PURPOSE
Correctional officers (COs) face extreme stress and have limited stress reduction options. This project aimed to equip correctional COs with mindfulness-base interventions (MBIs) to reduce their perceived stress.

BACKGROUND
COs consistently encounter high stress situations which negatively affects their physical and mental health and reduces their job effectiveness. Resources to help reduce COs’ stress are not readily accessible. MBIs have been shown to reduce psychological distress, improve general health, and improve overall well-being and quality of life in a variety of populations but have never been used for COs.

METHODOLOGY
An MBI toolkit was developed for COs and included: information on stress and mindfulness, MBI options, and logs to track MBI practices. To indicate participation COs completed pre-intervention questionnaires (demographics and the perceived stress scale-10[PSS-10]). Participants agreed to use MBIs daily and track their use on the logs. After four weeks participants completed the post- intervention PSS-10 to determine change in their mean PSS-10 scores and a questionnaire to measure participants’ satisfaction. The Plan-Do-Study-Act was the selected quality improvement method to evaluate and revise the QI project.

RESULTS
Nineteen COs completed the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. Utilizing MBIs for one month resulted in 23.6% reduction in COs’ mean perceived stress scores and participants reported high satisfaction.

IMPLICATIONS
Results from this quality improvement project imply that MBIs are good options for reducing perceived stress in COs who work with mentally ill inmates within one large county jail.