



Change to Chill In-Person Series: Evaluation Results 2017-2018 School Year

Program Summary

Change to Chill (CTC) is a free online resource offered by Allina Health aimed at improving mental well-being among teens. The program was launched in 2014 in response to research reporting that teens are experiencing stress levels that far exceed what is believed to be healthy¹. As a supplement to the online resource, Allina Health began delivering in-person, multi-session workshops in schools in 2016 that use existing Change to Chill materials.

Evaluation Overview

The main objective of the evaluation was to assess an in-person delivery model of the Change to Chill program during the 2017-2018 school year. Specifically, do Change to Chill participants demonstrate: (1) Increased awareness or knowledge of relevant issues, (2) Increased self-confidence in their ability to cope with stress, and (3) Intent to use skills learned in the Change to Chill sessions? Overall satisfaction was also assessed. Data were sourced via participant pre-post pen and paper surveys that measured self-efficacy in coping, intent to use concepts learned in the class (post only), retrospective assessment of change in knowledge (post only) and workshop satisfaction (post only). Contextual data such as familiarity with the program (pre only) and demographics were also gathered.

Description of Participants

School Sites

Workshops were offered at four middle schools and high schools from two Allina Health communities in Minnesota.

Student Participants

Six-hundred students completed the pre-survey and 498 completed the post survey. The majority of surveys were from three of the four schools: St. Michael Middle School East (41%), Cambridge Middle School (33%) and Dassel-Cokato Middle School (25%). The remaining 2 percent of surveys were from Sholund School for Girls.

Average age of respondents was 12.7 years (range: 12–18 years). Pre-test respondents were 46% female and 52% male. Post-test respondents were 50% female and 47% male. The remaining students identified some other way or were unsure of their gender identity.

The majority (about 71%) of respondents identified as white/Caucasian, followed by “Other race/ethnic group” (12%) and American Indian/Native American (8%). About 15% of respondents chose not to answer this question. Most students reported speaking English in the home.

Additionally, students offered a variety of information about their experiences or identity that they felt would be helpful to planning CTC including information about stressors (school and family situation, for example), hobbies, sexual/gender orientation, additional information about race/ethnicity, mental health diagnoses, and their faith community.

Key Findings

- Overall, students responded well to the series. The vast majority (89%) of students liked the class at least somewhat, with 44% saying that “yes”, they enjoyed the class.
- Students reported a statistically significant increase in knowledge across all topics. Most students said they knew “Nothing” or “A Little” about all of the topics prior to taking the class, and “A Lot” after taking the class
- While students remained “moderately” confident in their overall ability to cope with stress before and after participating in the class series, post-test respondents were significantly more confident than pre-test respondents in visualizing a pleasant activity and sorting out what can be changed and what cannot be changed after taking CTC classes.

¹ Anderson, N.B., Belar, C.D., Breckler, S.J., Nordal, K.C., Ballard, D.W.... & Wiggins, K. (2014, Feb.). Stress in America: Are Teens Adopting Adults' Stress Habits?. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2013/stress-report.pdf>.

Evaluation Findings by Topic Area

Satisfaction with Class (Post-Test only)

Overall, students responded well to the series. The vast majority (89%) of students liked the class at least somewhat, with 44% saying that “yes”, they enjoyed the class. Three hundred and twenty-eight students answered the open-ended question: “What did you like most about the class?” While some responded that there was “nothing” that they liked, many stated that they enjoyed the class activities (including specific activities such as meditation and receiving chocolate for a mindfulness activity), the facilitator, learning new things, and the opportunity to take a break and relax from their normal school activities.

Three hundred and twenty-one students answered the open-ended question asking what they liked least about the class. Many indicated that they liked everything. Others stated that they disliked specific tools/activities that did not work well for them, writing and/or filling out worksheets, sitting for extended periods of time, or felt the content was boring or tiresome.

Previous Knowledge of Change to Chill (Pre-Test only)

Over three-quarters (75.2%) of participants had never heard of CTC prior to participating in workshop series. Sixteen percent thought the program name sounded familiar and 9% were familiar with CTC prior to participating in the workshop. Of those who were familiar with the program, most had either seen the logo or a poster for the program at school or at their doctor’s office, had heard about it from an older student who had participated in the series, or had participated in a the series themselves at a younger age.

