

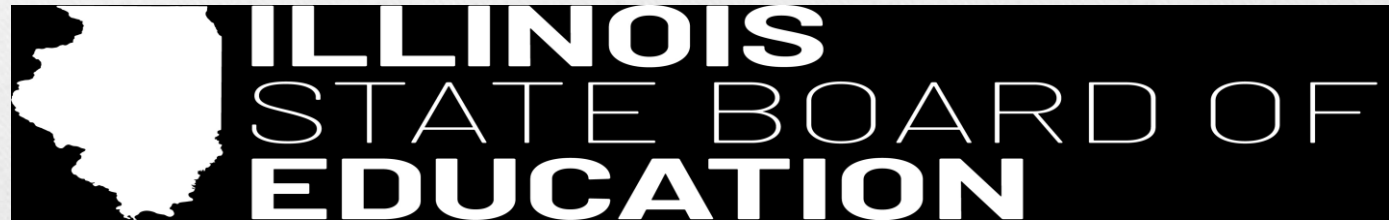
A photograph of a classroom with several blue yoga mats laid out on a light-colored wooden floor. In the background, there are two large windows with black frames. The text is overlaid on the image.

Classroom Mindfulness & Yoga

Enhancing Regulation and De-escalation
for a Calmer Learning Environment

Classroom Mindfulness & Yoga

Presented by: Dr. Jerrah Henson
3-5-25



About the BAT project

The Special Education Behavior Assessment Training (BAT) project provides comprehensive, professional learning for special education personnel on culturally responsive Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) practices, Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), and Positive Interventions and Behavior Supports for students across all grade levels through monthly webinars, an annual regional conference, technical assistance library including archived webinars and other materials and online training modules.

The BAT Project will provide tiered professional development and technical assistance to school districts and special education cooperatives requesting assistance on FBAs, BIPS, and Positive Interventions and Behavioral Supports. Priority will be given to districts identified with a disproportionate rate of suspension and expulsion for students with disabilities. State-level guidelines are currently being developed, per 105 ILCS5/14-8.05, to address culturally responsive, evidence-based behavior interventions for students across all grade levels.

This project is funded by the Illinois State Board of Education through an IDEA Part B Federal Grant.



Agenda

- What is Mindfulness?
- Mindfulness in Management
- Mindful Breathing
- Mindful Movements
- Research

Introduction to Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is the practice of bringing one's attention to the present moment with curiosity and without judgment.
- Purpose in Schools:
 - fosters emotional regulation
 - enhances focus
 - promotes a supportive learning atmosphere

Making Mindfulness Student Friendly



Keep It Simple

Paying FULL attention to what you are doing or feeling in the moment

- Notice how the sun feels on your skin, taste of food, body feels when running



Engage with Questions

Pose thought provoking questions

- How did it feel when you bit into that apple? What did you notice when you were playing outside?



Keep it fun with “Mindful Moments”



Empower Students

Teach students that practicing mindfulness allows us to understand our bodies and feeling better. It also makes our school and home life easier.



Use Fun and Engaging Resources

Additional Resource

 Meditate

 Sleep

 Music

 For Work

 Wisdom

 Calm Kids

 Movement

 Profile

Calm Kids

Mindfulness Programs for Kids

5 min



I'm Okay!

The PAW Patrol

3 min



Preparing for a Mission

The PAW Patrol

3 min



Dig Out of It

The PAW Patrol

5 min



Breathe Like the Ocean with Moana

Moana

 Let Your Light Shine with Tiana
TIANA

0:32  7:43



Mindfulness Matters



Enhancing Self-Regulation

Manages stress, reducing impulsive reactions and fosters patience



De-escalation Techniques

Regular mindfulness practice provides tools for students and teachers to de-escalate conflicts and maintain a calm environment.



Creating a Calming Learning Space

Classrooms become more conducive to learning, students feel safe, centered, and ready to engage.



You Matter

- You won't always be a priority to others, and that's why you need to be a priority to yourself. Learn to respect yourself, take care of yourself, and become your own support system. Your needs matter. Start meeting them. Don't wait for others to choose you.

Choose yourself today.

Mindfulness: Impact on Teachers



Wellbeing



Mental health



Social and emotional capacity



Teaching effectiveness



Classroom management and calmer and more focused classroom environments.



