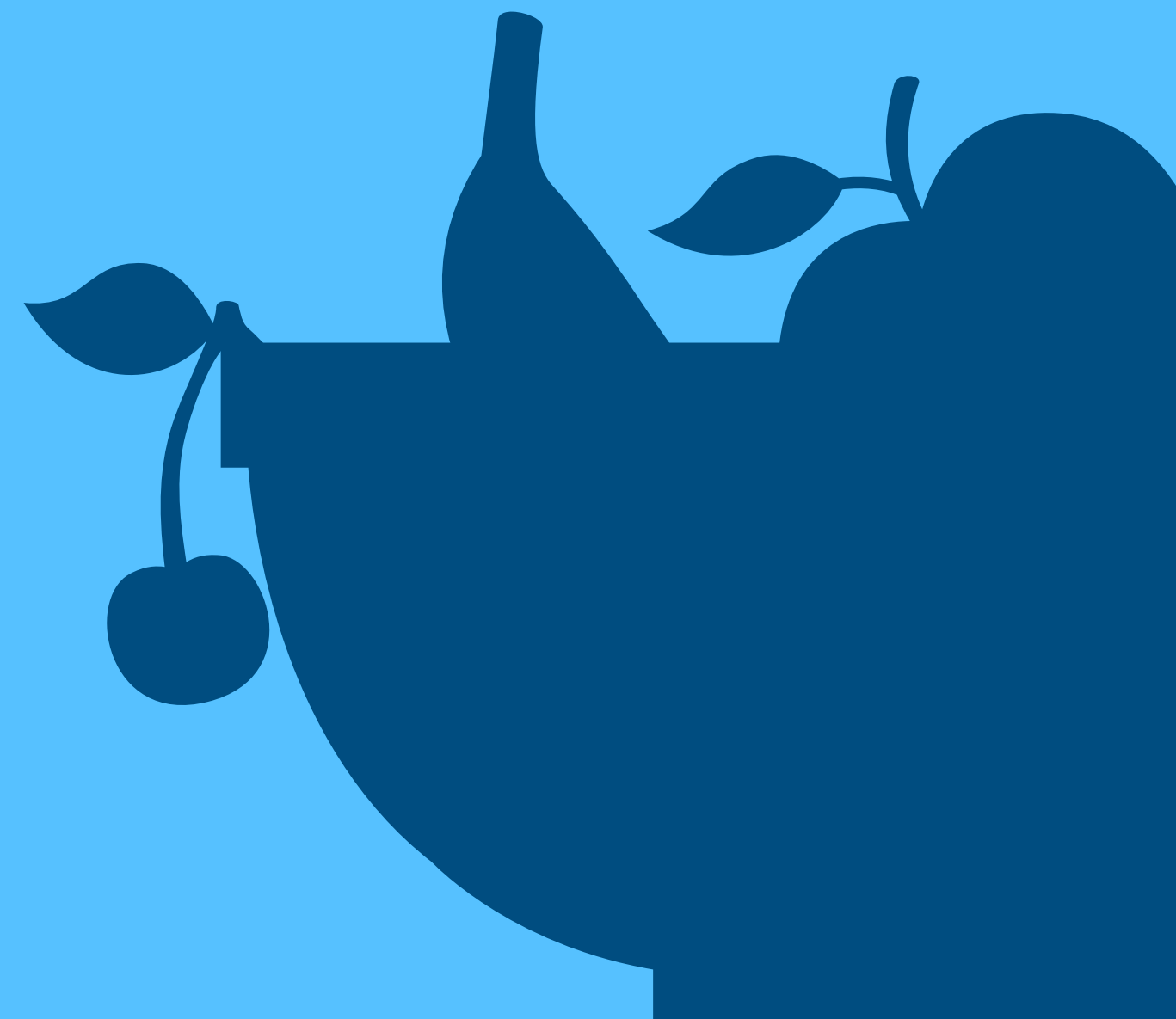


Christian Meditation in Schools

Evidence of the benefits



Christian Meditation in Schools

Meditation is a universal spiritual wisdom. It is a practice found at the core of all the great religious traditions.

