

Yoga for children

12 April 2014

CECEK

Presented by Kym Mills and Erica Barron

Let's get some energy flowing



For those of you who are still a little sleepy and not used to such an early start on a Saturday, let's get some energy flowing with a simple warm up.

“Namaste”

Warm up exercise – sun dance

Our modern world...

- *bombarded with media*
- *increase in prescription of medication for ADHD and other syndromes linked with anxiety and nerves*
- *too much emphasis placed on passive entertainment*
- *shift of reading from libraries to digital media*
- *record level of child obesity*
- *lack of community linked to stressed parents working long hours*
- *children ultimately lacking personal, family time with parents*

What is yoga?

- Yoga means to unite or be whole
- The union of body, mind and spirit
- Adaptable to almost any level of physical or developmental ability
- A gentle, non competitive form of exercise

It's not about how we look on the outside,
it's about how we feel on the inside.

The benefits of yoga

- Strength, flexibility and balance
- Concentration, focus and attention
- Inner strength and body awareness
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Creativity and imagination
- Awareness of breath
- Relaxation and self-control
- Feeling of well-being and respect for others

More benefits of yoga

- Increased self-reliance and social skills
- Fewer tantrums and better behaviour
- Better sleep
- Improved digestion
- Increased listening skills
- Better self-expression
- Improved gross and fine motor development
- Healthy and fit lifestyle
- Reduce stress and anxiety

What do you need?

- Children
- Space
- Imagination and creativity

By helping children to focus their energy and controlling their bodies, we give them the power to create their own lives and live in peace and harmony with others.

Be flexible

Many yoga strategies can be done in less than one minute so they can easily be slotted into your current routine.

For example – Mountain pose when lining up

- Incorporating animal poses and sounds into your story time session or literacy lesson
- Warm-up activities prior to circle time
- Calming poses after active or outdoor play

Active participation can really help learning sink in whilst being fun and props that you already have in the classroom can be incorporated such as colourful scarves, pom poms or soft toys.

Tips on keeping it fun

- Relax and shed preoccupations
- Provide positive words and praise
- Treat children as individuals
- Don't expect perfect poses. The key is to guide children into exploring yoga in a safe environment
- Keep instructions simple, using repetition
- Provide a safe place for breaks

Warm up

- *Hand rubbing warm up*
- *Washing machine and dryer*
- *Sun breath and stretch*

Poses (Asanas)

- Modifications on adults poses so that they are developmentally appropriate
- Incorporate stories, songs, toys and games to keep children engaged
- The perfect pose is not the goal, it's about having fun, engaging and experiencing yoga

Examples of poses

- Poses are often inspired by animals and things in nature such as mountains.

Yoga Pretzels

Down Dog

FORWARD SEND

Stretching

Playful

Open

DOWN DOG

1 "I am ready to play!"
Bend your knees and fold down.

2 "I am a dog on all fours."
Come up to your hands and knees.

3 "I am ready to stretch!"
Curl your toes under and press hips up and back.

4 "I push back and open!"
Stretch legs straight; heels down; arms strong.

Can you name the parts of the body that you stretch in down dog pose?


What kind of dog are you? What is your bark like?

Yoga Pretzels

Turtle

FORWARD BEND

Quiet




Safe


Inside

TURTLE


1 "I breathe deeply."
Sit with your feet together and knees apart.




2 "I slide inside my shell."
Lift your arms then slide them under your knees.



3 "I am protected."
Place your hands on the floor outside your feet.



4 "I am a wise turtle."
Round your back; reach your head toward your feet.



Turtles always have a safe, quiet space to go inside. So do you! What do you do then?

Turtles also have a strong shell to protect themselves. How do you protect yourself when you are in a difficult situation?

Yoga Pretzels

warrior I

Planted

Determined

Reaching

WARRIOR I

1 "I step forward, breathe and focus." Start in high lunge.

2 "I plant myself firmly." Turn your back heel down to the floor and press.

3 "I am strong." Bring your hands to your thighs.

4 "I am peaceful." Bend deep as you reach both arms up to the sky.

A peaceful warrior is someone who walks their talk, inspiring others by their example. Can you think of anyone who is a peaceful warrior?

Can you be peaceful and determined?

Yoga Pretzels

The Tree Pose Vrksasana



The tree pose teaches us to support ourselves with strong roots, so that we can reach high and remain stable, yet be flexible, at the same time.

