STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

ABOUT THE PROJECT

There are various approaches to meditation worldwide, including Mindfulness, Transcendental, Vipassana, Zen and Christian Meditation. There is also growing international interest in the potential of meditation type programs for improving student wellbeing in schools, including the use of Christian meditation in Australian Catholic schools (Campion & Rocco, 2009). Recent ARC funded research conducted by the Centre for Children & Young People at SCU found that the Christian meditation program in the Townsville Diocese was positively associated with students feeling cared for, respected and valued at school (Graham et al, 2014).

Notwithstanding such findings, the impact of Christian meditation on improving children and young people’s lives is generally not yet well researched. While most studies to date focus broadly on the impact of meditation on wellbeing (particularly social and emotional wellbeing), very little is known about whether and how meditation influences children and young people’s spirituality and religiosity as they transition to adulthood. Hence, the aim of this research is to identify the impact, over time, of Christian meditation on the religious and spiritual development of children and young people in the context of Catholic education.

The research will use a mixed-methods longitudinal approach comprised of an online survey and focus groups with Year 4 students (for Wave 1) in participating schools in the Lismore Diocese and the Archdiocese of Sydney, as well as individual interviews with participating teachers. Designing and undertaking a longitudinal study enables baseline data to be collected prior to engagement with meditation as well as tracking changes in relation to agreed indicators over time.

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

April 2014 – December 2015 (Wave 1)

PROJECT PARTNERS

Catholic Schools Office, Lismore Diocese
Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney
World Community for Christian Meditation

RESEARCH TEAM

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