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## Original Article

***Pilot randomized controlled trial of MINDful TIME, a novel telehealth mindfulness-based intervention for autistic adolescents and their caregivers***

*Published in the Peer-reviewed Journal  
**Autism***

*The full article can be found here:*

**<https://doi.org/10.1177/13623613251328484>**

## Key Terms

**Co-occurring mental health conditions** are mental health symptoms like depression or anxiety that may be experienced by autistic people.

**Mindfulness-based interventions** use strategies like meditation to encourage present-moment awareness through focused attention and acceptance of one's current experience.

## Why was this study conducted?

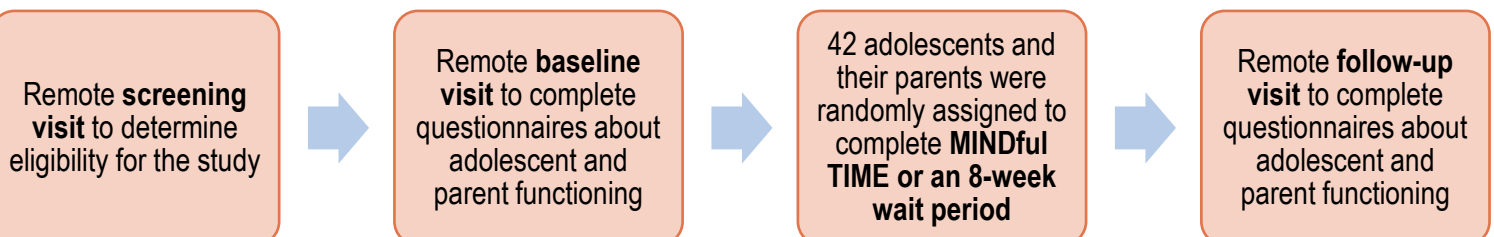
- Many autistic adolescents experience co-occurring mental health conditions like depression and anxiety.
- Previous research studies have found that mindfulness-based interventions can reduce stress, depression, and anxiety in autistic adults and the general population.
- However, more research is needed to understand whether mindfulness strategies are helpful for autistic teens.
- This study examined whether a new group-based telehealth intervention, MINDful TIME, improved depression, anxiety, and other areas of functioning in autistic adolescents without intellectual disability.

## What is MINDful TIME?

- MINDful TIME stands for, Mindfulness-based Intervention for Neurodiverse Teens: Telehealth Instruction, Mobile-app Enhanced
- 8-week group-based program for autistic adolescents without intellectual disability (IQ  $\geq$  70) and caregivers
- Teaches mindfulness and habit formation strategies to establish a regular mindfulness meditation practice and manage stress, anxiety, and depression
- Adolescents and their caregivers attend separate weekly 90-minute Zoom meetings
- Adolescents and caregivers are asked to practice mindfulness meditations outside of group meetings using a mobile meditation app (Happier Meditation)

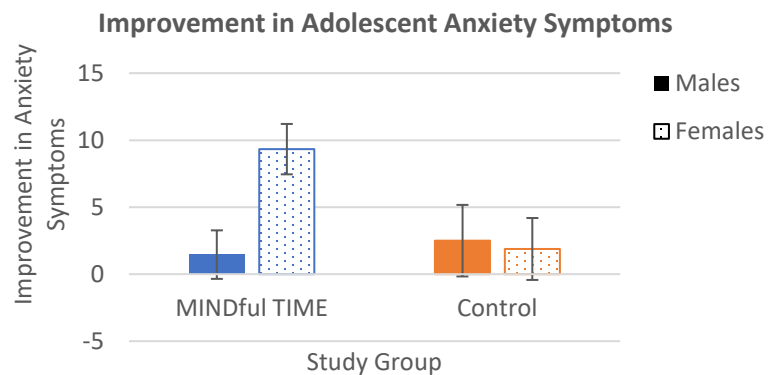
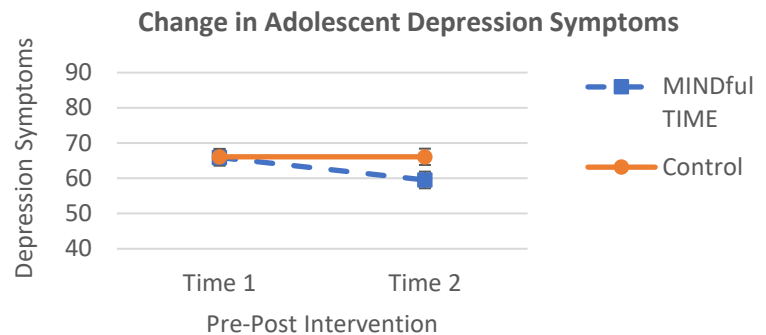


## What did the study involve?



## What were the main study findings?

- Adolescents who completed MINDful TIME showed greater decreases in parent-reported depression symptoms than the control group. This suggests that strategies taught during MINDful TIME helped adolescents to better manage their depression symptoms.
- There was not an overall group difference in adolescent anxiety symptoms, but there was a difference among adolescents assigned female at birth. Females who completed MINDful TIME showed greater improvements in parent-reported anxiety symptoms than females in the control group.
- Adolescents who completed MINDful TIME also showed **improvements in parent-reported executive functioning, including behavior and emotion regulation.**
- Parents who completed MINDful TIME reported **improvements in their own mindfulness, well-being, and adolescent-parent relationship functioning.**
- High attendance (> 90% of sessions) and program completion rates (90% of participants) suggest that MINDful TIME is a feasible program.
- Adolescents and parents reported high acceptability of the program (average scores of 5.85 and 6.32, respectively, on a 7-point scale, with higher scores meaning higher acceptability).



## What were the study's conclusions?

- Study findings suggest that MINDful TIME can be implemented (i.e., feasibility) and is acceptable to autistic adolescents and their parents (i.e., acceptability).
- Findings suggest MINDful TIME may be effective at improving depression symptoms in autistic adolescents and potentially anxiety symptoms in adolescents assigned female at birth.
- Future research with a larger sample size is needed to replicate these findings and better understand participant characteristics associated with program effectiveness.

## Original Article Citation

Matthews, N. L., Mitchell, M. M., Honda, H., Malligo, A. M., Boyd, S., Pagni, B. A., & Braden, B. B. (2025). Pilot randomized controlled trial of MINDful TIME, a novel telehealth mindfulness-based intervention for autistic adolescents and their caregivers. *Autism*, Advanced online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13623613251328484>

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