention, acceptance, love and intention) of consciousness that support stronger self-regulated responses to stress. This model of appropriate self-regulation paves the way for authentic and meaningful connections between an adult and child to be established through a sense of security and safety while accessing higher order cognition. (Coatsworth et al., 2009; Duncan et al., 2009; Conscious Discipline, 2015). CD allows families to connect more authentically and with more intention. This connection has the potential to support the development of children who are stronger problem solvers, better equipped to manage social interactions, and have healthier school readiness skills. The purpose of this study was to help families learn how to generate stronger connections through parent education using the CD curriculum.

2.6 Conclusion

Research indicates that the deteriorating state of our children’s social, physical and mental health needs to be a primary focus of the nation (Motiff et al., 2011). Family structures have changed drastically since the 1960’s, which has led to dramatic changes in children’s cognitive and SE development and their later life outcomes (Conscious Discipline, 2015; Motiff et al., 2011). Mindfully-based interventions have had much success in increasing SE development in young children (Duncan et al., 2009). With more children spending less time at home and more time in an educational setting, establishing mindfully-based connections between parent, child and school can prove beneficial for child development. Research findings demonstrate that when families

receive training on SE development in addition to the implementation of appropriate curricula in early childhood settings, a positive effect on children's SE competence is significantly greater than when the same curriculum is implemented without training and support for families (Webster-Stratton et al., 2001, 2004).

The foundation of the SEFEL teaching pyramid model is dedicated to supporting and nurturing relationships between children, families and educators (Hemmeter et al., 2006). CD is one SEL curriculum that supports strengthening young children's cognitive and SE outcomes through mindful, responsive and authentic connections between child, parent and teacher (Bailey et al., 2011). When CD strategies and teachings are shared with families, childhood outcomes have a greater chance of being stronger (Bailey et al., 2011; Hemmeter et al., 2006; Webster-Stratton et al., 2001, 2004). Based on this knowledge and research, this study aimed to mindfully educate parents on how to strengthen their connections with their children, increase their own self-awareness and their awareness of their parenting values and beliefs, which in turn, may lay the foundation for sound SE and cognitive development to be cultivated.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

3.1 Introduction and Design

This study used a pre/post-test design to measure the impact of mindfully-based parent education with text messaging support on parent perceptions of self-awareness, perceptions of parenting values and beliefs, and perceptions of their connections with their child by comparing results from pre/post surveys. The educational sessions were designed to share mindful parenting practices and techniques that would raise self-awareness; increase parental awareness of their parenting values and beliefs; and strengthen their perceived connections with their children. Specifically, the research addressed the following questions: 1.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own self-awareness? 2.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own parenting values and beliefs? 3.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their connection with their child?

3.2 Setting

This study took place at a public preschool in a suburban school district in the southeast. The school serves the district's children with disabilities while offering childcare to the children of district employees. This school's teachers are highly qualified as they all have B-K licensure and many have a Master's level education. The CSEFEL

(2011) teaching pyramid model is the SE framework used and CD (2015) is the SE curriculum employed in this setting. All teachers and teaching assistants have had extensive and continuous training in CD. The school also employs Project Based Learning while aligning instruction with North Carolina's Foundation for Early Learning and Development (North Carolina Foundations Task Force, 2013) and Teaching Strategies Gold for Early Development (Teaching Strategies Gold for Early Development, n.d.). This school serves approximately 250 children with and without disabilities between the ages of 3-5 years. There are 4 self-contained and 13 inclusive classrooms on campus. The classroom this study took place in had 12 children between the ages of 3-5 years; six of whom had disabilities of varying degrees and six of whom were typically developing.

3.3 Participants

Convenience sampling was used to recruit participants for this study. The researcher asked families enrolled in her classroom to voluntarily participate. There was one teacher (i.e., the researcher) and one teacher assistant in this classroom. The study was open to any families in the researcher's classroom that were interested in participating (i.e., mom, dad, grandmother, grandfather). Families were eligible to be included in the study if they had a child enrolled in the researcher's classroom and had access to the internet. All families in the researcher's classroom had access to the internet, thus, all were eligible to participate. After the invitation to participate went out, 4 out of 12 parents voluntarily agreed to participate. Participants were asked to report basic demographic information. The demographic information for each participant is reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic information for research participants

Participants	Demographic Information								
	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnic background	Marital Status	Educational Level	Familiarity w/ CD	Familiarity w/ SEFEL	Age of child	Gender of Child
P1	33	F	Caucasian	M	BA	Not at all	Not at all	4	M
P2	27	F	Caucasian	M	HS Diploma	Slightly familiar	Not at all	5	M
P3	36	F	Caucasian	M	Graduate	Slightly familiar	Not at all	4	M
P4	25	F	Caucasian	M	HS Diploma	Not at all	Not at all	4	F

This information revealed that all participants were Caucasian, married women. They all had little or no familiarity of what CD and the SEFEL pyramid model were. Educational levels of participants varied from high school to graduate school. Participant's children were in the age range of 4-5 with three being male and one female. This researcher had general knowledge of the participant's relationship with their child due to being their child's teacher. Speculation as to why these four parents choose to participate in the study pointed to pre-study informal parental reports of challenging behaviors at home and/or the desire to establish new or different connections with their children for a variety of reasons. A few other families in this researcher's classroom also requested help or asked for information on a regular basis prior to the study's implementation; however, these four participating parents did tend to reach out more frequently, though no formal data collection occurred to confirm this speculation. Establishing a link between participants, recognizing who asked for certain types of information, and pre/post-test results is not possible as any identifiable information about the participants had been coded and

withheld from this researcher. Establishing this link in the future has the potential for producing a richer report of data. (See Appendix D for an example of the Demographic Information survey)

3.4 Instrumentation

Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale-Revised (CAMS-R) The CAMS-R (Feldman et al., 2007) was used to examine the effects of the education sessions on parent perceptions of their self-awareness. Feldman et al. (2007) developed the CAMS-R in order to have a “brief self-report measure of mindfulness with items that cover the breadth of the construct and that are written in everyday language” (pg. 177). Feldman et al. (2007) created a 12-item (later a 10-item) “measure demonstrating acceptable internal consistency and evidence of convergent and discriminant validity with concurrent measures of mindfulness, distress, well-being, emotion-regulation, and problem-solving approaches in three samples of university students” (pg. 177).