1 Stand straight with your feet below your hips.



2 Inhale and lift your right foot up to your inner thigh.



3 Bring your hands together at your heart center.



4 Sweep your arms up above your head.



5 Interlace your fingers, palms up, and stretch tall.



6 When you are ready, lower your arms and your right foot as you exhale.



Basic principles

- Simple
- Short
- Slow
- Breathe
- Balance
- Both sides

Relaxation and meditation

- Allows you to tune into your true inner identity
- Access universal identity of humankind
 - love, joy and peace
- Healthy alternative to T.V. after a busy day
- Stillness and quiet are just as important as action and movement
- Become confident, fearless and peaceful in your surroundings
- Improved concentration
- Extension poses are alerting, and those that provide flexion are calming
- Child's pose and lying flat are good poses for relaxation
- Quiet calming music can help to focus your mood

Mindfulness

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the term for the practice of concentration within the Now. It is a process by which we give our mind rest - through a series of different practices we can rest our mind and gain emotional wellbeing.

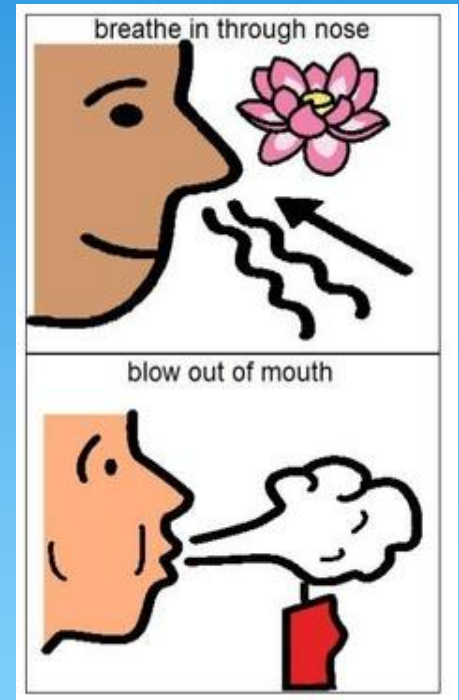
KORCOS Presentation - Benjamin Harnish (Chadwick International)

Mindfulness in the Classroom: Help Your Children Manage Stress and Find Peace at School.

- <http://blogs.chadwickschool.org/bharnish/mindfulness>

Controlled breathing

- Helps to produce calming or energising effects, increasing oxygen in the blood
- Breathe in through your nose and open your body
- Exhale through your mouth, closing your body
- Image of the flower and candle help
- Breathing out can help to relieve tension



Kid's breathing exercises

- Swimming Stuffies

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/PSShznzaz-8A>

- Ocean Breath

Hold arms out (parallel to the ground)
and breath in and out 1,2,3

Inhale and exhale through your mouth

As you inhale, raise your arms above your head

On the exhale lower your arms

Your breath should sound like ocean waves

Helps you to be relaxed and stay focussed

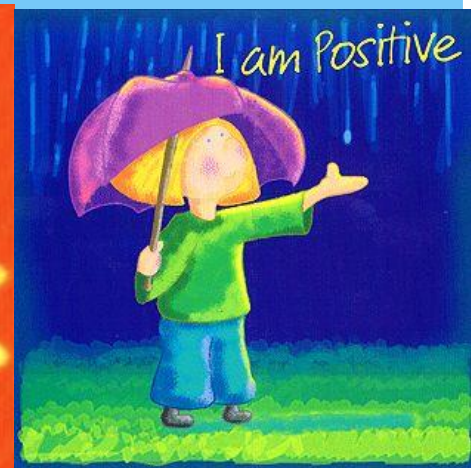
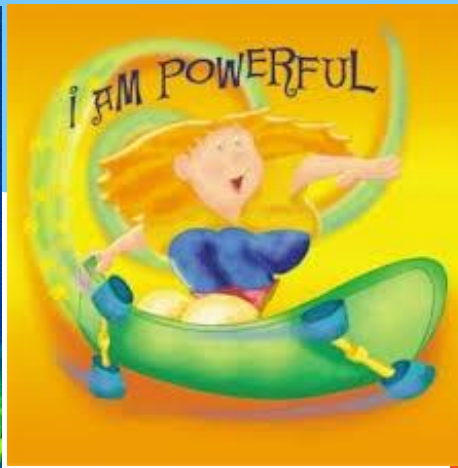
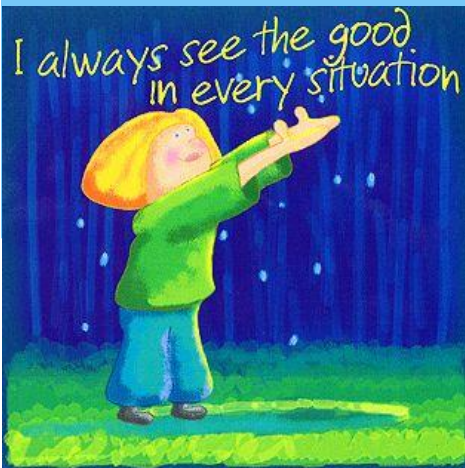