Physical health

Lead with Love: The Role of Mindfulness in Education

- Modeling Calmness
- Fostering Patience & Understanding
- Creating Focused Atmosphere
- Responding, Not Reacting

Mindfulness: Impact on Students

- Reducing Anxiety & Stress
- Enhancing Cognition and Learning
- Supporting Social Emotional Learning



Mindfulness:

Improved Concentration in the Classroom

Present Moment Awareness

- Mindfulness trains students to focus on the present, reducing distractions and improving attention during lessons.

Reduced Stress & Anxiety

- Regular mindfulness practice lowers stress, leading to a calmer mind that can better concentrate on tasks.

Strengthened Cognitive Skills

- Mindfulness exercises, like deep breathing and guided meditation, enhance memory retention and mental clarity.

Improved Classroom Engagement

- With better focus and reduced impulsivity, students participate more actively and stay engaged for longer periods.

Mindfulness: Building Connections in the Classroom

- Mindfulness Strengthens Social Connections:
 - **Enhanced Empathy:** Mindfulness practices encourage students to be more aware of their own emotions and those of others, fostering empathy and understanding.
 - **Improved Communication:** By being present, students listen more effectively and respond thoughtfully, leading to better peer interactions.
 - **Reduced Conflicts:** Mindfulness helps students manage their emotions, leading to fewer conflicts and more harmonious relationships in the classroom.
 - **Increased Sense of Community:** A mindful classroom promotes a sense of belonging, where students feel connected and supported by their peers and teachers.

Tier 1: Mindfulness Prevention Strategies

- Teach Regulation Strategies for Students
 - Implement practices during a calm time
 - Practices include mindfulness deep breathing, muscle relaxing movements
- Gather Data
 - Emotional Scales, such as a 0-10 “feelings thermometer,” can be used to teach students to rate their feelings/stress/anxiety and prompt coping and relaxation strategies.

Effective Classroom Management



PROMOTING SELF-
REGULATION



DE-ESCALATION
TECHNIQUES



CONSISTENT
ROUTINES



EMPOWERING
STUDENT
RESPONSIBILITY

Mindfulness in Classroom Management: Cultivating a Positive Environment

Establish	Establish clear expectations
Respond	Respond Mindfully
Identify	Identify Opportunities
Validate	Validate Progress
Empower	Empower Transformation

Establish Clear Expectations



HOW TO BEGIN
CLASS?



CLASS
ROUTINES



CLASS
ENGAGEMENT

The background of the slide is a dark teal color, overlaid with a pattern of numerous speech bubbles. Each bubble is a different color (red, yellow, purple, grey) and contains a large, dark blue question mark. The bubbles are scattered across the entire slide, creating a textured, questioning effect.

Responding Mindfully

- Pause Before Reacting
 - Take a moment to breathe and assess the situation before responding to student behavior, ensuring reactions are calm and constructive.
- Address with Compassion
 - Approach challenges with empathy, seeking to understand the underlying causes of behavior rather than simply correcting it.

Identifying Opportunities



FIND TEACHABLE
MOMENTS



ENCOURAGE
REFLECTION

Validate Progress



ACKNOWLEDGE
GROWTH



PROVIDE
CONSTRUCTIVE
FEEDBACK



Empowering Transformation

- Foster Independence
 - Student take ownership of their learning and behavior, guiding them to become self-regulated and responsible.
- Support Personal Growth
 - Create a classroom culture that empowers students to transform challenges into opportunities for personal and academic development.



Centering Students for a Positive Start



Attitude of Gratitude

Share 2 things you are thankful for today

- Out with the old & in with the new
- What are limiting beliefs students have?
- Cultivate Empowering Beliefs in your students

- Out with the old & in with the new
- What are limiting beliefs students have?
- Cultivate Empowering Beliefs in your students

YOU ARE

Positive Affirmations

enough

Affirmation Based Activities

- Morning Affirmations
 - Affirmation Journals
 - Affirmation Walls
-
- 2-3 times a week
 - 10 Minutes of Mindfulness Activity
 - 5 Minutes of Reflection



I am resourceful. I am thoughtful.
I am smart. I am funny.
I am honest. I am ambitious.
I am dedicated. I am creative.
I am resilient. I am warm.
I am skilled at all sorts of things.
I am driven by integrity and values.
I am a good mother.



Personalized Affirmations

- Math
 - “I am good at solving problems.”
- Anxious
 - “I stay calm and focused in all situations.”
- Teacher Model
 - “Today, I am focusing on patience and kindness.”
 - “I believe we can ALL learn something new today.”



