

Integrated, Youth-Led, Sport-Based, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Interventions for Children Affected by/ Living with HIV in Mombasa, Kenya

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BACKGROUND

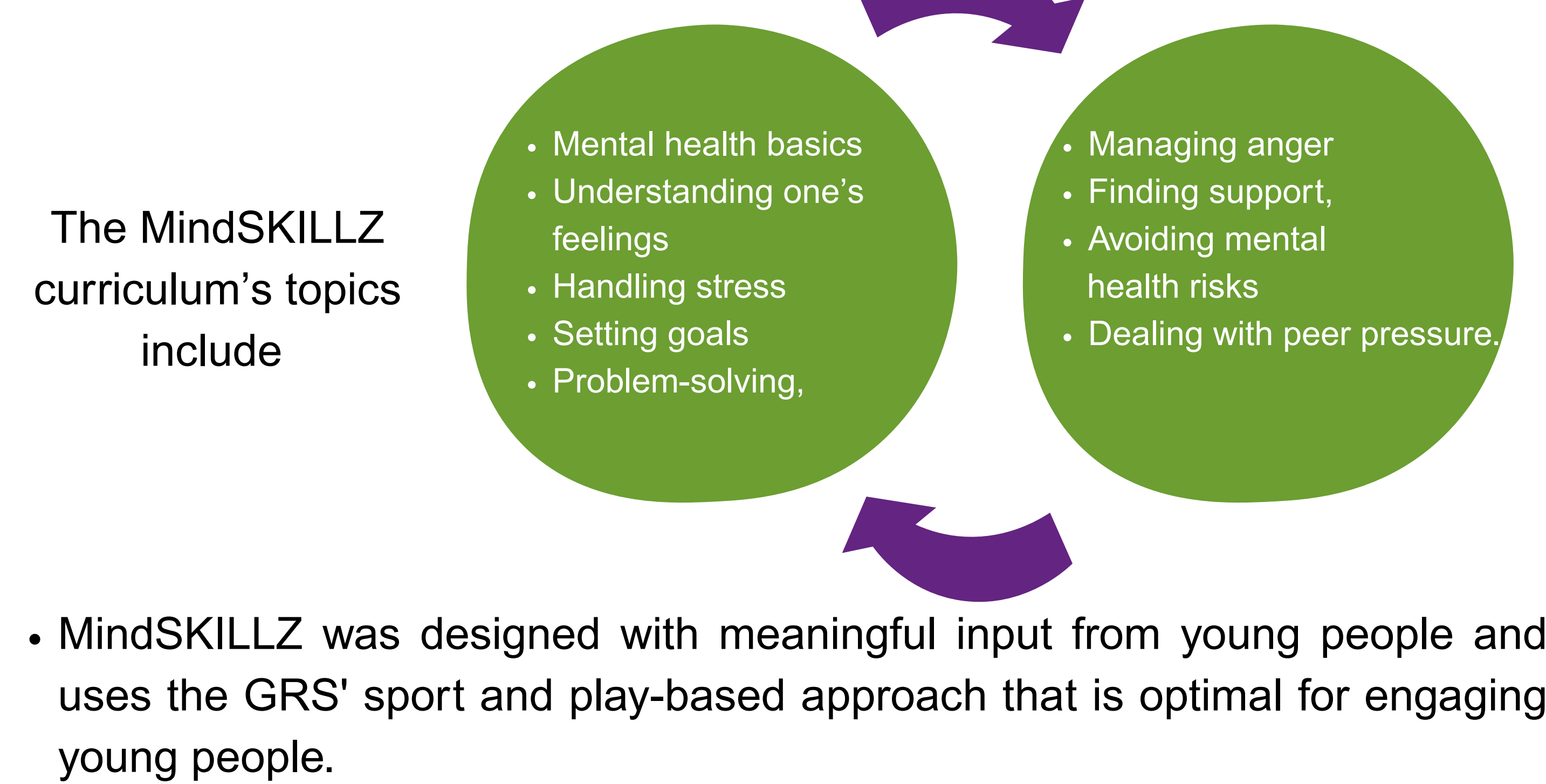


- Orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) interventions within HIV programs aim to improve the health and social outcomes of children living with and affected by HIV.
- OVC are at high risk of poor mental health, this may be partly due to factors like stigma, trauma, and stressful life events.
- Programming for OVC needs to respond to their social and emotional needs, including building resilience and mental well-being

• Grassroot Soccer (GRS) and LVCT Health partnered with AMURT to integrate a sport-based and youth-led preventive and promotive adolescent mental health intervention, called MindSKILLZ, into existing programming serving OVC in Mombasa County.

PROJECT

• The GRS' MindSKILLZ program utilizes a positive youth development approach focusing on strengths and life skills that promote good mental health.

