

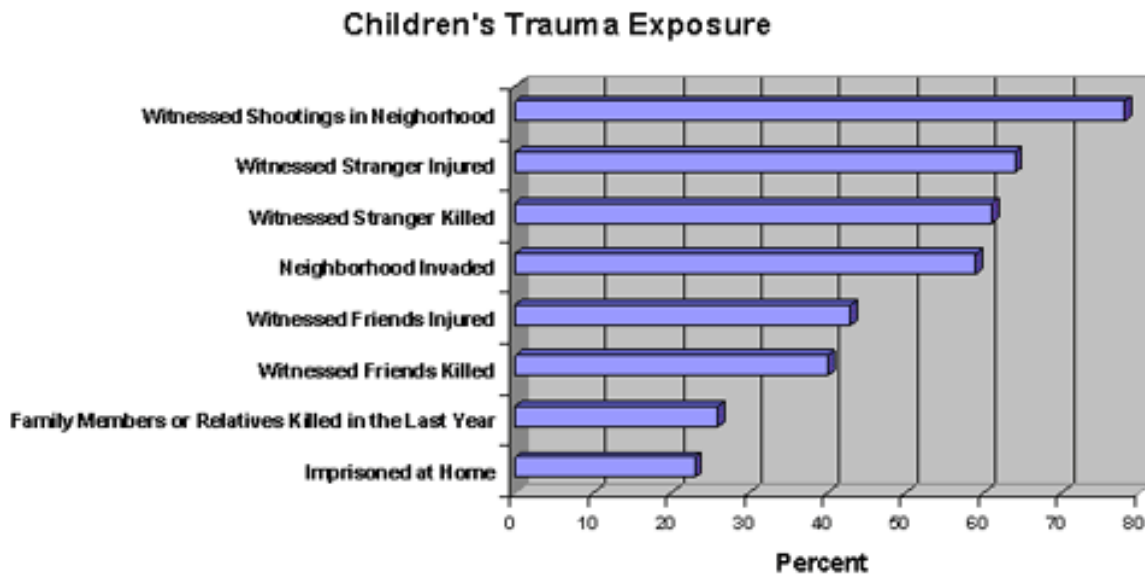
The Center for

Mind-Body Medicine[®]

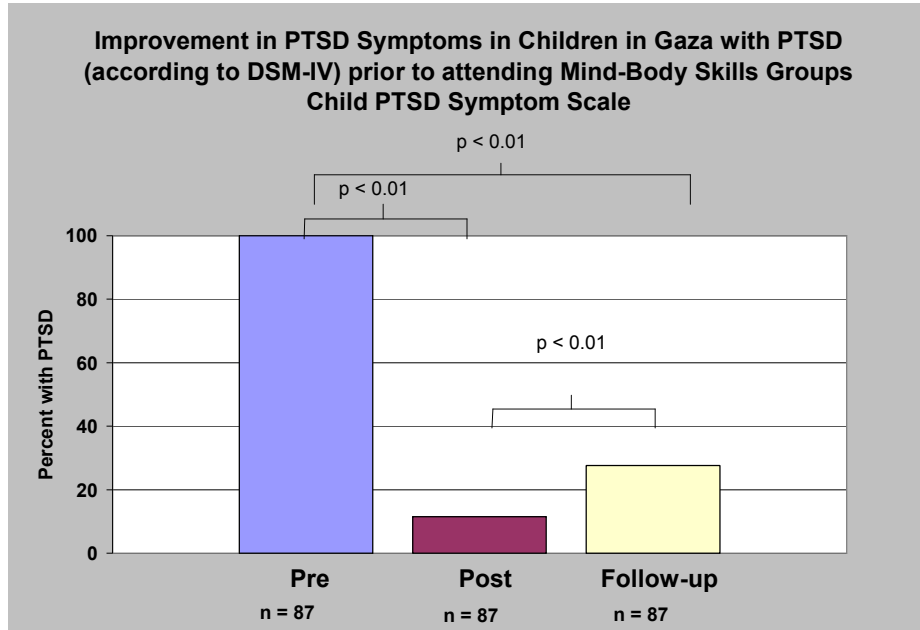
Science. Training. Community. Outreach.

The Effect of Mind-Body Skills Groups on PTSD, Depression, and Hopelessness in Children and Adolescents in Gaza

Data was gathered on 498 children and adolescents who participated in Mind-Body Skills Groups taught by 38 Center-trained health professionals in Gaza in 2007. Their ages ranged from 8 to 19 years with most being 11-15 years. There were 275 boys (55%) and 223 girls (45%). Trauma exposure was very high as shown in the graph below.



Prior to participation in the program, 27% of the children had symptoms which qualified them as having posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) according to the Child PTSD Symptom Scale. Eighty-eight of these (41 girls and 47 boys) were available for 7 month follow up. In those having qualifying PTSD symptoms prior to participating in the mind-body skills groups, the PTSD symptom levels dropped 88% following participation in the groups (from 100% to 12%) and remained low at 28% at follow-up.



A little over half of the children having qualifying PTSD symptoms prior to participation in the program also had depression as measured by the Children's Depression Inventory. Depression levels were significantly improved in these children following participation in the groups, dropping from 52% to 28% but this improvement was not maintained at follow-up. Children also felt more hopeful about themselves and their futures as shown by a statistically significant improvement on the Hopelessness Scale for Children and continued to feel more hopeful 7 months following the program.