Consistent Reinforcement and Review

Regular Practice

- Class-wide Activities
- Individual Check-ins

Tie Progress to Goals

- In the BIP, track the student's use of mindfulness and affirmations alongside their progress on behavioral goals.

Teacher and Staff Modeling

Tier 2 & Tier 3 Intervention

I am ready to
work hard.

_____ 's Home Daily Sticker Sheet

If I meet my goals, I can _____

_____ Daily _____ Weekly

My weekly goal is to earn _____ stickers for the whole week

MONDAY

I made my goal(s) at _____ Home: _____

TUESDAY

I made my goal(s) at _____ Home: _____

WEDNESDAY

I made my goal(s) at _____ Home: _____

THURSDAY

I made my goal(s) at _____ Home: _____

FRIDAY

I made my goal(s) at _____ Home: _____

Did I make my goal of _____ stickers?

Did I make my goal of _____ stickers?

Did I make my goal of _____ stickers?

Did I make my goal of _____ stickers?

Did I make my goal of _____ stickers?

Did I make my goal of _____ stickers?

Check-In Check-Out
CICO

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Event Frequency Data Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Behavior: _____

Time	Behavior
8:00 - 8:30	
8:30 - 9:00	
9:00 - 10:00	
10:00 - 10:30	
10:30 - 11:00	
11:00 - 11:30	
11:30 - 12:00	
12:00 - 12:30	
12:30 - 1:00	
1:00 - 1:30	
1:30 - 2:00	
2:00 - 2:30	
2:30 - 3:00	
3:00 - 3:30	
Total Incidents	
Total time minute/hour/day Time Interval (circle one)	
Rate Per minute/hour/day Time Interval (circle one)	

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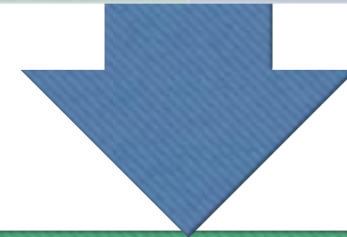
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Affirmations
& FBA/BIP
Identify
Target
Behaviors
from the
FBA

FBA – identifies specific behaviors that are impeding a student's success in school, as well as the triggers and consequences maintaining those behaviors.

Attention-
Seeking

Avoidance



Based on the results of the FBA, affirmations should be designed to address the emotional needs underlying these behaviors

Affirmations Aligned with the BIP

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) – replaces negative or disruptive behaviors with positive, productive ones. Affirmations can be crafted to support these new behaviors by encouraging a mindset shift.



Each affirmations should:

Build Confidence

Regulate Emotions

Enable students to respond positively in situations that would previously trigger problem behaviors

Affirmations Tied to Behavioral Goals

Emotional Regulation

- “I am calm, even when I feel upset.”

Attention and Focus

- “I can focus my mind and stay on task.”

Task Completion

- “I learn best when I listen and follow directions.”

Task Avoidance

- “I can ask for help when I don’t understand something.”



Affirmation Case Studies

Case Scenario: ADHD Impulsivity



FBA Conclusion: Student acts out impulsively in class when frustrated or bored.



BIP Goal: Student will raise their hand and wait to be called on before speaking.



Mindfulness Affirmations:

“I take a deep breath and think before I speak.”

“I have the power to pause and choose how I respond.”


“I am patient and can wait my turn.”

Case
Scenario:
Task
Avoidance
(Common in
Anxiety or
Learning
Disabilities)

FBA Conclusion: Student avoids difficult tasks by shutting down or distracting others.



BIP Goal: The student will engage with challenging tasks for a set period before requesting help.



Mindfulness Affirmations:

"I can try hard things, even when they feel tough."

"I am capable of learning new things, one step at a time."

"I stay calm and focused, even when I don't know the answer."

Case
Scenario:
Attention
Seeking
Behaviors
(Oppositional
Defiance or
Conduct
Disorders)



FBA Conclusion: Student disrupts class to gain peer or teacher attention.



BIP Goal: Student will use positive, appropriate ways to seek attention (e.g., asking for help or engaging with peers constructively)



Mindfulness
Affirmations:

“I can ask for attention in kind and respectful ways.”

“I am noticed and valued for my positive actions.”

“I show my strengths by listening and being kind to others.”

Case Scenario: Emotional Outbursts (Emotional Regulation Disorders)



FBA Conclusion: The student has an emotional outburst when overwhelmed or upset.