In Christianity, this contemplative dimension of faith and prayer is rooted in the Gospel teaching of Jesus and the Christian mystical tradition.

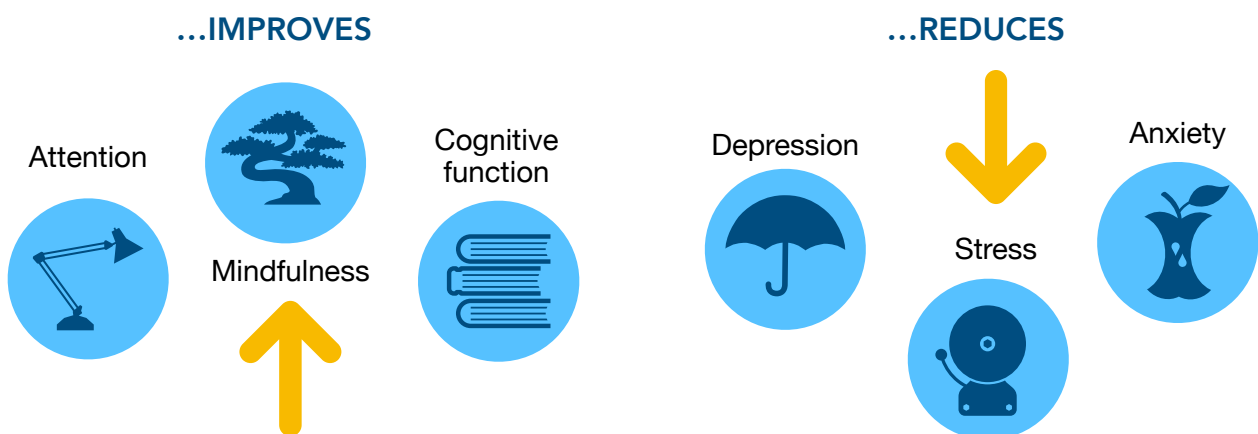
Over the past 40 years, there has been renewed interest in Christian meditation, largely led by The World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM). Schools in approximately 30 countries have now introduced the practice.

The Benefits

Scientific research shows that practising meditation offers many potential benefits to children.

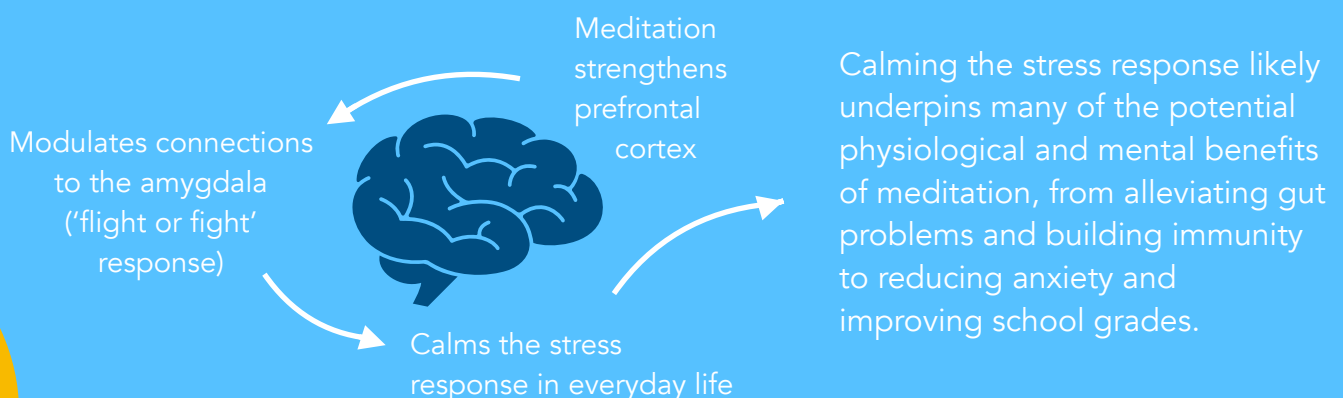
These include clinical improvements in mental and physical health as well as strengthening emotional and behavioural regulation, stress management and concentration.