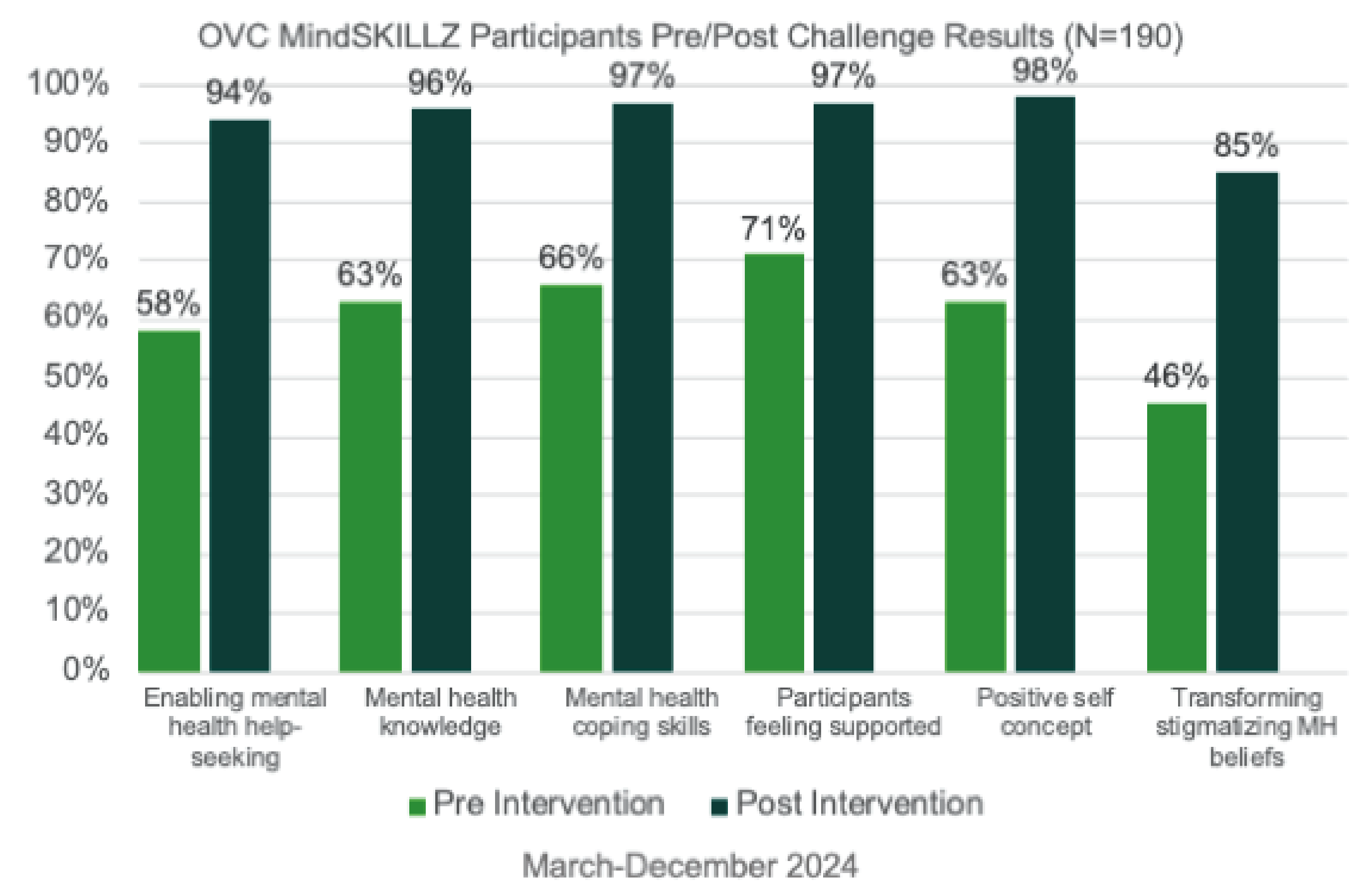


- GRS and LVCT integrated the MindSKILLZ intervention in the OVC psychosocial support, within the "Health Domain" of the AMURT OVC program.
- It's delivered by trained 'Coaches' (near-peer mentors) in a fun, safe, supportive culture during the psychosocial support forums.
- Coaches provide mental health first aid and facilitate linkages for specialized services as needed.

• MindSKILLZ Magazine, a supplemental comic book-style resource, was also distributed to participants to reinforce key topics.

RESULTS

- The MindSKILLZ intervention had an impressive impact with an average pre/post change of 45% for mental health knowledge, attitudes, behavior and coping skills among all the participants reached.
- OVC participant pre/post survey results indicate improvement in multiple domains: enabling mental health care-seeking behaviors, mental health knowledge, coping skills, participants feeling supported, positive self concept, and reduced stigmatizing mental health beliefs.
- Participants also self-reported improved school performance.
- The OVC intervention is part of a larger MindSKILLZ program that has reached +5,100 adolescents 10-14 years in Mombasa and Nairobi



• The Coaches reported being more self-aware, resilient, and improved care-seeking.



Collaboration and Partnership

- Strategic partnerships were formed with the Department of health and youth-led organizations focused on marginalized adolescents, playing a critical role in promoting a community-driven approach to mental health promotion.
- LVCT and GRS team members highlighted how collaborations and partnerships are effective ways to address crosscutting health outcomes, such as mental health for OVC beneficiaries.

LESSONS LEARNT AND IMPLICATIONS

- Integrating mental health interventions for adolescents living with/affected by HIV contributes to improved mental health awareness, emotional well-being, care seeking, and stigma reduction, therefore should be scaled.
- Adolescence is an opportune stage for solutions that promote mental wellbeing, and help young people navigate life's challenges and thrive.

