

# MindOut

Review: February 2023

**Note on provider involvement:** This provider has agreed to EIF's terms of reference, and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the programme provider.

**MindOut is a school-based programme. It is a universal programme for children between the ages of 15 and 18. It is delivered in secondary school and aims to improve social and emotional skills and promote positive mental health and wellbeing.**

MindOut aims to improve young people's social and emotional skills (such as self-esteem, coping, empathy, communication) in order to improve a range of mental health outcomes in the longer-term. It is aimed at adolescents (between the ages of 15 and 18), delivered by teachers at secondary school settings. The programme takes an interactive approach and promotes active learning (e.g., discussion, games, group work, scenarios). This programme also uses video clips throughout to engage students in the weekly topics. At the end of each session there is a 'Practice at Home' activity. These activities are used to encourage students to further practise the skills they have learned outside of the classroom.

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Evidence  
rating: **3**

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Cost rating: **1**

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## EIF Programme Assessment

MindOut has evidence of a **short-term positive impact** on child outcomes from at least one rigorous evaluation.

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Evidence  
rating: **3**

### What does the evidence rating mean?

**Level 3** indicates **evidence of efficacy**. This means the programme can be described as evidence-based: it has evidence from at least one rigorously conducted RCT or QED demonstrating a statistically significant positive impact on at least one child outcome.

This programme does not receive a rating of 4 as it has not yet replicated its results in another rigorously conducted study, where at least one study indicates long-term impacts, and at least one uses measures independent of study participants.

In Ireland, the cost for MindOut is covered by HSE.

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## Cost rating

A rating of 1 indicates that a programme has a low cost to set up and deliver, compared with other interventions reviewed by EIF. This is equivalent to an estimated unit cost of less than £100.

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Cost rating: **1**

# Child outcomes

According to the best available evidence for this programme's impact, it can achieve the following positive outcomes for children:

## Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing

### Improved emotional regulation (suppression subscale)

Based on study 1

### Improved coping skills (avoidance and social support subscales)

Based on study

### Improved mental health (stress and depression subscales)

Based on study

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## Key programme characteristics

### Who is it for?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to the following age-groups:

- Adolescents
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### How is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to implementation through these delivery models:

- Group
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### Where is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation in these settings:

- Secondary school

The programme may also be delivered in these settings:

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### How is it targeted?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation as:

- Universal
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### Where has it been implemented?

Ireland

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## UK provision

This programme has not been implemented in the UK.

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## UK evaluation

This programme's best evidence does not include evaluation conducted in the UK.

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## Spotlight sets

EIF includes this programme in the following Spotlight sets:

- school based social emotional learning
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# About the programme

## What happens during delivery?

### How is it delivered?

MindOut is delivered in 13 sessions of 40-60 minutes duration each by teachers, to groups of 20-25 students.

### What happens during the intervention?

MindOut is suitable for Transition Year or 5th year pupils and is designed to be implemented within a single 35-40 minute class period over 12 weeks, using interactive learning methods.

The programme includes elements of psychoeducation, social and emotional learning, and mindfulness.

## What are the implementation requirements?

### Who can deliver it?

- The practitioner who delivers this programme is a teacher who has attended a one-day comprehensive training session, delivered by a Health Promotion Officer (HPO) from the Health and Wellbeing Division of the national Health Service Executive (HSE).
- The teacher delivering the intervention would typically be qualified at NFQ 7 or 8

### What are the training requirements?

The practitioners have one-day of programme training. Booster training of practitioners is not required.

### How are the practitioners supervised?

*Not available*

### What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?

- Training manual

## Is there a licensing requirement?

There is no licence required to run this programme.

## How does it work? (Theory of Change)

### How does it work?

- Social and emotional skills promote positive mental health and wellbeing and protect against negative problem behaviours and poor mental health outcomes.
- MindOut teaches young people a range of SEL skills including self-esteem, coping skills, empathy, communication and problem-solving which promote positive wellbeing and protect against negative mental health outcomes.
- In the short term, young people will build their awareness of, and ability to apply skills across the five core SEL competencies (CASEL) including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management and responsible decision-making.
- In the longer term, young people will have increased mental wellbeing outcomes and demonstrate a reduction in poor mental health outcomes including stress, depression, and anxiety.