BIP Goal: Student will use calming strategies like deep breathing or taking a break before reacting.



Mindfulness Affirmations:

“I am in control of my feeling, and I can stay calm.”

“I can choose to breathe deeply and feel better.”

“I am safe, and I can handle this feeling.”



Incorporate Mindfulness in the Classroom

Just Breathe!

Welcome to Yoga Class!

Guided by M 4 years old



Morning Breathing Exercises for a Focused Start

- Deep Belly Breathing
- 4-7-8 Breathing
- Alternate Nostril Breathing
- Box Breathing (4x4x4x4)
- Student Breathing Cues:
 - Breathe in like you are smelling a flower.
 - Breathe out like you are blowing out a candle.



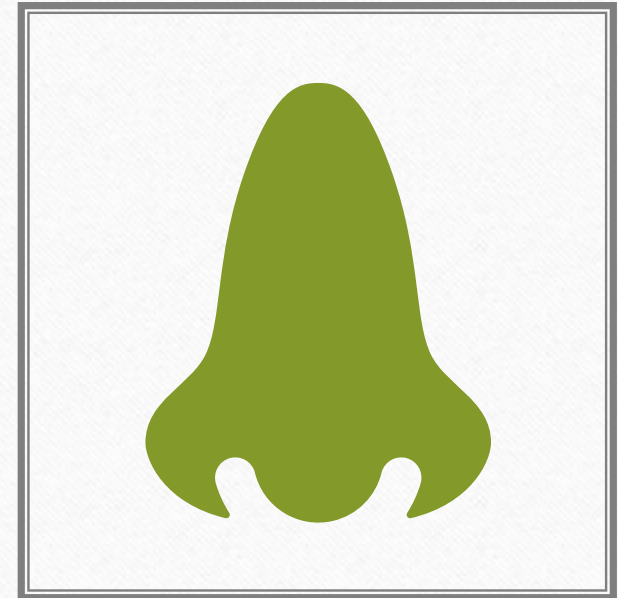


Deep Belly Breathing

1. Sit comfortably with their hands on their bellies.
 2. Inhale deeply through the nose, filling the belly with air.
 3. Exhale slowly through the mouth, feeling the belly contract.
- Benefits: Reduces stress, increases oxygen flow to the brain, and promotes a calm, focused mindset.

4 – 7 – 8 Breathing

1. Inhale quietly through the nose for 4 counts
 2. Hold the breath for 7 counts
 3. Exhale completely through the mouth for 8 counts
- Benefits: Balances the nervous system, improves focus, and sets a peaceful tone for the day.



01

Use the thumb to close the right nostril and inhale through the left.

02

Close the left nostril with the ring finger, open the right nostril and exhale through the right.

03

Inhale through the right nostril, close it, and exhale through the left.

Benefits: Enhances concentration, balances energy levels, and reduces anxiety.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

Box Breathing (4x4x4x4)

Inhale through the
nose for 4 counts

Hold the breath for 4
counts

Exhale through the
mouth for 4 counts

Hold the breath again
for 4 counts

Benefits: Calms the
mind, improves
emotional control, and
prepares students for
focused learning.

Calm Resource

Breathe Like the Ocean with Moana

Follow along as Moana shares a simple breathing exercise to feel more peaceful and calm.