The final scale was a self-reported, 10-item inventory that measures mindfulness during general daily occurrences on four components needed to reach a mindful state (i.e., attention, awareness, present-focus, acceptance/nonjudgment) using a 4 point Likert-type rating scale. To calculate a score on this measure the researcher added the answers into one sum while reversing the score for questions 6. The range of scores for this measure examined the varying levels of self-awareness that participants possessed. (See Appendix B for an explanation of Scoring for CAMS-R.)

Interpersonal Mindfulness in Parenting (IEM-P) The IEM-P (Duncan, 2007) was used to examine parents’ perceptions of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child. Duncan (2007) tested the validity and the reliability of the

IEM-P when applied to mindful parenting practices. Four target goals that incorporated several hypotheses and specifically addressed the validity and reliability of the IEM-P were addressed in target goal #3: “Assess the validity of the IEM-P scale by examining the concurrent relations between mindful parenting and other empirically supported dimensions of parenting” (pg. 48) by way of hypothesis #3: “Mindful parenting was expected to have a positive relation to parent-child affective quality and effective child management practices (e.g., inductive reasoning, consistent discipline, high monitoring)” (pg. 48). The results supported this goal and hypothesis. They yielded a positive relationship between mindful parenting and general child management when controlling for income, mother’s education, family structure, and PROSPER, a preventive, evidence-based substance abuse program for middle school students that was systematically delivered at the community-level using a randomized trial to measure the effectiveness of the program (Duncan, 2007; Spoth, Greenberg, Bierman, & Redmond, 2004).

The IEM-P scale is a self-reporting, 10-item inventory running on a 5-point Likert-type scale. It was used to measure parent perceptions of mindful parenting characteristics, specifically awareness and present-centered attention, non-judgement and non-reactivity, and parent’s perceived strength of connection with their child. The researcher calculated scores by totaling the sum of the answers, with questions #1, #9, #10, and #5 having a reversed score. The range of scores for this measure examined the varying levels of participant awareness of their parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of their connection with their child. (See Appendix C for an example of Scoring for IEM-P.) A CD session evaluation survey, which included 5-point Likert-scaled questions about the effectiveness of the parent education and asked about the

supportiveness of the BLOOMZ messaging, was used to evaluate the implementation of the intervention. This survey also included one open-ended question regarding what participants would like to know more about. (See Appendix G for an example of the Conscious Discipline Parent Education Session evaluation survey)

3.5 Variables

The independent variables for this study were the two mindfully-based Conscious Discipline parent education sessions and the ongoing text message support using the BLOOMZ (2016) application. The dependent variables for this study were parent perceptions of their self-awareness, parent perceptions of their parenting values and beliefs, and parent perceptions of their level of connection with their child.

3.6 Intervention

Conscious Discipline (CD) Parent Education Sessions The intervention was broken down into two sessions. They were each approximately one hour in length and covered the basic skills needed to become more self-aware, increase participants' awareness of their parenting values and beliefs, and strengthen their perceptions of connectedness with their child as defined by the CD program. Hands on activities, collaborative opportunities and tangible techniques were used and discussed. The sessions used CD videos, 2 handouts from CD and a PowerPoint outline (See Appendix H for an outline of the PowerPoint Parent Education Session Outline). Approval was granted by CD to this researcher to use the materials so long as acknowledgment was given to CD.

At the end of the first session, the researcher asked participants to choose two or three mindful strategies that were discussed to implement before the next session. The researcher gave each participant a perforated notecard that had a checklist of techniques

taught listed on both sides of the perforation (See Appendix I for an example of the Checklist for Mindfully-Based Techniques). The researcher asked the participants to check off on both sides of the notecard which 2-3 techniques they planned to implement with their child. The participants tore along the perforation and kept one side for themselves and gave the other side to the researcher.

The second session was a debriefing held four weeks later. This session gave parents a chance to collaborate and share experiences, as well as recap what was discussed at the first session with more detail. The debriefing began with an open discussion about what worked and what challenged them, while allowing parents to establish a level of support and awareness amongst themselves. This researcher used the same PowerPoint from the first session to guide the debriefing while listening to what the families would like to discuss in more depth.

It is important to note that the first parent session was split into two separate sessions. Two of the participants were not able to attend the OSS due to child illness. The researcher rescheduled with the two parents that cancelled three days later. There were observable differences between the two sessions, though no formal data were gathered. The OSS had less spontaneous dialogue between the researcher and participants when compared to the RSS. The parents in OSS allowed the researcher to direct the conversations while following along with the PowerPoint presentation. The two participants in the RSS produced more spontaneous conversations between each other and with the researcher. They asked more questions, made more comments about personal parenting experiences and displayed more emotional vulnerability (i.e., crying sad and happy tears, sharing psychological history and present state of mind, freely

sharing the strategies they used in times of stress to control misbehavior). Interestingly, the two parents in the RSS had also known each other longer because their children had been in class together the previous school year. The two parents in the OSS met each other at the beginning of the current school year and had limited opportunities to establish a strong connection. However, in both sessions, all participants maintained eye contact, actively participated when encouraged by the researcher, shared personal experiences and displayed excitement when choosing their CD techniques for implementation.

