

Yoga Breathing

Overview:

Yoga helps kids develop physical strength, balance and flexibility. It also improves concentration and self-control and gives kids lifelong tools for managing stress and emotions. Just as with adults, yoga can bring a sense of calm and balance to a child's busy day. Over time yoga can also improve body awareness and boost self-esteem. All in all, yoga combines all the best principles of health literacy. The physical activity of yoga increases the body's core strength. Doing yoga in a group setting provides the opportunity to improve social skills. And the mental/emotional benefits of yoga include increased coping skills and reduced stress. Yoga breathing is a lifelong skill that can be used anytime, anywhere. The theme of breathing in and breathing out helps keep minds, bodies and emotions in balance.

Grades K- 2 BALLOON BREATHING, PART 1

- Sit on the floor "pretzel style," with knees bent and ankles crossed.
- Imagine your body is a balloon. Pick a color of balloon, but don't tell anyone. Just quietly picture this in your mind.
- Place your hands around your belly button. Breathe in through your nose, slowly and deeply, so that your lower belly expands like a balloon. Count to 5 while you breathe in.
- Now breathe out through your nose and feel your belly deflate. Count to 5 while you breathe out.
- Repeat several times.

BALLOON BREATHING, PART 2

Before beginning this activity, blow up a balloon and release it so it twists and flutters in the air. Ask kids to observe the movement of the balloon as it inflates and deflates.

- Squat on the floor with your rear end perched just a few inches above your feet.
- Imagine your body is a balloon, any color.
- Hug your knees tight while breathing out. Squeeze all the air out of your "balloon."
- Now breathe in as you stand up, and stretch your hands high over your head, slowly filling your balloon (body) with lots of air.
- Now imagine you've been untied, or pricked by a tree branch or bumble bee. You slowly breathe out as you slowly deflate, twirling and fluttering in slow motion until you flop on the floor.
- Rest for 30 seconds and repeat.