Moana

Breathe Like the Ocean with Moana

5m



Breathe Like the Ocean with Moana

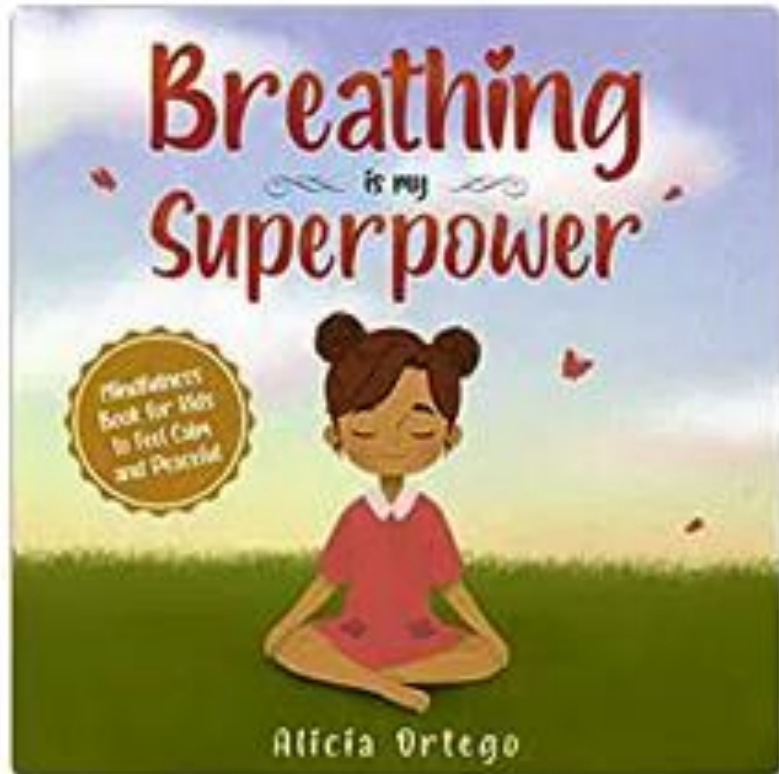
NA

0:52



5:34

- https://www.calm.com/app/program/Lc7u5140ip?utm_campaign=disney100&utm_medium=organic&utm_source=blog



Breathing is My Superpower

- This book is an excellent aid for both parents and educators looking to teach children the power of mindful breathing.
- It presents different breathing techniques to help children regain control of emotions when faced with challenging situations.
- Beautifully illustrated, this book is suited for children up to 12.

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08L3XC8H3/>



Mindful Movements

Tier 1: Yoga in the Classroom

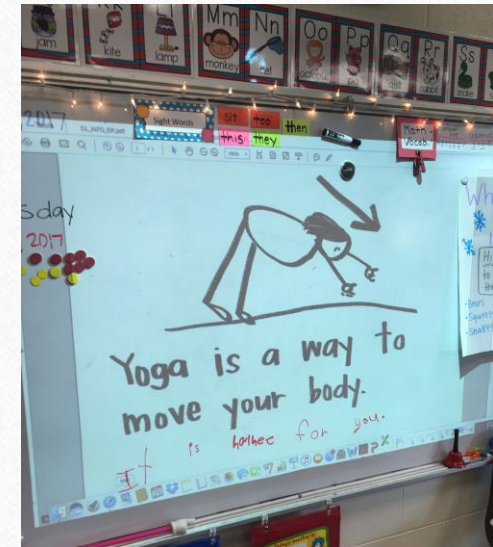
Kids Yoga

Kids' yoga can help students become more aware of their physical, mental and emotional state.



Benefits of Teaching Yoga in Schools

- Improved emotional regulation.
- Better awareness of their thoughts, feelings and actions.
- Improved behavior.
- Improved concentration.
- Improved physical fitness.
- Improvements in connecting with others.



Classroom Practices

- Morning Meetings
 - Starting with
 - Mediations
 - Movements

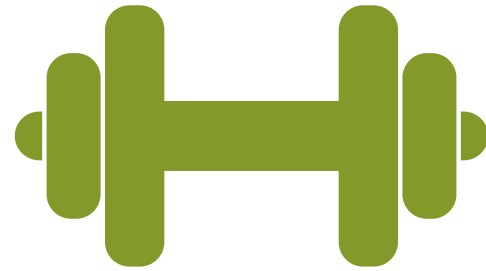


2 Year Old Yogi

Shoulder Rolls

A hand is shown from the bottom, reaching upwards with fingers slightly spread. The background is a bright, hazy sky with a sun visible in the upper center, creating a lens flare effect. A white rectangular box with a thin green border is centered in the upper half of the image. The text "Sun Breathing" is written in a white serif font inside this box. Two dark horizontal bars, one on the left and one on the right, appear to hold the box in place.

Sun Breathing



Side Stretches

Seated Cat & Cow Pose





Mountain Pose

- Stand tall like a tree with your shoulders back, palms facing up.
- *Extension:* Ask children to raise their hands above their head parallel to their ears with palms open.

Tree Pose

- Stand tall like a tree, make a bike stand with one of your feet, and place your hands by your heart.
- *Extension:* More flexible children can extend their leg up to their thigh and raise their hands above their head (similar to mountain pose extension).