BLOOMZ Application BLOOMZ (2016) is an application that was used to recruit participants, schedule events, automatically send out reminders and support participants in study. The BLOOMZ (2016) application was introduced at the beginning of the school year. The researcher used the application on a daily basis to share classroom experiences, privately communicate with families, create and set calendar events, schedule parent teacher conferences, and create volunteer opportunities that families could sign up for. The application instantaneously enabled the researcher to communicate with all classroom families, share pictures and videos, send private messages, send and create event reminders, post to a calendar with important dates and allowed parents to privately communicate with each other without publically disclosing private information (i.e., phone numbers, email addresses). This researcher controlled classroom membership and was able to create a sense of privacy and connectedness. At the beginning of the school year, the researcher created a private access code specific to the classroom and shared it with families. The researcher controlled who had the code and was the sole person to grant requests to join the classroom's page. The researcher choose to use BLOOMZ (2016) for this study because of its secure nature, classroom familiarity, and multiple

event planning capabilities. The application was used as a form of text messaging. Text messaging has been found to be a reliable tool that increases parent participation (Murray et al., 2015).

BLOOMZ (2016) allowed this researcher to supportively communicate with participants on a weekly basis in between sessions. The weekly messages asked each participating family, “At our first session, you choose to implement the following strategies: ____, _____. Have you been able to do so? Reply yes or no.” A second question was sent asking, “Would you like more support with implementing your chosen strategies? Reply yes or no.” Should a family have replied yes for more support, this researcher would have called the family to discuss their specific concern. All participants promptly replied each week to the researcher’s messages. At no point during the study did any participant state they were unable to implement their chosen strategies, nor, did they require any further support by way of a phone call. However, had a participant requested more support from the researcher, the information shared would have been information shared with each participant during their first session.

3.7 Procedures

Recruitment Recruitment for this study occurred within the researcher’s classroom. All 12 families were invited to participate. Four parents voluntarily agreed to be part of the study. Families received the invitation electronically via BLOOMZ (2016) messaging. Attached to the electronic invitation was an uploaded file explaining what the study was about. It also outlined what roles and responsibilities the participants would have in the research study should they choose to participate. Families were asked to privately respond to the researcher via BLOOMZ (2016) to voluntarily participate. The researcher

then confirmed participant eligibility (e.g., in researcher's classroom and access to the internet). After agreeing to participate, a reply message was sent thanking them for volunteering and apprising them that an informational packet would be sent home with their child the next school day (See Appendix L for an example of Parent Education Session Schedule and Family Support), and included a hard copy of the notice of informed consent to be signed and returned and a request for demographic information (See Appendix G for an example of demographic questionnaire) and the pre-survey instruments. Participants were asked to return the completed packet of information within one week of receipt in the provided envelopes. Instructions as to how to complete the surveys were included. Participants were also asked to not write any identifiable information on the surveys, place completed surveys in provided envelopes, write their names on the outside of the envelope and seal them. Returned envelopes were placed in a locked cabinet in the researcher's classroom. After all participant packets were returned, the researcher delivered them to the responsible faculty member (researcher's chair) to be de-identified and coded in preparation for analysis. The responsible faculty member, who did not know the families, removed any identifiable information and assigned a unique identifier to the data. Only the responsible faculty member had access to the list that links each participant with the unique code. The researcher used the coded data to develop the database for analysis in SPSS.

Pre/Post Surveys CAMS-R and IEM-P pre-surveys were sent home to all participants in the informational packet. Participants were asked to complete the CAMS-R and IEM-P. Pre-survey data was used to determine a baseline of parental perceptions. The same

instruments were administered after the educational sessions. Surveys were gathered before the families left the second session.

Session Schedules and Support Session dates were added and shared with the participants using the calendar on the BLOOMZ (2016) application. An RSVP was requested for each session from each participant, including the re-scheduled session. The application automatically sent each participant a reminder about the sessions one day prior to the events. The original and re-scheduled sessions occurred approximately one week after consent to participate by all individuals was received. The second session occurred approximately four weeks from the date of the first sessions. The researcher sent BLOOMZ (2016) messages to each participant offering support between sessions as previously described.

3.8 Data Analysis

This researcher measured the impact of mindfully-based parent education with messaging support on parent perceptions of their self-awareness, parent perceptions of their parenting values and beliefs and parent perceptions of their connection with their child by calculating the sums of survey results then conducting a descriptive analysis of the scores using SPSS software. Data from the CAMS-R answered the first research question: 1.) What is the effect of a mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own self-awareness? Data from the IEM-P answered the second and third research questions: 2.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own parenting values and beliefs? 3.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their connection with their child?

The sum of the CAMS-R was used to measure levels of participant self-awareness. Results were calculated by adding the answers together into one sum, with question #6 having a reversed score. The researcher used SPSS to calculate the mean scores and differences between pre/post survey results. Results yielding scores between 13-21 were described as exhibiting personal self-awareness *rarely or not at all*; scores between 21-29 were described as exhibiting personal self-awareness *sometimes*; scores between 29-37 were described as exhibiting personal self-awareness *often*; scores 37 and above were described as exhibiting personal self-awareness *almost always*.

The sum of the IEM-P was used to measure parental awareness of their parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of their connection with their child. Results were calculated by adding the answers into one sum, with questions #1, #9, #10, and #5 having a reversed score. The researcher used SPSS to calculate the mean scores and differences between pre/post survey results. Results yielding scores between 26-28 were described as exhibiting *little to no awareness* of their parenting values and their perceived strength of connection with their child; scores between 28-30 were described as exhibiting *a mild awareness* of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child; scores between 30-32 were described as exhibiting *a moderate awareness* of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child; scores between 32-34 were described as exhibiting *a strong awareness* of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child; scores 34 and above were described as exhibiting a *very strong awareness* of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Findings

Results from the CAMS-R and the IEM-P revealed an overall increase of parents' perceptions of their connection with their child, level of personal self-awareness and level of awareness of their parenting values and beliefs. These findings are similar to other research findings that measure self-awareness, awareness of parenting values and beliefs, and the parent-child connection after mindful based education or training had occurred (Duncan, 2007, Feldman et al., 2007). The mean scores and differences for those results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Mean Scores and differences for CAMS-R and IEM-P pre/post test

Survey	n	Mean Scores and Differences		
		Pre-test mean scores	Post-test mean scores	d
CAMS-R	4	24	27	3
IEM-P	4	34.25	38	3.75

Mean scores for the CAMS-R increased from 24 to 27 with a difference of 3. CAMS-R scores falling between 21-29 indicated that participants were aware of their actions *sometimes*. Although, the scores did not move from *sometimes* to *often*, an increase was recorded. Mean scores for the IEM-P increased from 34.25 to 38 with a

difference of 3.75. IEM-P scores falling between 32-34 indicated a *strong awareness* of parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child. Scores on the IEM-P producing sums of 34 and above indicated a *very strong awareness* of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child. Results demonstrated growth post intervention. Both measures produced results exhibiting a moderate impact on self-awareness, awareness of parenting values and beliefs and on their perceived strength of connection with their child (See Appendix B and C for an explanation of scoring for the CAMS-R and IEM-P).

