

**Testimonial of Dr. Glenn Joseph Mendoza, MD, M.P.H.,  
and Raina Koterba, OTR/L  
“Superbrain Yoga Pilot Study – Cedar Grove School”**

During the first and second week of October, together with Raina Koterba, OTR/L, we also started a study in North End and South End schools in Cedar Grove.

The first group is composed of a self-contained classroom of six children, between the ages of 6 and 8. The *Sensory Profile* was completed on each child including parts of the *Developmental Test of Visual Perception* and the *Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration*. These children have a variety of disabilities, including neurological defects, autism, seizure disorder, cognitive delay and specific learning disabilities. They do the Superbrain Yoga for a minimum of five times per week, sometimes completing it twice depending on the needs of some students.

The results of this preliminary study are as follows:

- The children are more focused and ready to work.
- The children are displaying less negative behaviors.
- They can follow multi-step directions, with less verbal cues and guidance.
- Some children are displaying strengths the teacher did not know they possessed.
- The children display increased social skills.
- The entire dynamic of the class has improved dramatically.

The second group is composed of a Resource classroom with nine children, varying between the ages of 7 and 9. These children have a variety of disabilities, including Down syndrome, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, attention deficit disorder, specific learning disabilities, cognitive delays and psychotic depressive disorder. They complete 10 preliminary warm-up exercises and the Superbrain Yoga a minimum of 5 times a week.

The subjective observations are as follows:

- The children are more focused and ready to work.
- The children are displaying improved emotional states.
- The child with Down syndrome, always appeared frustrated, anxious, and in an upset mood every time she came to Occupational Therapy. After about two weeks of completing the exercise, she is in high spirits and does all that is asked of her. She is able to focus more and follow 2-3 step directions, with little to no verbal cues for redirection.

- Some children are calmer, displaying less negative behaviors.
- Children ask for the exercise when the teacher forgets, or during stressful times (showing an increase in awareness and self-regulation).

The third group is composed of 4 classified children, varying between the ages of 5 and 8. These children have a variety of disabilities, including seizure disorder, emotional problems, obsessive compulsive disorder, psychotic depressive disorder, anxiety disorder and possible childhood schizophrenia. They complete 10 preliminary warm-up exercises and the Superbrain Yoga a minimum of 2 times per week.

The subjective observations are as follows:

- The children are more outgoing (students who didn't communicate much are talking and sharing thoughts with the therapist).
- The children are able to tolerate frustration to a greater degree (students are able to engage in more difficult activities prior to study with minimal aggravation).
- The child displaying bizarre behaviors appears to have a normal behavior.
- *The memory and retention of new information appears to have improved.*
- The child with very low self-esteem and always saying, "I can't" and requiring maximal encouragement and coaxing, is now engaging in activities with minimal encouragement, some independently. His teacher has observed increase in speed and quality of work within the classroom.
- The child with psychotic depressive disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety disorder appears to be more at ease in his body. Movements that were awkward and clumsy, have improved along with his self-esteem. He appears to be less anxious during regular daily routines.

The preliminary findings have been very encouraging particularly for the teachers and therapists who have been involved in the program.

(Signed) Dr. Glenn Joseph Mendoza, MD, M.P.H.

(Signed) Raina Koterba, O.T.R./L

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