



# RESEARCH RUNDOWN

## An Evaluation of Mindful Practice Training for Direct Support Providers

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Mindful Practice for Direct Support Providers is a training program aimed at improving caregiver behaviors to promote meaningful care experiences. We will be evaluating the effects this training program has on outcomes for clients and staff. Mindful care practices have the potential to enhance quality of life and care experiences for not only care recipients, but caregivers as well.

### What is this research about?

We are planning to evaluate the effects of Mindful Practice for Direct Support Providers (MPDSP) training at St.Amant. MPDSP is a mindful caregiving program developed by Andrew Terhoch during his work as a massage therapist at St.Amant. The training is intended to foster more meaningful care experiences by connecting caregivers with the direct physiological, emotional, and sensory impacts they can have while providing care.

A research proposal has been developed by St.Amant Research Centre in collaboration with Dr. Michael McIntyre, Research Program Leader for the Compassion Project at the St. Boniface Research Centre.

### What will the researchers do?

Our initial research questions are: does the training successfully foster the desired care behaviours, and what are the resulting benefits for clients and staff?

MPDSP training will be evaluated within living units at River Road Place as well as in community homes, using an experimental design to rigorously test these hypotheses. Staff will experience the training as a matter of professional development, and may independently volunteer to participate in the research project by agreeing to complete a series of questionnaires, and to have some of their care behaviours observed.

### What do the researchers hope to find?

We anticipate that staff may display greater engagement, reduced stress, reduced burnout, and improved efficacy following training. Clients may benefit by experiencing less

### What you need to know:

St.Amant is offering a mindful caregiving training program to staff as a professional development opportunity. We will evaluate the effects of the training program in terms of resulting care behaviours, and the impact for clients and staff. Effective mindful practice training may contribute to improved quality of life for the individuals and families that St.Amant serves.

stress, fewer challenging behaviours, and greater well-being as a result of improved care. While MPDSP is not a mindfulness training program per se, it is possible that training mindful caregiving behaviours will increase trait mindfulness among caregivers.

### Why is it important?

Personal care for clients with developmental disabilities can range from driving someone to the mall to intimate situations such as bathing. Client well-being therefore depends upon staff approaching their job in a mindful way as opposed to just "getting the job done." Mindful practice training holds the promise of radically improving quality of life for the individuals and families that St.Amant serves.



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## Research Team

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## Additional Resources

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At the time of writing this project was ongoing, version date: April, 2016. Latest versions are available at:  
<http://stamant.ca/research/our-research/project-summaries/>