This researcher choose to further examine the potential impact of the intervention on each participant by comparing individual pre/post-test scores. Table 3 compares participant scores and measures the change in score of the pre/post tests on the CAMS-R. Table 3 illustrates, specifically, how the researcher measured the potential impact of the intervention as reported by each participant while answering research question number 1: What is the effect of a mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own self-awareness?

Table 3

Participant pre/post scores and measured differences for the CAMS-R

Participants	CAMS-R Pre/Post Survey Results		
	CAMS-R Pre-test	CAMS-R Post-test	Difference
P1	26	32	+6
P2	23	25	+2
P3	22	24	+2
P4	25	27	+2

Pre-test scores for the CAMS-R were reported as being between 21-29. These scores were described as a participant *sometimes* exhibiting self-awareness of their own interpersonal interactions. Calculated post-test scores for three of the four participants remained between 21-29. However, the scores illustrated a 2-point gain for each participants 2, 3, and 4. Participant 1 reported a 6-point gain in self-awareness after receiving the intervention. Scores falling between 29-37 were described as a participant *often* exhibiting self-awareness of their own interpersonal interactions. Reviewing individual participant results revealed a mild impact of the intervention for participants 2, 3, and 4 with a moderate impact of the intervention on participant 1 (See Appendix B for more detailed explanation of scoring).

Table 4 examines participant scores and measures the change in score from pre/post tests on the IEM-P. Table 4 illustrates how the researcher measured the impact of the intervention as reported by each participant while answering research questions 2.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their own parenting values and beliefs? and 3.) What is the effect of mindfully-based parent education plus text message support on parent perceptions of their connection with their child?

Table 4

Participant pre/post scores and measured differences for the IEM-P

Participants	IEM-P Pre/Post Survey Results		
	IEM-P Pre-test	IEM-P Post-test	Difference
P1	31	40	+9
P2	41	45	+4
P3	32	34	+2
P4	33	33	-

Pre-test scores for the IEM-P reportedly measured across several levels of awareness of parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with their child.

Participants 1 and 3 reported scores measuring between 30-32. This range of scores was described as exhibiting a *moderate awareness* of their parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with their child. Participant 4 reported a score measuring between 32-34. This range of scores was described as exhibiting a *strong awareness* of their parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with their child. Participant 2 reported a score measuring above 34 demonstrating a *very strong awareness* of their parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with their child.

Results from the IEM-P post-test revealed increased scores for 3 out of 4 participants. Participant 1 reported a 9-point gain. This participant's gain represented the largest increase of awareness of her parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with her child. After receiving the intervention, participant 1's post-test results illustrated a significant change. The participant moved from exhibiting a *moderate*

awareness to a *very strong awareness* in her parenting and perceived connection with her child. Participant 2 reported a 4-point gain. This participant's pre-test scores revealed *very strong awareness* of her parenting and perceived connection with her child. While this participant did not move to a higher level of awareness as illustrated in Appendix C, a 4-point gain demonstrates a significant change in participant 2's level of awareness of her parenting values and beliefs and perceived connection with her child after the intervention.

Participant 3 reported a 2-point gain. This participant's increase in score demonstrated a moderate change following the intervention. The increase of score for this participant shows her moving from having a *moderate awareness* to a *strong awareness* of her parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with her child. Finally, participant 4 did not demonstrate an increase or decrease of scores between pre/post-tests results. Thus, as reported on this instrument, the intervention did not yield results showing an impact on this participant's level of awareness of her parenting values and beliefs and perceived connection with her child.

Formal data collection regarding the helpfulness of the BLOOMZ messaging in between session was done by asking one 5-point Likert scale question on the Conscious Discipline Parent Education Session Evaluation. All participants stated they strongly agreed that the use of the BLOOMZ messaging in between sessions was helpful. Informally, during the debriefing session, the researcher asked the participants if they found the weekly BLOOMZ messages to aide in their implementation of their chosen strategies. They all stated that the messaging was not only helpful in their implementation, but it kept them motivated, held them accountable and increased the

likelihood that they would remember to consistently implement their chosen strategy with their children. One participant used the messaging to ask the researcher if she could add a new strategy because she noticed that her children seemed to be losing interest and one of her children requested to do something different, meaning the child wanted to do a different I Love You Ritual. This researcher's findings regarding the use of text message supports align with previous research that found text messaging to be a reliable tool that increases parent participation (Murray et al., 2015).

Data gathered from the demographic information survey (See Appendix D for example of the demographic information survey) and the session evaluation survey (See Appendix E for example of session evaluation survey) were unable to yield reportable associations. The small sample size limited the researcher's ability to analyze results based on demographic characteristics and responses to the intervention without revealing participant identifiers. Information gathered from the session evaluation survey revealed that all participants were very satisfied with the material shared during parent education sessions, the BLOOMZ messaging supports were helpful, and participants were interested in learning more about this topic.

