



What it is

"Mindful Organizing is a team-based practice that allows teams to manage complexity and bias in decision-making"

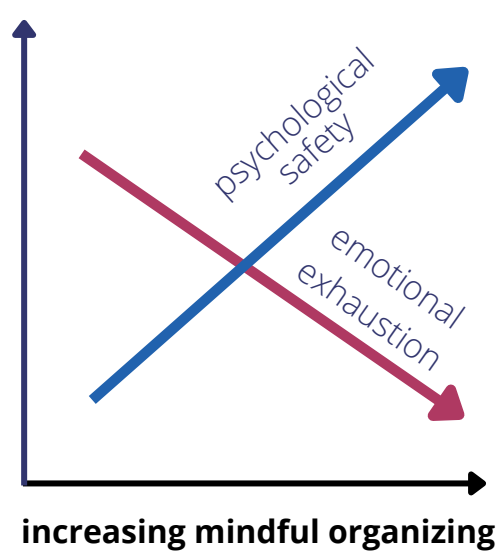
Sutcliffe, 2011

- Mindful Organizing is the habits, practices, and perspectives teams use to monitor, plan, innovate, learn, and support each other
- Mindful Organizing supports better decision-making and helps teams rapidly and effectively identify and respond to unexpected events
- Mindful Organizing is grounded in shared accountability for outcomes and equity

Why It Matters

Early research tells us Mindful Organizing is related to:

Less **emotional exhaustion** and higher **psychological safety** in the child welfare workforce



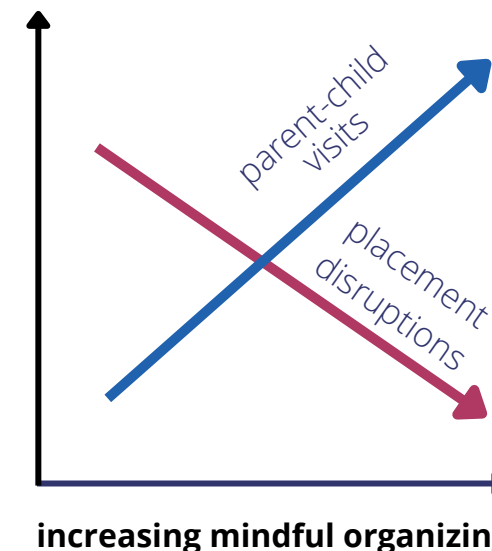
NPCS data, 2021-2023

Higher frequency and effectiveness of teaming strategies like **huddles**



NPCS data, 2021-2023

Fewer **placement disruptions** and more parent-child visitation for children in out-of-home placement

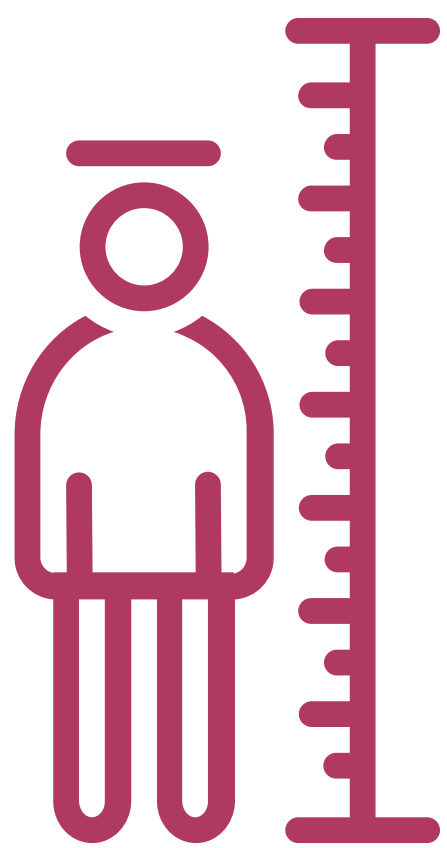


Vogus et al, 2016; Epstein et al, 2020

Fewer **care interruptions**, and **medication errors** in residential treatment centers



Vogus et al, 2007



The Safety Culture Survey uses a validated scale to measure mindful organizing. Participants rate their agreement with these statements.

How we Measure Mindful Organizing

When giving a report to another employee, we usually discuss what to look out for

My team spends time identifying activities we do not want to go wrong

My team discusses alternatives to improve how we go about our normal work activities

My team has a good understanding of each other's skills and talents

We discuss our unique skills with each other so we know who has relevant specialized skills and knowledge

My team talks about mistakes and ways to learn from them

When errors happen, my team discusses how we could have prevented them

When we attempt to solve a problem in my team, we take advantage of the unique skills of our colleagues

When a problem occurs in my team, we all get together to figure out the solution



A surgeon and their medical team verbalize each step of the surgery so everyone in the room is aware of each step taken



A pilot and co-pilot run through a pre-flight checklist with the assigned air traffic controller before take-off.



A child welfare team uses Pre Mortem Strategy to think through a safety plan and consider how the current plan may fail and could benefit from preventive care

SAFETY CULTURE

Teams practice Mindful Organizing by building habits that help them plan, review, and innovate their work. These habits are built using team-based strategies that help teams anticipate challenges that might stretch them beyond their limits and plan how to contain them when they happen.

THE SIX HABITS

Mindful Organizing is central to Psychological Safety and Safety Culture. Psychological Safety encourages professionals to be candid, disclose mistakes, and manage conflict. Safety Culture is a workplace culture grounded in candor, respect, shared accountability, and coordinated teaming.



SIX HABITS

PLAN FORWARD

to anticipate what might go wrong

REFLECT BACK

to talk about and learn from mistakes

TEST CHANGE

to find alternatives to everyday activities

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

with peers and understand who knows what

APPRECIATION

appreciate the unique skills and expertise of colleagues at all levels

MANAGE PROFESSIONALISM

as a precondition of teamwork centered on candor and respect



STRATEGIES

Each of the 6 Habits has a corresponding set of strategies for teams to try. Building new habits can be hard, but you can learn a lot by sticking with it.

Testing new ways to do things and adjusting based on what we learn is a Mindful Organizing strategy!



PLAN FORWARD using HUDDLES

Schedule 10-15 minute sessions where everyone contributes and shares essential information to plan how work will be done.

REFLECT BACK using STRUCTURED DEBRIEF to share learning from a situation or experience. What went well? What could have been better? What will we do differently next time?



The *TeamFirst Guide for Safe, Reliable and Effective Child Welfare Teams* describes these and other strategies and how they can be implemented