### Intended outcomes

Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing

### Contact details

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<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/hse-education-programme/training-and-resources-for-post-primary-schools/>

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## About the evidence

MindOut's most rigorous evidence comes from an RCT, which was conducted in Ireland.

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes.

This programme is underpinned by one study with a Level 3 rating, hence the programme receives a Level 3 rating overall.

### Study 1

**Citation:** Dowling et al., 2019

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**Design:** RCT

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**Country:** Ireland

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**Sample:** 497 adolescents, between 15 – 18 years old, who were in 4th/transition year or 5th year (at baseline), studying in disadvantaged schools.

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**Timing:** Post-test

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**Child outcomes:**

- Improved emotional regulation (suppression subscale)
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**Other outcomes:**

- None measured
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**Study rating:** 2+

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Dowling, K., Simpkin, A. J., & Barry, M. M. (2019). A cluster randomized-controlled trial of the MindOut social and emotional learning program for disadvantaged post-primary school students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48, 1245-1263. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31004264/>

### **Study design and sample**

The first study is a cluster RCT.

This study involved random assignment of schools to a MindOut treatment group and a business-as-usual control group.

This study was conducted in Ireland, with a sample of children aged between 15 and 18 (average age 16).

### **Measures**

- Self-esteem was measured using Rosenberg Self-esteem scale (self-report)
- Emotional regulation was measured using Emotional Regulation Questionnaire (self-report)
- Emotional intelligence was measured using Trait Meta-Mood Scale (self-report)
- Coping skills was measured using Coping Strategy Indicator short form (self-report)
- Social self-efficacy was measured using The Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (self-report)
- Asserting influence and conflict resolution was measured using Adolescent Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire (self-report)
- Decision-making was measured using the Making Decisions in Everyday Life Scale short form (self-report)
- Mental health was measured using the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (self-report)
- Mental wellbeing was measured using the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (self-report)
- Attitudes toward school was measured using The Attitudes Towards School Scale (self-report)
- School achievement motivation was measured using The School Achievement Motivation Rating Scale (teacher report)

### **Findings**

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes.

This includes:

- Emotional regulation (suppression subscale)
- Coping skills (avoidance and social support subscales)
- Mental health (stress and depression subscales)



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## Guidebook

The EIF Guidebook provides information about early intervention programmes that have at least preliminary evidence of achieving positive outcomes for children. It provides information based on EIF's assessment of the strength of evidence for a programme's effectiveness, and on detail about programmes shared with us by those who design, run and deliver them.

The Guidebook serves an important starting point for commissioners to find out more about effective early interventions, and for programme providers to find out more about what good evidence of impact looks like and how it can be captured. As just one of our key resources for commissioners and practitioners, the Guidebook is an essential part of EIF's work to support the development of and investment in effective early intervention programmes.

Our assessment of the evidence for a programme's effectiveness can inform and support certain parts of a commissioning decision, but it is not a substitute for professional judgment. Evidence about what has worked in the past offers no guarantee that an approach will work in all circumstances. Crucially, the Guidebook is not a market comparison website: ratings and other information should not be interpreted as a specific recommendation, kite mark or endorsement for any programme.

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[How to read the Guidebook](#)

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[EIF evidence standards](#)

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[About the EIF Guidebook](#)

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## EIF

The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) is an independent charity and a member of the What Works network. We support the use of effective early intervention for children, young people and their families: identifying signals of risk, and responding with effective interventions to improve outcomes, reduce hardship and save the public money in the long term.

We work by generating evidence and knowledge of what works in our field, putting this information in the hands of commissioners, practitioners and policymakers, and supporting the adoption of the evidence in local areas and relevant sectors.

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[www.EIF.org.uk](http://www.EIF.org.uk) | [@TheEIFoundation](https://twitter.com/TheEIFoundation)

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