4.2 Discussion

Findings from this study are similar to findings of other researchers. Coatsworth et al. (2009) found that mindfully-based approaches enhance parent-child connections, especially when infused with existing empirically validated parenting programs. This study is guided by the empirically validated framework for social emotional learning, the SEFEL teaching pyramid model (Hemmeter, 2006). This researcher hoped to teach and share mindfully-based SEL practices with parents on how to be aware, mindful, and

conscious of their own views towards their children and parenting while becoming more present, intentional, and nonjudgmental when interacting with their children. An abundant amount of research has demonstrated the positive impact of strong parent-child connections on child development (e.g., Coatsworth et al., 2009; Cohen & Semple, 2009; Duncan, et al., 2015; Hemmeter et al., 2006; Conscious Discipline, 2015; Motiff et al., 2011; El, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010). Research findings demonstrate that when families receive training on SE development in addition to the implementation of appropriate curricula in early childhood settings, a positive effect on children's SE competence is significantly greater than when the same curriculum is implemented without training and support for families (Webster-Stratton et al., 2001, 2004). The results from this study indicate an alignment with these research findings. However, the formal data that were gathered does not reflect or capture the changes in participants' children and in their interactions with their children that the researcher informally observed.

Hemmeter et al. (2006) state to establish secure attachments and connections, professionals must intentionally invest time and effort in learning about a child's attributes, likes and dislikes, and abilities while possessing an understanding of the child within the context of his or her family and community. The researcher in this study was the participants' child's teacher. Over the course of the school year, strong relationships were developed between her and the children, as well as with the participants. Thus, before the implementation of this study, the researcher had prior knowledge about each participants' family dynamics, challenges they were experiencing with their child both at home and at school, and how the family was choosing to address these challenges. These

pre-established relationships may have indirectly affected the reported results. In spite of this, the interpretation of results for this study indicated that the parent education sessions had an overall moderate impact on parents' self-awareness, awareness of their parenting values and beliefs and their perceived strength of connection with their child. All participants made gains on the CAMS-R and three out of four participants made gains on the IEM-P, with the one participant's results remaining constant. These results correlate with the informal observations made by the researcher of the participants' interactions and level of participation during the sessions, between sessions, and the observed behavioral changes in the participants' children. The researcher did not gather formal data on the observations, nor, is the researcher able to link these observations to the results of the pre/post surveys and shared demographic information due to the de-identification of participants.

Researcher observations of participants during the sessions illustrate particular differences between the first two parent sessions: the originally scheduled session (OSS) and the re-scheduled session (RSS). The most significant difference was how the participants in the two sessions interacted with one another. During the OSS, participants sat across from one another at a child-sized table in the researcher's classroom. The researcher sat no more than 5 feet away from the two participants and shared the session PowerPoint from her desk's computer. These two participants had met one another at the beginning of this school year and had a handful of opportunities to interact with each other since that time and shared similar family compositions. One of the participants had her young child with her at the session because she did not have a sitter. The child moved about the classroom and at times requiring the participant (child's mother) to

divert her attention. While the activity of the child was distracting at times, the researcher was able to use the child to demonstrate how to implement the taught strategies during the hands on activities. This seemed to enhance the experience for both participants as they smiled, laughed, and excitedly completed the hands on experiences. The two participants responded to researcher's questions and freely offered personal experiences when asked. However, unless asked directly to respond or encouraged by the researcher, spontaneous conversations between the two participants was minimal. Interestingly, both participants in the OSS had prior contact with the researcher about behavioral concerns related to their child in the researcher's classroom, as well as other children in the home.

Reflecting on the interactions in the RSS revealed a very different type of engagement. First, this session had to be held in a small meeting room because school was still in session and students were still in the researcher's classroom. The participants sat directly next to each other at a four person rectangular table. The researcher used her computer, which was placed on the table, to share the presentation. The researcher sat directly across from the two participants, no more than two feet away. The participants had known each other for almost two years because their children were in the same class last school year. They had an established rapport based on researcher observations of their flowing conversations about their families prior to when the session started. Both participants' children had a diagnosed disability. One participant had to bring her infant daughter with her to the session as she did not have a sitter. The size of the meeting room proved to be helpful in keeping the infant entertained and within arm's reach of her mother. The researcher, the mother and the other participant took turns throughout the session holding her and keeping her entertained. Again, like in the OSS, the researcher

took the opportunity to use the participant's daughter to demonstrate how to use the taught techniques. This interaction seemed to illustrate to both participants how simple and doable it can be to implement their chosen strategy.

Differences between the groups were observed. The most observable difference between the OSS and the RSS was the amount of spontaneous conversation that occurred. The dialogue rich conversations at the RSS may have had a positive impact on how strategies were implemented and on their level of self-awareness and on their awareness of their parenting values and beliefs. Further, RSS participants were more willing to be emotionally vulnerable and share their perceived parenting flaws. The OSS participants did not engage in spontaneous conversations and did not share as many personal parenting experiences.

Additionally, the researcher and one participant had also collaborated to help with challenges at home prior to the beginning of this study. This may have been the reason this participant choose to take part in the study. Another participant, prior to this study's implementation, had shared that she was not sure how to manage and support her child's behavioral challenges at school and at home. This may have been the reason this participant choose to take part in the study.

The de-briefing session was held with all participants in the researcher's classroom. Both parents who brought younger children with them to the education session had the children with them again for this session. Two participants sat at the child-sized classroom table and the participants with children sat away from the table to more easily address the needs of their children. The de-briefing session was loosely guided by the same presentation from the first session. The researcher encouraged fluid

conversation between participants, asked about their experiences using the strategies, wanted to know if they encountered any challenges when implementing strategies, and wanted to know if they saw any differences in themselves or in their connection with their child. All of the participants reported that their chosen strategy had made a positive impact on how they interacted with one of their children. They stated that they felt more connected with their children and that the time of day that they choose to implement the strategy went smoother and had become much more pleasant. The participants all stated that they tried to be more aware of their reactions to situations before engaging with their child.

Individually, participants reported on their personal experiences using the strategies. One participant reported that she used the connection ritual with all of the children in her home, but saw the biggest impact with one foster child who would remind her if she forgot to do it and asked to do it at different times during the day. Another participant reported that her child enjoyed the connecting opportunity more when she did it at home or before walking into school. When she tried to do it at school, she was not as successful because her child was not interested or would have an emotionally charged response to being dropped off. A third participant reported that the morning routine had become smoother, her child was more engaged, and she was feeling more confident as a parent. She continued to tell the researcher that the connection ritual/strategy had really helped her focus on her child in a way that allowed her to simply focus on just her child instead of being constantly wrapped up in the stress of family changes. She and her child looked forward to the connection opportunity each day. A fourth participant reported that while she did implement her chosen strategy after the first session, she did not do it every

day. She reported that she was working on controlling her emotional reactions when her child did not follow directions, but it was still difficult for her.

