Teaching Yoga for the Whole Family

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Jen owns and directs Breathing Space, a children’s and family yoga and wellness program in Washington DC. Jen has been teaching yoga to children and families since 2008. She is a teacher trainer for the ChildLight Education Company and co-creator of their Baby & Toddler Teacher Training. Jen also works with expecting and new parents as a prenatal yoga instructor, international board certified lactation consultant (IBCLC), and through her volunteer work as a La Leche League leader.

What is Yoga?

• Yoga is union
  • Union of mind, body, spirit

What Do Children Need?

• space to move and explore their environment (exercise and sensory input),
• lots of face time and social interaction (social-emotional learning)
• and physical contact (touch) with caregivers, and
• lots of movement (vestibular and proprioceptive stimulation).

Why yoga for children?

• Sensory development
• Language development
• Body awareness
• Socialization
• Emotional intelligence
• Gross motor skills
• Strength

Strength & Gross Motor Skills
Sensory Input

Simultaneous Sensory Systems

Language Development

Singing in Yoga and Language & Brain Development

Signing and sing-song rhyme is an integral part of baby and children's yoga. Why?

- It is Engaging!
- Singing stimulates more of the brain than speaking alone
- Singing helps children learn
- Singing encourages breath
- Singing slows adults down and communicates the pace

Vestibular and Proprioceptive Input

Sing-Song with Vestibular Movement in Baby Yoga

https://youtu.be/Fxsq_IrAr3s

https://youtu.be/6bX-GT5vkFM
Sing-Song with Vestibular Movement in Kids Yoga

https://youtu.be/cB6JKNKvtRMA

- Do My Best, Childlight Yoga / Yoga 4 Classrooms

Body Awareness

Fine Motor Skills

Socialization & Community

Bonding with Parent or Caregiver

Fun
Benefits of Family Yoga for Parents

To become a parent is to be overwhelmed. By intense love and the instinct to protect. By the sheer demands of a small child 24/7. Suddenly you’re someone’s mother or father. It changes everything. Forever.

Parent advice books tell you how you should act. Calm and confident. What they don’t teach you is how to calm down and feel confident. They tell you 100 different ways to “get your child to sleep through the night.” But they don’t teach you how to know deep in your bones what’s right for you and your child tonight.

- Alison Rogers, Ed.D. LPC, RYT, theyogaofparenting.com

Feeling closer to your child
Gaining a deeper understanding of your child’s behavior and learning style
Providing an enjoyable opportunity for you to spend one-to-one time with your child
Feeling the relaxing effects of moving, singing, and breathing with your child
Increased confidence in your ability to care for and nurture your child
Learning a life-long parenting skill

Yoga for Families & Children Ages and Stages

- Prenatal & Postnatal Yoga
  Yoga postures, breath, mindfulness exercises, meditation, and philosophy for the adult in the context of the major physical and life transition of birth and early parenting. Babies may be present for postnatal yoga, but they are not the focus of the class.

- Baby Yoga
  Yoga-inspired postures, movements, activities, rhymes and songs for baby. Emphasis is on parent and child bonding and shared activities. Often incorporates some physical or breath and mindfulness exercises for adult participants but that is not the focus of the class.

- Tot & Toddler Yoga
  Yoga-inspired postures, activities, rhymes and songs for toddler and mobile baby. Emphasis is on parent and child bonding.

- Preschooler Yoga
  A yoga class for children from about 2-4 yrs OR that same age in a school setting.

- Yoga & Mindfulness for Children 3-9 yrs
  incorporates yoga postures, movement activities and games, partner poses, breath and mindfulness exercises, concentration, philosophy, relaxation and visualization.

- Family Yoga 3-9 yrs
  similar but with an emphasis on partner activities and family connection.

https://youtu.be/dlJLNiy8NLk

Yoga for Families & Children Ages and Stages

- Preschooler Yoga
  for families with children from about 2-4 yrs OR that same age in a school setting.

- Family Yoga 3-9 yrs
  similar but with an emphasis on partner activities and family connection.

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Yoga for Families & Children
Ages and Stages

- Yoga & Mindfulness for Tweens 9-12 yrs
  similar to younger ages in structure, but with less pretend play and more complex sequences, postures, and games. Almost always child-only.

- Yoga & Mindfulness for Teens 12-16 yrs
  similar to tweens but with more sophisticated breath, mindfulness, and concentration work.

What skills do you need to teach children’s and family yoga?

- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Mindfulness
- Yoga knowledge (hatha)
- Specialized training?

Challenges?

Explore More

ChildLight Education Company
https://childlightyoga.com/teacher-training

National Kids Yoga Conference
https://conference.yokid.org/conference-blog/
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