

HeartMath® Institute Student Mental Health Initiative

Educator Reports: Implementing HeartMath® Programs and Technology



North Reading Middle School, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

Submitted by Michael Hursh, School Adjustment Counselor

With the opportunity to receive resources through the HeartMath® grant, I was able to teach students in the school about the connection between the heart and brain while exploring the importance of coherence. I taught whole group lessons to four (4) eighth-grade classes of about twenty students each. The students learned about the importance of the key concepts taught within the **Smart Brain Wise Heart™** curriculum. They were able to observe how the **emWave® Pro** and **Inner Balance™** technology function to monitor our heart rate variability while we seek to gain coherence.

The feedback from the Health teacher and building principal was positive and they saw great value in teaching this material to more students. The students in the four classes also had a positive response. 87.5% of students who responded shared that after receiving the lesson they would consider practicing stress management activities, and 93.8% reported that they found the demonstration of the emWave Pro interesting.

Through my follow-up data collection tool, here are a few examples of what students learned from the presentation:

- I learned that your heart can send signals to the brain about the stress
- I learned that stress can be there even if you don't realize that you are stressed.
- Your heart can tell when you're stressed and send signals to your brain.
- I learned about how to take deep breaths and then exhale.
- I learned that stress can affect your mood, and if you are feeling bad, you can make others feel bad, too.

We appreciate the wonderful opportunity to participate in this grant.