

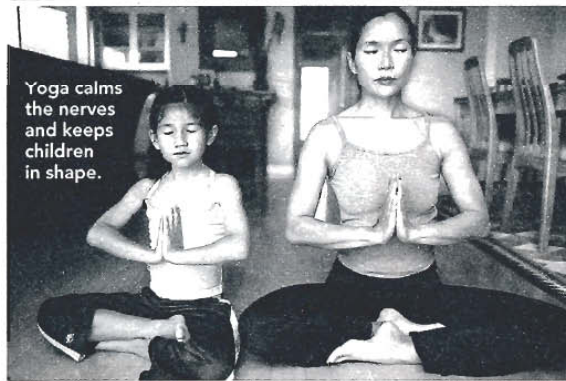
Parade's Guide To

Better Fitness®



By Michael O'Shea

Q Is yoga appropriate for children?



With the right modifications, yoga helps children “develop strong, limber and healthy bodies as well as foster imagination, increase attention span and cultivate self-esteem,” says

Marsha Wenig, author of *Yoga-Kids*. While adult yoga involves sustained poses combined with focused breathing, children are better

off doing a variety of poses without holding them.

“Many people teach yoga to children as if they were mini-adults,” says Wenig, “but their requirements are different—their physical bodies, growth rates and metabolism vary.”

Most successful kids’ programs alter the names of the poses and shed the spiritu-

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The mind-body link of yoga helps kids manage stress.

ality in favor of reinforcing the mind-body connection of yoga. The goals are to develop balance, strength and an awareness of one’s body.

Schools across the nation are making yoga a part of

their phys-ed curriculum. “I don’t stress getting into a pose as much as I stress students trying their best,” says Georgina O’Farrill, a teacher

in the Yoga Ed program at the Accelerated School in South Central L.A. The 50-minute classes emphasize forward bends, twisting movements, inversions and breathwork. “I see students use their yoga breathing during tests when they are stressed or throughout the day when they get upset. It helps them relax and focus.”

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Have a question about exercise or health? Write: Fitness, Box 4943, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163-4943. We can’t give personal replies but will try to address your concerns in future columns. Remember to consult your physician before starting an exercise program.