Participants also discussed the changes they saw in their children (those in the researcher's classroom as well as other children in the home) as a result of using the strategies. For example, one reported that their relationship with one child in the home had noticeably become stronger as the child was more compliant at home, and more loving towards her and the other family members. This change was noted in other settings too as the child's teacher at a different school had also informed the participant that the child's behavior had improved. Another participant stated that she had noticed some difference in her child's behavior. She also reported that she and her child were still having some challenges but she felt their relationship had improved some. She reported that she would like more information in the future and enjoyed learning about mindful practices. Another mother, as noted above, described her child as more engaged during the morning routine. Interestingly, one participant reported that one child's behavior had become much more emotional since implementation. She was concerned that her child was experiencing some jealousy and confusion about his mother doing a special connection ritual with other children in the home.

Although the researcher did not specifically collect data on parent-child interactions and child behaviors, the researcher had similar observations to the participants' reports. Specifically, as noted by one participant, the researcher noted that one child had become more emotional and required more emotional support to maintain active participation in the classroom. It is possible that the increased emotional responses could have just simply been due to maturation and progression of typical social-

emotional child development. Regarding another participant, on more than one occasion, the researcher observed her actively doing her chosen strategy with her child when she would walk her child to the classroom. The researcher observed marked improvements in her child's ability to appropriately enter the classroom at arrival and self-regulate emotions. Her child appeared to demonstrate an increase of emotional literacy and competence as the child was able to more frequently verbalize and identify the feelings that were present upon arrival. The researcher also noted that for one child experiencing family changes, there were overall improvement in the child's ability to self-regulate, comply with directions and successfully recover from emotional setbacks.

Additionally, had the researcher not de-identified the survey results, the researcher could have linked participants level of engagement (i.e., eye contact, spontaneous sharing of information and making comments, asking questions) during sessions to survey results. Examining participants' level of engagement during the intervention could have produced correlations that expanded the understanding of survey results, specifically, how participants received and applied information from the intervention, thus, yielding richer results.

4.3 Limitations

There are several limitations to this study that should be considered when interpreting results and addressed in future research. The first is that two of the four participants were unable to make it to the first scheduled session as their children fell ill. The researcher rescheduled with the two participants for later that week. This is limiting because while the researcher presented the same information to all participants, the conversations that were had by the participants were different. The OSS was more

researcher directed as the back and forth conversation between the two participants was minimal. The RSS's participants generated more conversation between each other and with the researcher. They asked a wider variety of questions and were able to share their experiences with one another. Had the session been held with all four participants, the results could have been different, possibly yielding stronger results.

Another limitation is the use of self-reporting rating scales. Self-reporting can be inflated and altered according to participant's desire to appear differently or based on their own perception of the measurable variables. This reporting may be even further altered as this researcher is their child's teacher. Families may want to appear to be more knowledgeable or connected in attempts to appease this researcher. However, by keeping participant results confidential and coded by committee members, this researcher hoped to decrease the implications of this limitation. Self-reporting can also be cumbersome for the participant to complete. Asking the participants to complete pre/post surveys could deter some participants from giving much conscious and intentional thought to the instruments.

Similar to self-reporting inflation, inflated observations by the researcher could be a limitation as well. The researcher did not have a formal measure to assess the observed changes which could have controlled for researcher bias. The researcher may have the inaccurately interpreted observed changes. Future researchers may consider including some type of formal tool to guide unbiased observations.

Another limitation could be the participant's ability to comprehend and apply new knowledge. One participant's survey results yielded no change on the IEM-P. A mindful approach to parenting takes a level of awareness that can be difficult if someone has

never been exposed to it. It is possible that this participant had not had any prior experience with mindful approaches to interaction. Prior knowledge data were gathered on the demographic information survey. Three out of four participants reported having very little or no prior knowledge of SEFEL and CD. Mindfulness requires the adult to be very self-aware of what the adult brings to each interaction. Had this participant been one of the participants that had no knowledge, her pre-survey scores could be a reflection of lack of knowledge rather than a true measure of awareness. Researcher knowledge and application of CD and mindfully-based techniques and strategies may also be a limitation. The researcher has had extensive coaching, on-going education and practice using CD and mindfully-based approaches in the classroom. The level of knowledge and application may vary from researcher to researcher. This researcher had been measured on her fidelity of implementation using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (T-POT) for preschool classrooms, an observation tool that measures the implementation of classroom practices specifically related to promoting young children's social-emotional competence and addressing challenging behavior in the preschool classroom (TACSEI, 2011). Results yielded successful implementation.

Inflated self-reporting of implementation of chosen strategies and lack of regular implementation can both be limitations. During the debriefing session, one participant did state that she had not been implementing the strategy on a daily basis. She still felt as though she and her child needed to connect more and it was her perception that her child just did not want to listen to her. However, due to the de-identification of data, it is unknown if the non-changing IEM-P results belonged to that participant. While this is a limitation, it can also be a way to measure fidelity of implementation.

The time constraints of the study is also a limitation. Asking and expecting parents to significantly increase their self-awareness and their awareness of their parenting values and beliefs after a 4 week intervention process that provides one education session, 3 weekly supportive text messages, and a de-briefing session, is challenging. The attempt to change personal perceptions on fundamental, core beliefs, such as parenting, in two short training sessions is ambitious. Conscious Discipline offers trainings for parents over the course of 8 months. To produce stronger results, an on-going coaching model, as CD suggests, has the potential to make life long changes to interpersonal relationships (Bailey, 2015).