Warrior Pose

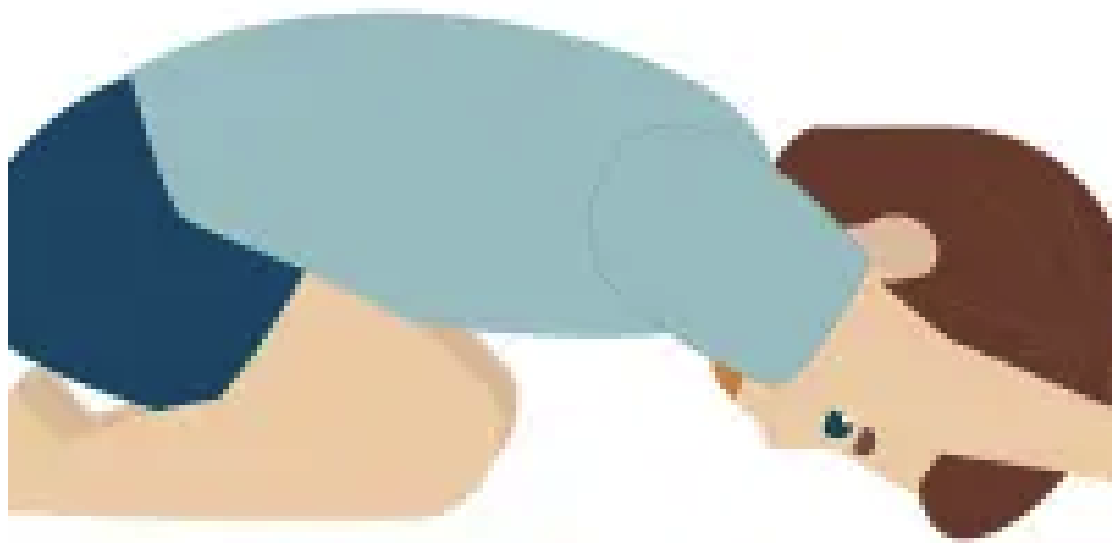
- Move into a runner's lunge. Turn your front foot forward like you are running and press both hands together over your head.
- *Extension:* Spread arms parallel at their sides like a plane.



Cat/Cow Pose

- Get down on all fours like a baby who is learning to crawl. Tuck your head in between your arms and lift your spine up like a cat waiting to pounce.
- *Extension:* Get children to lift their heads and lift their bottom up.

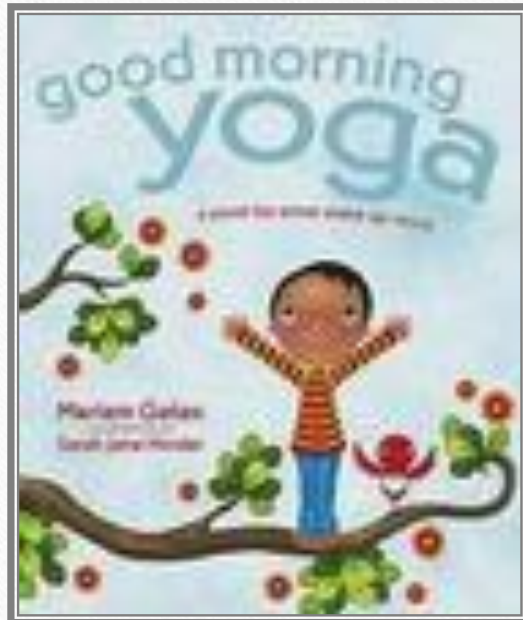




Child's Pose

- Lower down to the floor and put your arms and legs in a table position. Push your arms forward as far as you can with your arms straight and relax.

Yoga Literature



- Amazon – Good Morning Yoga
- https://www.amazon.com/s?k=good+morning+yoga+book&adgrpid=1341404749958122&hvadid=83837867901550&hvbmt=be&hvdev=c&hvlocphy=47567&hvnetw=o&hvqmt=e&hvtargid=kwd83838140894222%3Aloc190&hydadcr=15522_10461004&mssclkid=575dd29535e11531dcb5b44b5d384bfc&tag=mh0b-20&ref=pd_sl_93wddjizwz_e

