

Here is What Your Child Can Expect to Learn in the Yoga Class

1. Awareness of the Breath

Breathing exercises can energize children or encourage relaxation, depending on what you teach. Different games and techniques help children connect to how their bodies feel as a result of deep breathing. Focus increases, as does their breathing and lung capacity. Stress is naturally reduced and healthy hormones are released.

2. Strengthening and Energizing

Talking about the different muscles used in poses and incorporating games and sequences will help build strength as well as body awareness and coordination. Bodies that are strong digest food better, maintain a healthy weight and can support the stress of carrying heavy loads, like a backpack. Bodies will also breathe better, work more efficiently, and protect the more fragile joints.

3. Balancing

Balancing poses teach children that with increased focus, you can increase attention naturally, even in children who struggle with different attention challenges. Poses and games focused on balancing skills, develop an intrinsic strength, evoke a meditative feeling, and promote stillness and quieting of the mind. This can help children deal with the stress of living in a chaotic world where constant stimulation is a regular part of life.

4. Stretching and Lengthening

It's great for children to be strong, but a body that's only based on strength has no way to yield under pressure. Strong muscles without accompanying flexibility cannot move quickly, pulling on bones and joints. Yoga poses stretch muscles and through integrating breathing and movement, muscles become warm and become more flexible. They can yield when they need to, and support tender joints in a more functional way.

5. Awareness and Focus

Kids Yoga helps create awareness in the body through deep breathing and movement. It gives children a way to express themselves, build a strong connection between what they hear and what they do. Children that have healthy body awareness are more confident and strong, have better posture, breathe better, and have a sense of quiet strength.

6. Flowing, Connecting and Integrating

When we string poses together, we give children a taste of what it means to move with ease. It also helps them build the awareness that all our movements are a series of coordinated efforts between muscles, bones, joints, and nerves. Older children are more able to isolate different muscle groups and get more sophisticated about movements; things like keeping the arms lifted in Warrior 1, while at the same time, dropping the shoulders to relax them. All these things together increase a child's sense of feeling integrated.

7. Meditation and Relaxation

Yoga is meditative by nature. So whether a child is holding a balancing posture, sitting quietly, or moving through a series of poses, there is going to be a calming, soothing quality. Giving younger children something to do as they rest on their mats will help with their attention, such as suggesting they think of a favorite color or toy. Older kids will find it easier to rest longer with less structure.

8. Maintains Flexibility and Strengthens Growing Bodies

Children are born with an innate flexibility and yoga poses help to prolong this gift. Poses like Warrior 1 and 2 aid in developing strength in their growing muscles and bodies. Strength and flexibility allow for fewer and less-severe injuries, especially when children are engaged in sports and playground activity.

9. Enhances Concentration

In Kids Yoga classes, some poses are fast moving while others are slow paced. This allows children to learn self-control, enhancing their focus and awareness. Moving from one pose to the next takes great attention—a skill that is essential in most learning environments.

10. Increases Self-Esteem

When a child displays great strength, focus, and flexibility in Kids Yoga, it does wonders for their confidence. A successful pose yields poise and power, which leads them to believe in and pursue their true abilities. Success in Kids Yoga grants children the persistence to achieve greatness as they embark on all of life's adventures.

11. Teaches Present Moment Awareness

Yoga philosophy teaches present moment awareness because when our mind is thinking about the past or future, we are missing the most valuable now. When children are engaged, focused, having fun, and following a Kids Yoga lesson, they are in the present moment. Your child can carry this valuable tool throughout their life.

12. Cultivates a Peaceful, Relaxed State of Body and Mind

All yoga classes conclude with quiet time, also known as deep relaxation. Different from napping, this is an all-time favorite for yogis and yoginis of all ages. Called the "Resting Pose," children relish lying on their backs in quiet, peaceful stillness, sometimes with music or guided visualization. Even if just for three minutes, children learn to understand the importance of this peace and can carry it with them into their daily lives.

13. Gives Tools for Stress Management

Practicing Kids Yoga provides children an immediate outlet to reduce stress in a safe and nurturing environment. It is a physical exercise that produces happy endorphins. While breathing exercises slow down the heart rate, relaxation techniques are powerful sources for calming the mind and the body. Kids Yoga teaches non-judgment and non-competition toward oneself and one another. These are all tools that a child can carry into any difficult life situation.

14. Sparks Creativity in Ripe Imaginations

Kids Yoga classes often infuse themes that are fun and engaging like "A Trip to the Beach" or "Jungle Safari." When children are allowed the opportunity make up their own yoga poses to fit with the theme and express their experiences throughout the class, it inspires them to be free, creative, and self-expressive. Not only is this playful and fun, but it invites the child to tap into their own creativity and use their boundless imaginations without judgment.

15. Encourages Kind Peer and Social Interactions

Kids Yoga teaches children that we are all the same inside, despite our outward appearance, race, and religion. We all have bodies that function, hearts that love, and feelings that feel. Partner yoga poses allow children to fully understand this concept of oneness by working together. Kids Yoga inspires children to be kind, patient, accepting, and empathetic with themselves and their peers.

16. Enhances Body Awareness

Kids Yoga poses vary from balancing, strengthening, twisting, back bending, and inverting. All of these poses have the ability to teach a child about their body. Kids Yoga teaches children to listen to where in their bodies they feel a movement and express how it makes them feel when they are complete. Body awareness is an invaluable tool for all stages and ages of life.

17. Teaches Discipline and Responsibility

Yoga is not a destination; rather it is a journey of a lifetime, which takes discipline. Ideally, when children learn at a young age the benefit of a committed practice, it ripples out into their everyday life activities, relationships, and responsibilities. When they learn that yoga takes practice versus an immediate accomplishment, they learn and accept that life is a path with good days, bad days, and everything in between.

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