ABC Yoga cards
www.addriya.com

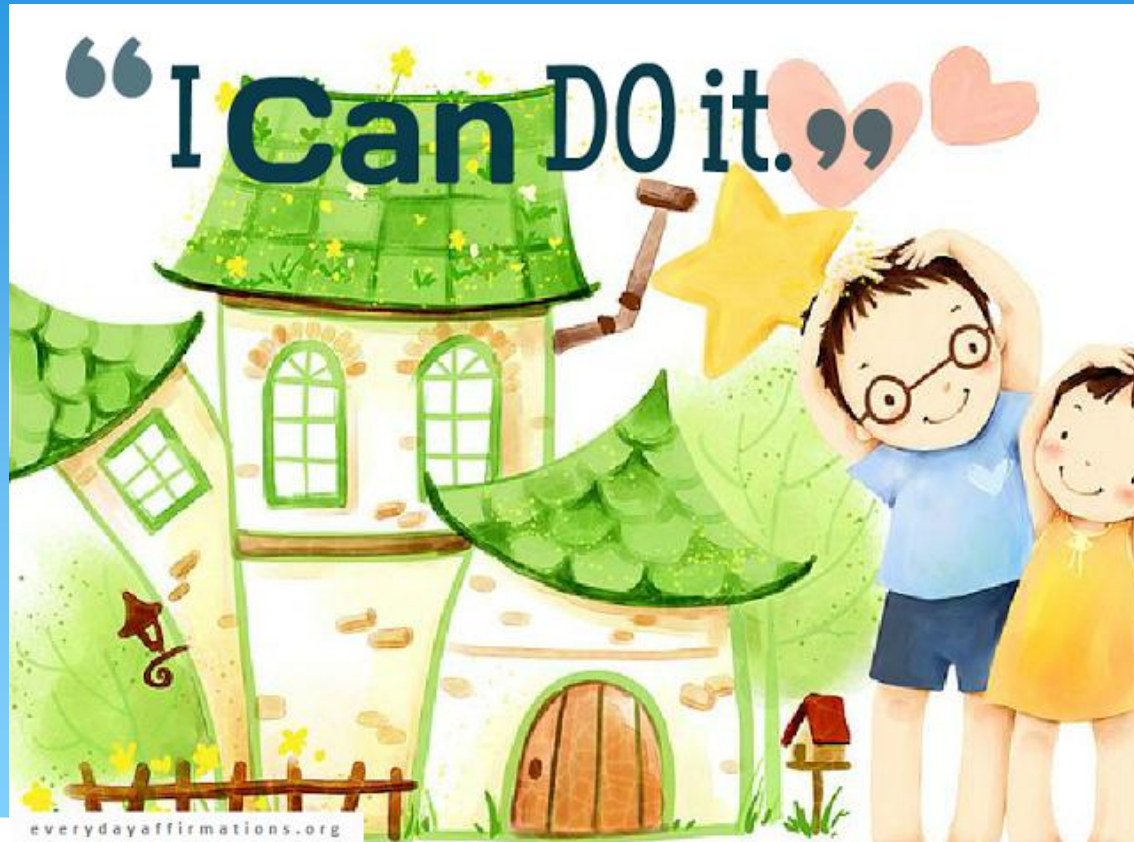
Positive Affirmations

- Affirmation cards encourage the best in us
- It is important that all children know that they are special, important and loved for just being them
- “Sometimes things are said or done to us that make us forget about who we truly are and our self esteem suffers.”

Manifest Your Magnificence <http://www.magnificentcreations.com/>



Positive Affirmations



Guided Imagery

- Relax Kids -Guided Imagery and Affirmations for Kids

<http://www.relaxkids.com/21days/21-day-programme.pdf>

- Namaste☆Kids – empower kids through positive thoughts

<http://www.namastekid.com/learn/affirmations-for-children/>

Additional Benefits for Children with Special Needs

Yoga:

- addresses their heightened anxiety, poor motor coordination.
- helps regulate their sensory system.

Yoga strategies can easily be incorporated into daily routines and existing educational goals.

