

Body Awareness

Yoga promotes physical strength because kids learn to use their muscles in new ways, thus helping a child become aware of their body and how it moves.



Body Awareness

Balance is a very important component of Yoga poses. Balance poses can help to improve stance, attention, physical stability, and patience.

Balance poses can be adapted to suit children of all abilities and cognitive levels.



Body Awareness



While many children may not be able to stand on one foot right away, an attentive instructor will encourage a child who falls, to try again.

Modeling appropriate reaction to disappointment, caregivers will be able to teach children the importance of perseverance.

Body Awareness

Physical confidence and growth in dexterity will eventually lead to a strong sense of accomplishment.



Safety



Depending on who you speak to, the opinion on children practicing yoga can vary greatly. Most practitioners will agree that, when done correctly, yoga has been shown to benefit children in many ways.

However, you should always get permission from the parents of the children in your care, before beginning a yoga training program.

Safety

As a general rule, yoga with children should always consist of short and gentle movements. Encourage children to only do poses that they are comfortable with, and that do not encourage strain or hyperextension.



Safety

The [American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons](#), “believes the rewards of basic yoga outweigh the potential physical risks, as long as you take caution and perform the exercises in moderation, according to your individual flexibility level”.

Safety

To help keep children safe, here are some safety tips from [Baby GooRoo](#) that should always be followed.



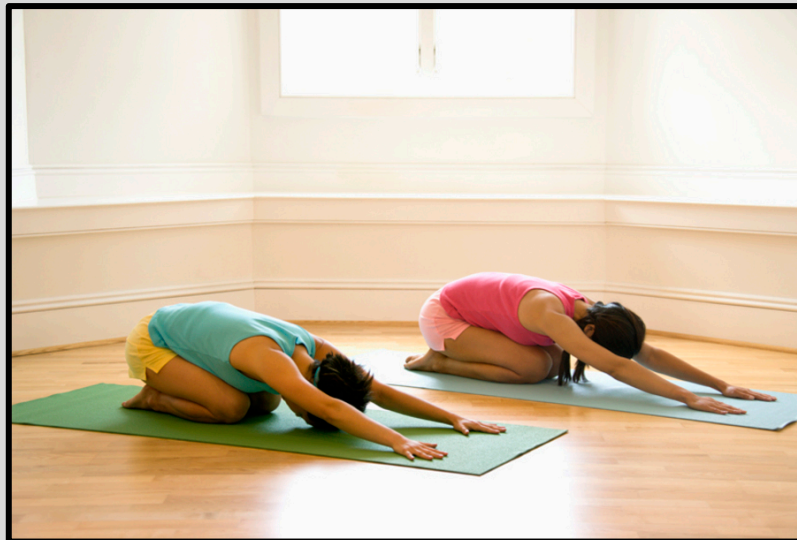
Safety

Safety Tips

1. Find a safe and appropriate place for children to practice yoga.
2. Provide your child with a proper yoga mat to prevent slips.
3. Allow your child to digest snacks or meals before starting a yoga class.
4. Don't overdo it. Children should keep their movements slow and avoid forcing poses or extended stretches.
5. Inverted poses, which involve extending the legs above the heart or head, should be avoided.
6. Most importantly, look for instructors specially trained to teach yoga to children.

Setting the Scene

When preparing your location for a yoga session, it is important to offer lots of space between the children, with no obstacles in the vicinity that may cause them to stumble or fall.



Setting the Scene



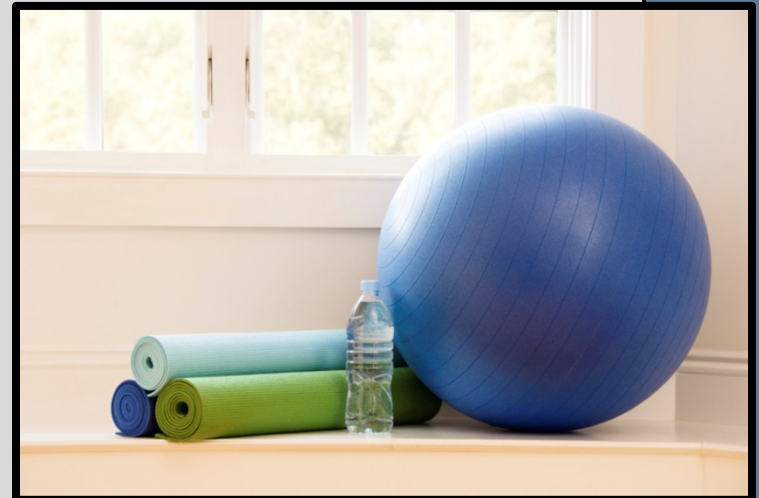
Yoga can be done outside, as long as caregivers prepare the children for weather (i.e. sunscreen for sunny days, or sweaters on cooler days).

Setting the Scene

Yoga is most successful when preformed on a yoga mat, because the mat offers a good grip (traction) and a small amount of cushioning

Towels or bathmats can be used in a pinch, but do not offer the traction of a yoga mat.

Inexpensive yoga mats can usually be found online or at discount home supply stores.



Setting the Scene



It is important to remain calm, and use a soft voice while working with children regarding yoga. The children will mirror your behavior.

Do not expect children to effectively participate in yoga after coming in from strenuous playing. They will need to be transitioned into the setting.

Setting the Scene

Allow them time to explore the scene you have established for them, then ask them to begin with a simple warm up.

We have included several tutorial videos to aid in the teaching of yoga to children. You may also want to create your own yoga plan, once you discover what works best for your class.



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