e yoga
ar Meddy Teddy

kids yoga

Meddy Teddy Plus Additional Resources

Shop
<https://www.meddyteddy.com/>

Instagram @summerperez

Instagram @miniyoga

Meddy Teddy on the Mat

4 Year Yoga Student



Calm Movements for Kids

Additional Resources

ow Movement

ion • Emiko Susilo

Daily Move

Movement • Mel Mah

Kids: Building Confidence

Daily Move

Movement • Mel Mah

Kids: Working Out The Wiggles

Daily Move

Movement • Mel Mah

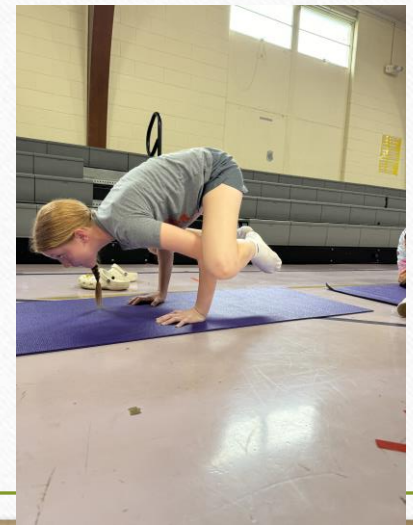
Kids: Bedtime Routine

- <https://www.calm.com/app/class/calm-kids-movement>

Yoga Club

- School Wide
 - Individual Classrooms
 - PE Classes

Kids Yoga in Action





Kids Yoga: Mindful Movements



Kids Partner Yoga

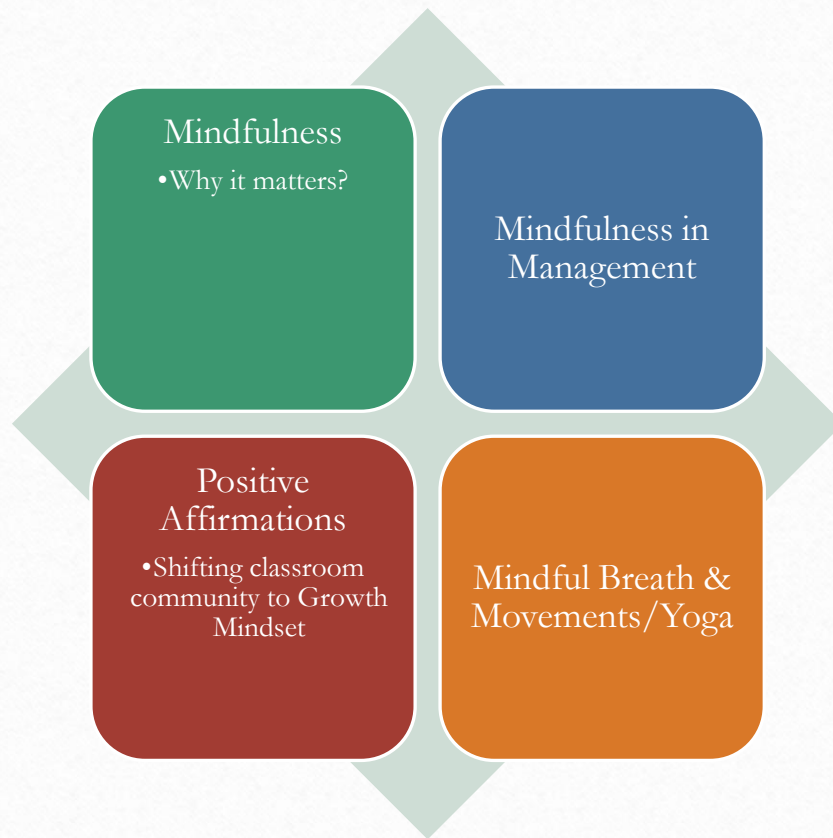


Ditch Detention for Yoga

- Reflection Yoga
 - Tiered Interventions
 - Students in Tier 2/3 Supports

Mindfulness to Curb Discipline Problems

- Step 1 Cool Down Room
 - Objective: Learning Breathing Exercises & Adult Mediation
- Step 2 Mindful Movement Room
 - Objective: Breathing & Movements
- Step 3 Reflection Yoga – Or – Deep Breathing after 3pm
 - After School Class
- Other students wanting to practice yoga had the option of a yoga club.



Learning
Check-In



When do we do this?

When do you NOT do this?

It's a classroom lifestyle.

When
would you
use
Mindful
Movement
in your
classroom?