By becoming aware of their bodies and aware of their breathing, yoga provides them with the ability to cope when they start to feel anxious or upset.

This enhanced ability to self-calm will allow the child to learn from and participate in educational and daily routines in a more productive and enjoyable fashion.

<http://omazingkidsllc.com/about/>

Videos to watch great inspiration and ideas

- Sun Dance Kids Yoga

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6B_OaTQm2I

- Fly Like a Butterfly from Radiant Child Yoga

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D700UygonMg>

- A Cosmic Kids Yoga Adventure

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cNjAj_o0SI

Yoga Stories

- We are fascinated by stories. It's an easy way to focus the kids and keep the yoga class interesting.
- A yoga story is especially good with toddlers who really need something concrete to follow
- show them the pictures in a book as you do the poses so that they can connect it all together (the name of the animal, the way it looks, and the corresponding yoga pose).
- Use a book, that has lots of animals in the story or other possible yoga poses, and then do the poses every time you meet an animal or an object in the story.
- You can also retell a story in your own words, or invent a new one, and dramatize it with yoga poses.
- http://rainbowkidsyoga.net/articles/fun_ways.html
- <https://www.kidsyogastories.com/>

Yoga Story



Looking for Okapis (aka Forest Giraffe or Zebra Giraffe)

by Leslie Wilda - Yoga Playgrounds on April 26, 2012 (modified)

Today we are going to play a game of hide and seek with some okapis in the rain forest.

(Share facts about okapis.)

We will start with some RAIN FOREST BREATHS to help us use our sense of smell in the game. Take your index fingers and place them on the tip of your nose and lift your elbows up. As you breathe in through your nose extend your arms wide, pointing your fingers out to your sides. As you breathe out through your mouth bring your fingers back to the tip of your nose, keeping your elbows lifted. (3x)

Now lets practice making our bodies really tall and thin in case we decide to hide behind a tree when its our turn to hide. Breathing in through our noses STRETCH OUR ARMS UP HIGH OVERHEAD and take a few breaths here. Now breathing in again lets lean our bodies to the right like we are swaying with the trees, and breathing out we come back to center. Again breathing in lets lean our bodies to the left....(3x). Keeping your arms up high overhead lets LEAN OUR BODIES FORWARD AND BACKWARD...swaying with the trees.

Now lets practice making our bodies really small and quiet for when it's our turn to hide. MOUNTAIN and then EAGLE (BOTH SIDES)

Let's start looking for the okapi. STANDING LEG LIFTS.

Oh look, I see some leopards (CAT/COW) just waking up. Maybe they can lead us to the okapi.

Shhh, I hear something. Pretend you are a rock (CHILD POSE) Oh, I think it was just the wind. Let's come down on our bellies and peek out from behind the rock to make sure there is nothing dangerous up ahead before we keep looking. (COBRA) Ok, it's safe to keep looking for the okapis. STANDING LEG LIFTS.

Oh, I see a baby giraffe whose neck is stuck in some branches. Let's try to move the branches out of the way. TRIANGLE. Oh, he is really stuck. Let's try again (TRIANGLE OTHER SIDE). Oh, still stuck.

Shhhh....did you hear that strange noise? I don't know what it is. Hide (MOUNTAIN) behind a tree and be very still. Oh, it was just the wind in the trees again.

Oh, there's a baby ELEPHANT stuck in the quicksand. He's waving his trunk calling for help. WIDE LEG FORWARD BEND WITH ALTERNATE ARM LIFTS. Let's see if we can throw a rope out and pull him.

Get ready to throw the rope (WARRIOR 3). Oh, he's getting tired, let's try a bigger rope (WARRIOR 3 OTHER SIDE). Great, we did it, there he goes to join his family. Let's keep looking for the okapi. LEG LIFTS.

I'm getting hungry. Let's climb this banana TREE to get some bananas. I can't reach them. We need to climb higher (TREE OTHER SIDE)

I saw the okapi from the tree. I think they are over there.

Oh, it's really muddy here and I forgot my boots, let's make a (BRIDGE) to walk over. (BRIDGE with LEG LIFTS.) Here we are. Oh, the okapi have fallen asleep. Let's sit for a minute (LOTUS) and admire their beauty. They have been joined by their friends who are all around us... look. (SEATED TWIST BOTH SIDES)

I'm a little tired. Let's take a little rest with them. RECLINED TWISTS
SHIVASANA.

Visualization of a special friend in the bushes, an animal who is hiding but is always there for you to give you friendship, support, encouragement and love.