Sample size and composition is another limitation. The small sample size and specific setting in which the study was conducted could make results difficult to generalize to a larger population. Lack of generalizability decreases the likelihood of duplication and the significance of found results. Additionally, a simple pre-posttest design does not account for subject maturation. Future researchers should take these limitations into account when conducting their own research.

4.4 Implications

This study has the possibility of offering additional evidence for mindfully-based parenting interventions. This study can help parents and educators build stronger connections with children and support existing literature that states engaging in conscious, present, intentional, and mindful interactions helps to establish a safe and secure foundation from which a solid connection between a parent and a child can form (Duncan, Coatsworth, & Greenberg, 2009). Mindful and responsive connections between a parent and a child can establish a secure attachment between the pair. Enhancing the

quality of the parent-child connection allows for strong automatic emotional reactivity neuropathways in the brain to be established. It is this type of brain activity that lays the foundation for positive social-emotional (SE) and cognitive development to occur (Cohen & Semple, 2009). Stronger adult-child connections allow children to explore the world because of a sense of safety and security that comes from strong relationships. When a child feels safe and connected, they are more likely to exhibit emotional well-being, positive social behaviors, academic success and strong peer relationships (Hemmeter et al., 2006). This study hopes to add to and support the findings of such literature by demonstrating the positive impact of educating families on a mindfully-based approach to SE development and how mindfulness can help strengthen families, and in turn, strengthen the positive SE and cognitive development of young children.

Based on the results of this study, future research may include conducting a school-wide CD book study at the beginning of next school year. When the researcher asked participants if they would be interested in participating in a yearlong book study, they all said they would be interested. Gathering a larger sample size would allow the results to be more generalizable across settings. In cooperation with CD's parent book study, this researcher hopes to continue this line of investigation by gathering parents at enrollment of the next school year and conduct an 8 month CD parent book study. This study allowed the researcher to formulate ideas about what type of setting, structure, and process future interventions may take. Based off of the current study's survey results and participant reporting, future research may best be conducted in a familiar and/or comfortable setting that is structured to allow intentional and meaningful connections to develop between the researcher and the participants and among individual participants.

Future processes for research may find the same level of participation if a text messaging piece is included. This researcher hopes to gather richer demographics and data to uncover the most functional way to share this education and ensure implementation for a wide variety of families.

The participant that reported the strong impact with her foster child is intriguing. It leads this researcher to wonder how sharing mindful practices with foster parents could impact the social-emotional development of children in foster care. Attachment theorists, Ainsworth and Bowlby (1991), explain that significant interactions should occur during critical developmental periods between parent (caregiver) and child, resulting in a securely formed attachment from which future cognitive development can occur. A lack of these interactions can lead to an insecure attachment and create disconnect between parent (caregiver) and child, thus forming a weak foundational base for cognitive development to occur (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). Mindful-based approaches to interpersonal and intrapersonal connections support the theory behind attachment. Future research may include exploring how to effectively educate families involved in foster care on mindful parenting practices.

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Appendix A

CSEFEL Inventory of Practices Aligned with Conscious Discipline®

CSEFEL Inventory of Practices	Conscious Discipline® pulled from the book Easy To Love, Difficult To Discipline	Conscious Discipline® Skill Description
1. Develops meaningful relationships with children and families	<p>Chapter 1: "Composure," pp. 23-54</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safe Place b. Circle Time/Morning Meetings k. Safe Keeper Ritual l. Brain Smart® Start <p>Chapter 2: "Encouragement," pp. 55-87</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Meaningful Jobs d. Friends and Family e. Ways to Be Helpful m. Appreciation Ritual n. New Student & Greeting/Goodbye Rituals o. Kindness Ritual <p>Chapter 3: "Assertiveness," pp. 89-130</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Time Machine/Instant Reply p. S.T.A.R. & Wish Well Rituals <p>Chapter 5: "Positive Intent," pp. 157-186</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> h. Celebration Center r. Cheer Card Rituals <p>Chapter 6: "Empathy," pp. 187-222</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. We Care Center s. Absent Child & Welcome Back Rituals 	<p>Being the person you want others to become. Composure is self-control in action. Self-control is guiding yourself from the lower centers of your brain to the higher centers of your brain so that you may choose how to respond to life events.</p> <p>Creating a sense of belonging for all children by building the School Family™ which values interdependence. Social successes prime the brain for academic achievement. Relationships, embedded in a school family, are the motivation and cradle of all learning.</p> <p>Setting limits respectfully by focusing on the behavior you want; teaching others how to treat you.</p> <p>Seeing the best in others while improving self-image and building trust. Cooperation is fostered by joining with someone to solve a problem.</p> <p>Helping children accept and process their feelings so as to see the world from others' perspectives. Empathy wires the brain for self-control, allowing children access to higher cognitive processes.</p>

Adapted from the works of Hickman, K. (2009)

Appendix B

Scoring for CAMS-R

Level of Self-Awareness as measured by the CAMS-R

Score between 13-21 = *Rarely or not at all* will participant exhibit self-awareness

Score between 21-29 = *Sometimes* will the participant exhibit self-awareness

Score between 29-37 = *Often* will the participant exhibit self-awareness

Score 37 and above = *Almost always* will the participant exhibit self-awareness

- Increased post-test scores that remain in the same category as pre-test scores are described by the researcher as exhibiting MILD impact of the parent education sessions.
- Increased post-test scores that move up one level of awareness (i.e., moving from a moderate level of awareness to a strong level of awareness) are described by the researcher as exhibiting a MODERATE impact of the parent education sessions.
- Increased post-test scores that move up two levels of awareness (i.e., moving from a moderate level of awareness to a very strong level of awareness) are described by the researcher as exhibiting a SIGNIFICANT impact of the parent education sessions.

