

Trauma-informed, mindfulness-based intervention significantly improves parenting among mothers in op

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Researchers at Jefferson's Maternal Addiction Treatment Education & Research (MATER) program found significant improvement in the quality of parenting among mothers who participated in a trauma-informed, mindfulness-based parenting intervention while also in medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder. Results of the study, the first to scientifically test a mindfulness-based parenting intervention with this population, were published July 27 in the *Journal of Addiction Medicine*.

"Our results validate a powerful intervention when it is needed most," said senior author Diane Abatemarco, Ph.D., MSW, principal investigator, Director of MATER and Associate Professor of OB/GYN and Pediatrics in the Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University. "By improving parenting through [mindfulness](#), we may be able to change the intergenerational trajectory of trauma and improve children's and families' lives."

A total of 160 [women](#) participated in a 12-week mindful parenting intervention at Jefferson's Family Center, an outpatient and intensive outpatient treatment center that cares for women who are pregnant, parenting or working toward reuniting with their child. The mindfulness-based [program](#) included mother/baby education and practice, education on the impact of trauma, and mindfulness meditation. Themes included non-judgment, full attention and compassion.

"We designed the mindfulness-based parenting program to give women the resources and tools to be great parents. Our program supports moms, building their self-efficacy and self-confidence," said Abatemarco.

The research team conducted pre- and post-tests with the women using three validated instruments to measure observed parenting quality, the mother's childhood trauma exposure and self-reported mindful parenting. Women who participated in the mindfulness-based parenting program experienced a clinically significant increase in parenting quality, from "low" at baseline to "moderate" at completion.

"We also found that attendance matters," said Meghan Gannon, Ph.D., MSPH, first author and research project manager at MATER. "For women who experienced high levels of childhood trauma, attendance was key to improving parenting."

More information: Stacey L. Klaman et al, Treating Women Who Are Pregnant and Parenting for Opioid Use Disorder and the Concurrent Care of Their Infants and Children, *Journal of Addiction Medicine* (2017). [DOI: 10.1097/ADM.0000000000000308](https://doi.org/10.1097/ADM.0000000000000308)

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