Knowledge of Change to Chill Topics (Post-test only)

Change in knowledge was assessed via a retrospective self-assessment. In the post test, students were asked to reflect on their knowledge of Change to Chill topics before and after participating in the series. Students reported a statistically significant increase in knowledge across all topics (meditation, mindfulness, guided imagery, gratitude/thankfulness, mindful movement/yoga, sleep techniques, relaxation techniques). Most students said they knew “Nothing” or “A Little” about all of the topics prior to taking the class, and “A Lot” after taking the class. Gratitude/thankfulness had the highest number of students reporting “A Lot” of knowledge both before (44%) and after (76%) taking the class. Students reported the biggest increase in knowledge around mindfulness and guided imagery.

Intent to Use and/or Share Skills Learned in Workshop (Post-Test only)

Many students said that they intend to use what they learned and gave specific examples of how the workshops helped them (see table). Students were most likely to say they “might” practice meditation (42%) and mindfulness (42%), and will “probably” practice guided imagery (32%), gratitude/thankfulness (32%), and sleep (35%) and relaxation techniques (37%). Most students (35%) stated that didn’t think they would practice mindful movement/yoga. Additionally, a third (33%) of students say that they are currently practicing gratitude/thankfulness techniques. Most students said that they will “maybe” share what they learned in class with someone else (61%). About 15% said that they will share what they learned in class (24%) said they will not.

Please tell how likely you are to do the following activities.

Activity	Student’s response (%)			
	I don't think I'll do this.	I might do this.	I will probably do this.	I am doing this.
Meditation	31.8	42.6	19.2	6.3
Mindfulness	14.2	42.0	36.3	7.6
Guided Imagery	19.8	32.5	32.5	15.2
Gratitude/thankfulness	9.8	22.3	34.5	33.5
Mindful movement/yoga	33.7	35.9	20.6	9.8
Sleep techniques	14.3	24.7	36.9	24.1
Relaxation techniques	10.2	28.3	36.3	25.2

Confidence in Coping with Stress

Student's confidence in coping with stress was assessed via 6 questions asking respondents to rate their confidence in using various coping skills from 0 (Cannot do at all) to 5 (Certain I can do).

Overall, students reported being “moderately” confident in their ability to cope with adverse events both before and after taking the CTC classes. However, students reported a significant increase in their confidence in visualizing a pleasant activity and sorting out what can be changed and what cannot be changed after taking CTC classes.

Confidence in Coping by Race/Ethnicity

Students were asked to identify their race and ethnicity via a multiple choice question in which they were asked to choose all races and ethnicities that applied. “Other” was also an option. Approximately 70% of students' identities included white/Caucasian. Due to sample size, students who identified any way except white/Caucasian (“participants of color”) were grouped together for analysis. These students were compared with those whose identities included white/Caucasian.

As a group, participants of color had lower confidence in their ability to cope with adverse events when compared with white participants and their total coping score post-intervention was significantly lower than that of white students. However, there was no significant difference by race/ethnicity in the *change* in self-efficacy in coping from pre to post intervention. This is true for both the coping scale as a whole and the individual elements.

Difference in coping by age and gender was not assessed for the 2017/2018 school year on its own. Instead, 2016/2017 data was pooled with 2017/2018 data to allow for a larger sample size. See the full 2016–2018 Change to Chill evaluation report for more detail.

Next Steps

Due to limited capacity and a high volume of requests, Allina Health will no longer have facilitators teaching the Change to Chill series to students. Instead, the program will transition to a train-the-trainer model, in which facilitators train community members, such as teachers and youth workers, on how to deliver the program to teenagers and equip them with the tools to, in turn, train others in their community. Change to Chill train-the-trainer sessions provide community members with knowledge about teen stress, resources found on the Change to Chill website, and demonstrate ready-to-use, pick-and-choose modules and activities through experiential learning and group discussion. The train-the-trainer model will sustainably increase program reach and allow for a more flexible, tailored approach to program delivery to better meet individual community needs.

Due to the above changes, in-person sessions will no longer be evaluated via pre-post surveys, though the results will continue to be incorporated into future program decisions. Instead, aspects of and learnings from this evaluation will be incorporated into other in-person Change to Chill offerings, such as the Change to Chill School Partnership Model. For example, based on these findings, familiarity with Change to Chill, knowledge of the topics, and self-efficacy in coping will continue to be assessed for students touched by the Change to Chill School Partnership Model. Additionally, program staff will explore other opportunities for assessing in-person sessions being delivered by community members, such as retrospective surveys or interviews with facilitators.