

# DAVID LYNCH FOUNDATION

For Consciousness-Based  
Education and World Peace

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## ***Press Release***

### **At-Risk Teens Reduce Hyperactivity and Stress through the Transcendental Meditation Program**

#### **New University of Connecticut Study to Be Presented March 27 at the Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting**



At-risk adolescents can reduce their level of hyperactivity and stress when practicing the Transcendental Meditation technique at school, according to a new study to be presented on Thursday, March 27, during the Society of Behavioral Medicine's 29<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in San Diego, March 26-29.

One hundred and six secondary school students from three U.S. public schools participated in the project. Sixty-eight students learned the Transcendental Meditation technique and 38 students from the same schools served as controls. Students in the study were primarily from lower income, minority populations, including African American, Hispanic, and Native American.

A standard battery of tests, measuring anxiety, student stress-related problems, and mental health, was administered prior to the start of the program and again an average of four months later.

Over the course of the project, meditating students showed significant reductions in anxiety, emotional problems, hyperactivity, and total student problems, and improved overall mental health.

According to Dr. Robert Colbert, assistant professor of educational psychology at the University of Connecticut and co-author of the study, many adolescents suffer from a high degree of stress. Students cite the pressure of schoolwork as the most frequent cause of stress, followed by parents, friends, relationships, drugs, and the neighborhood.

"Something must be done to help today's youth deal with the enormous amount of stress in their lives," Dr. Colbert said. "This study shows that something can help immediately—and it is easy to implement in any school setting."

Dr. Sanford Nidich, professor of education and physiology at Maharishi University of Management, and lead author on the study, said the way that adolescents manage stress can greatly influence their ability to perform well in school—as well as have significant impact on their physical and emotional health.

“This new research shows that the most at-risk adolescents can substantially reduce stress in their lives within a few months of practicing Transcendental Meditation,” Dr. Nidich said.

The findings support previously published research on Transcendental Meditation in adolescents, which show improvements in academic achievement as well as reduced school absenteeism, rule infractions, and suspensions. Other studies on adolescent health have shown decreased reactivity to stress and decreased high blood pressure through practice of Transcendental Meditation.

“I have seen first-hand the kind of positive impact a few minutes of Transcendental Meditation at the beginning and end of the school day can make. Administrators, teachers, and students find Transcendental Meditation helpful, especially in relieving stress and increasing energy levels,” Dr. Colbert said.

Transcendental Meditation is an easily learned, nonreligious technique, practiced for 10 to 20 minutes twice daily, sitting comfortably in a chair with the eyes closed. The technique produces a state of deep physiological relaxation while brain research shows the mind is settled and alert. This unique state of “restful alertness” is the basis for the reduced stress and wide range of health improvements reported from the practice.

The Transcendental Meditation technique is now offered to students on a voluntary basis in many U.S. middle schools and secondary schools as part of a school-wide “Quiet Time” program to help students combat the debilitating effects of classroom stress ([www.stressfreeschools.org](http://www.stressfreeschools.org)).

The study was funded by a grant from the David Lynch Foundation for Consciousness-Based Education and World Peace ([www.davidlynchfoundation.org](http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org)).