While effect sizes vary, particularly for interventions offered universally in schools, there is now **consistent** evidence across studies that meditation in schools...



WHY do these benefits occur?

Clear scientific evidence from magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans shows that meditation builds grey and white matter in the brain and changes brain connectivity. These changes likely underpin many of the potential benefits. For example...



The Experience of Christian Meditation at School

Recent research on Christian meditation in schools in Australia and Ireland highlights similar calming benefits.

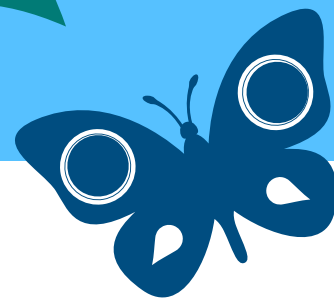
Students and teachers consistently say Christian Meditation helps:



"I feel like I just got out of the ocean on a hot day."

(Yr 5 student, Australia)

In addition, the research suggests practising Christian meditation at school creates a safe, respectful 'space' for nurturing children's **spiritual growth**.



"I used to not really believe in God that much...but ...I've felt like he's around me now and I've come closer."
(Yr 5 student, Australia)

"I feel like God is wrapping his arms around me."
(Yr 5 student, Australia)

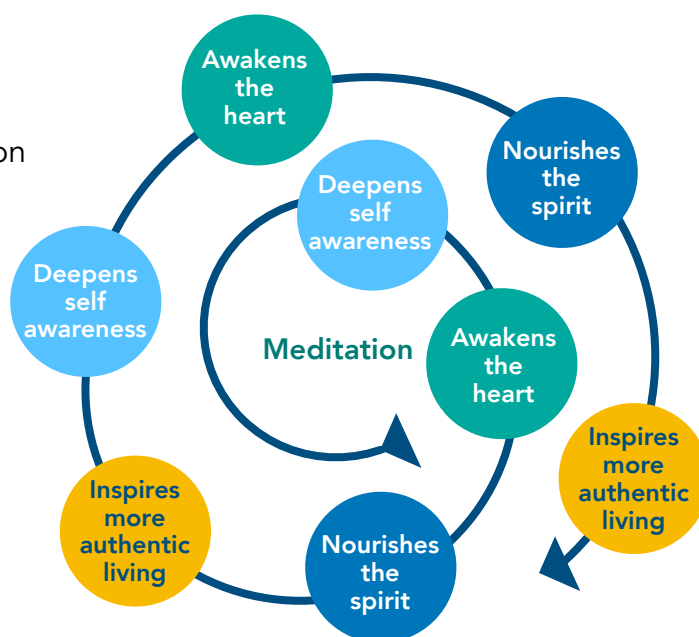
The stillness and silence helps create a space where children are open to the presence of God. This:

- Helps strengthen children's relationship with God (even when their religious behaviour such as church attendance may begin to drop)
- Offers a sense of personal agency in spirituality which can renew faith

In turn, the research shows Christian meditation also helps children become more aware and accepting of themselves and others:

- Supports identity formation and self-acceptance
- Increases kindness towards others
- Fosters a sense of community

"When I meditate I feel more 'me' than I ever did before."
(Norah, age 11, Ireland)



The evidence to date highlights that the practice of Christian meditation provides an important space for nourishing children's spiritual growth, with connections to the fruit of the Spirit. It also suggests that children's spiritual growth, and the many other benefits, might be deepened further through opportunities to give voice to or reflect upon their experiences.



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This summary document was developed by the Centre for Children and Young People (CCYP) at Southern Cross University. It is derived from a comprehensive research review undertaken by the CCYP in 2019 on behalf of The World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM). The full review is available here: <https://www.scu.edu.au/centre-for-children-and-young-people/our-research/meditation-in-schools/>

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Meditatio, the outreach of The World Community for Christian Meditation offers resources, training and support to help you launch Christian meditation at your school.

Please visit: www.wccm.org