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Research Behind Classroom Yoga

Improved Concentration and Memory

Respect for Peers and Others

Self Regulation

Self Confidence

Feeling of well being

Improved Mental, Social, and & Physical Well-being

Mindfulness Research in Classrooms

- **Increased Student On-Task Behaviors** combined with traditional management (Kasson & Wilson, 2017)
 - Behavioral treatment alone increased on-task behaviors to 66% of students compared to baseline; however, **83% of students increased and sustained high rates of on-task behaviors when mindfulness exercises were added to the behavior analytic techniques.**

Behav Anal Pract. 2017 Sep; 10(3): 242–251. Published online 2016 Dec 12.
doi: 10.1007/s40617-016-0160-x

Yoga Research

- Yoga and mindfulness have been shown to **improve both physical and mental health in school-age children (ages 6 to 12)**.
 - Yoga improves balance, strength, endurance, and aerobic capacity in children.
 - A growing body of research has already shown that yoga can improve focus, memory, self-esteem, academic performance, and classroom behavior, and can even reduce anxiety and stress in children.

Yoga and ADHD Research

- Emerging research studies also suggest that yoga can help children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) by **improving the core symptoms of ADHD**, including **inattentiveness, hyperactivity, and impulsivity**.
- It can also boost **school performance** in children with ADHD.

Mental Health and Yoga Research Findings

- Improvements that are significant to classroom settings include improved outcomes in **behavior, stress reduction, and emotional balance**.
- Butzer et al. (2015) reported improvements in second- and third-graders' behavior, specifically in **attention span** and the **ability to focus on work and stay on task**. They also noted improvements in social-emotional learning.
- Chen and Pauwels (2014) proved that daily yoga practice **improved student mental, social, and physical wellbeing**.

Classroom Yoga Findings

- These emotional indicators suggest that students who practice yoga may feel **less stressed** and **more resilient** when confronted with stressful situations.
- Overall, yoga was found to be an excellent remedy for **reducing negative emotions and distress** in children.
- Last, Telles et al. (2019) studied adolescents between the ages of 11 and 15 as they engaged in an 18-minute pranayama yoga intervention for three days. Even though the intervention time was short, there was significant improvement noted in **attention and general anxiety reduction**. **These results indicated that yoga helps promote overall emotional balance.**

Let's Recap!



WHAT IS
MINDFULNESS?



MINDFULNESS
MANAGEMENT



POSITIVE
AFFIRMATIONS

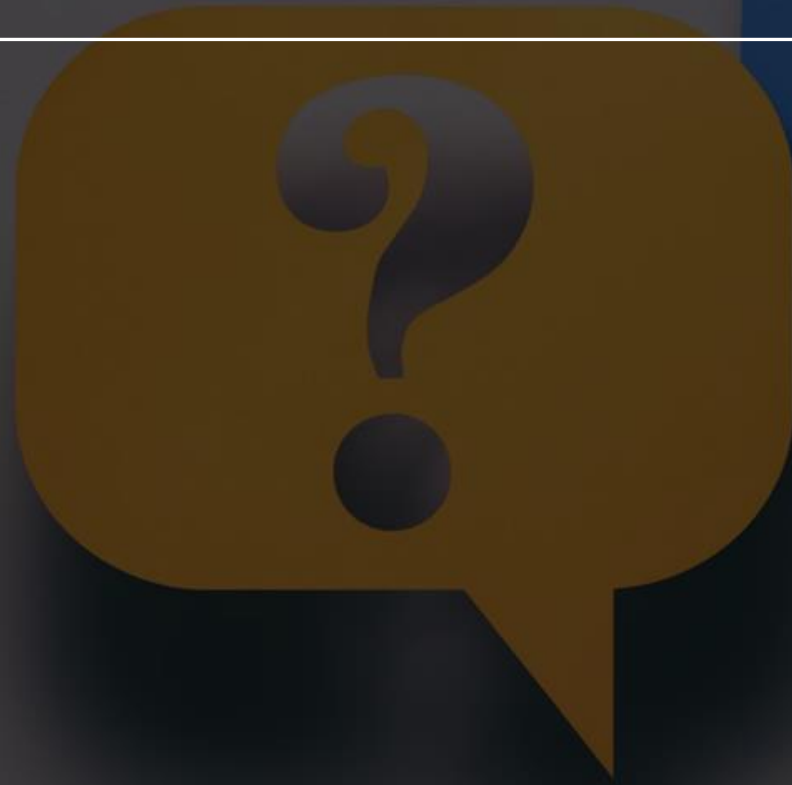


MINDFUL
MOVEMENTS –
YOGA



RESEARCH
FROM THE
CLASSROOM

Questions & Comments



Exit Survey
Thank you!