Constructs measured

<i>Components of a mindful state</i>	<i>Questions related to each component</i>
Attention	#1, #5, #10
Present-focus	#9
Awareness	#4, #6, #7
Acceptance	#2, #3, #8

Appendix C

Scoring for IEM-P

Level of awareness of parenting values and beliefs and perceived strength of connection with child as measured by the IEM-P

Score between 26-28 = Little to no awareness of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child

Score between 28-30 = Mild awareness of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child

Score between 30-32 = Moderate awareness of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child

Score between 32-34 = Strong awareness of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child

Score of 34 and above = Very strong awareness of their parenting values and perceived strength of connection with their child

- Increased post-test scores that remain in the same category as pre-test scores are described by the researcher as exhibiting a MILD impact of the parent education sessions.
- Increased post-test scores that move up one level of awareness (i.e., moving from a moderate level of awareness to a strong level of awareness) are described by the researcher as exhibiting a MODERATE impact of the parent education sessions.
- Increased post-test scores that move up two levels of awareness (i.e., moving from a moderate level of awareness to a very strong level of awareness) are described by the researcher as exhibiting a SIGNIFICANT impact of the parent education sessions.

Constructs measured

<i>Characteristics of mindful parenting</i>	<i>Questions related to each characteristic</i>
Awareness and present centered attention	#1, #3, #6, # 9
Non-judgement	#4, #7, # 10
Non-reactivity	#2, #5, # 8

Appendix D

Demographic Information

Directions: Please tell us a little about your family. After you have filled out this form, seal it in the enclosed envelope and return to your child's teacher. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Please return by _____ . Thank you for your time!

Part 1: About your Child

1. Child's Age: _____
2. Child's Gender: Male _____ Female _____
3. What is your child's racial/ethnic background?
 - 1) White/Caucasian
 - 2) Black/African American
 - 3) Hispanic/ Latino
 - 4) Asian
 - 5) Native American
 - 6) Pacific Islander
 - 7) Multiple Origins
 - 8) Other _____

Part 2: About You

1. What is your relationship to your child?
 - 1.) Biological Parent
 - 2.) Step Parent
 - 3.) Adoptive Parent
 - 4.) Other relative
 - 5.) Legal Guardian
 - 6.) Other (specify) _____
2. What is your age? _____
3. What is your gender?
 - 1.) Male
 - 2.) Female
4. What is your race/ethnic background?
 - 1.) White/Caucasian
 - 2.) Black/African American
 - 3.) Hispanic/ Latino
 - 4.) Asian
 - 5.) Native American

- 6.) Pacific Islander
- 7.) Multiple Origins
- 8.) Other _____

5. What is your marital status?
- 1.) Married or living with partner
 - 2.) Separated
 - 3.) Divorced
 - 4.) Single
 - 5.) Other _____
6. What is your highest grade completed in school? _____
7. What is your highest degree obtained?
- 0) None
 - 1) HS Diploma/GED
 - 2) Vocational Degree/Certificate
 - 3) Associates Degree (2-year college degree)
 - 4) Bachelor's Degree (4-year college degree)
 - 5) Master's Degree
 - 6) Doctorate (e.g., Ph.D., M.D.)
8. Total number of children (younger than 18 years) living in the home. _____
9. Total number of adults (including you) living in the home involved in child care. _____

Please circle the most applicable knowledge level

I am familiar with Conscious Discipline curriculum

1 2 3 4 5

1-not at all familiar

5-very familiar

I am familiar with the SEFEL teaching pyramid.

1 2 3 4 5

1-not at all familiar

5-very familiar

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Appendix E

PowerPoint Parent Education Session Outline and Handouts

(Parents will be given a paper copy of presentation for note taking)

- I. Video will open session- <https://www.youtube.com/user/lovingguidance>
- II. Explanation of what Conscious Discipline is
- III. I LOVE YOU RITUALS-Focus of training to increase connections and self-awareness
 - A. What are they?
 - B. What are their role in creating and establishing strong neural connections?
 - C. Implications for future child developmental outcomes
- IV. Science of the brain
- V. Ingredients for connection
- VI. Connection equals cooperation
 - A. Greetings
 - B. Finger plays
 - C. Nursery rhymes
- VII. When to use I Love You Rituals
- VIII. Specific goals of I Love You Rituals
 - A. Increase dopamine
 - B. Encourages conscious touching
 - C. Creates strong bonds
 - D. Creates loving rituals

Appendix F

Checklist for Mindfully-Based Strategies

Conscious Discipline Parent Education Session	Date: _____
Over the next four weeks, I choose to implement the following 1-2 mindful strategies using eye contact, touch, present focused attention and playfulness at home with my family (please place an "X" next to your choices):	
_____ Greetings	_____ Use when we wake up/go to bed
_____ Finger plays	_____ Diapering to toileting
_____ Nursery rhymes	_____ Active to quiet times
_____ My own (specify) _____	_____ Other time (specify) _____
I understand that weekly messages will be sent to me on BLOOMZ offering support for implementation.	

Appendix G

Conscious Discipline Parent Education Session Evaluation

Conscious Discipline Parent Education Session Evaluation

Date: _____

Title and location of training: _____

Trainer: _____

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below in #1-11.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The objectives of the training were clearly defined.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. Participation and interaction were encouraged.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. The topics covered were relevant to me.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. The content was organized and easy to follow.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. The materials distributed were helpful.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. This training experience will be useful in my work.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.	<input type="radio"/>				
8. The trainer was well prepared.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. The training objectives were met.	<input type="radio"/>				
10. The time allotted for the training was sufficient.	<input type="radio"/>				

11. BLOOMZ messaging support was helpful in implementing strategies.

12. I would like more information or education on:

Appendix H

Parent Education Session Schedule and Family Support

Parent Education Session Schedule and Family Supports

35th week of school first session will be offered-date will be uploaded to BLOOMZ calendar

39th week of school the second debriefing session will be offered-date will be uploaded to BLOOMZ calendar

-Support will be offered to each participant by way of a BLOOMZ message each week in between sessions.

- The message will ask each participant, individually and privately, if they have been able to implement their chosen strategy. This researcher will then ask each participant if any further information or guidance is needed to assist with implementation. Should a participant require further information or guidance, a phone call will be made directly to that participant. The researcher will listen to participant concerns with implementation and review the information shared at the first training.
- This researcher will ask each participant the same question and offer the same support each week in between sessions.