

Importance of Yoga for Children

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Abstract:

This report summarizes the current evidence on the effects of yoga interventions on various components of mental and physical health. Research found a positive association between exercise habit after school and muscular strength and endurance among asthmatic children. Compared to the control group, the exercise group showed favorable outcomes in terms of flexibility and muscular endurance. Yoga is just one of the many ways kids can stay active to maintain a healthy weight. It will also teach them tools necessary for maintaining a healthy weight during adulthood.

Key words: Yoga, Adulthood, Fitness of Children

INTRODUCTION, YOGA EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Yoga is the oldest system of personal development encompassing body, mind, and spirit. The origin of Yoga goes back more than 5000 years. This valuable science developed by the ancient sages of India, and modified through generations, took many years to spread around the world. In the modern times, the value of Yoga is being increasingly recognized for general health, and its preventive and curative effects.

Yogasanās help relax body and mind together. Stretching helps relax and tone the muscles, to improve circulation, to regain the vital force or energy, lose or gain weight, feel and look young, and improve concentration. It can

relieve conditions like stress, back-pain, allergy, headaches, high and low blood pressure, insomnia and depression. Some of the Yogasanas are easy to practice and yet very powerful.

OBJECTIVE AND AIM:

Yoga education helps in self discipline and self control, leading to immense amount of awareness,, concentration and higher level of consciousness. Briefly the objectives and aims of Yoga education are

Objective:-

To provide the required theoretical and practical inputs in order to provide an integrated and holistic understanding of health, disease and physical fitness among children at the primary, secondary and senior secondary levels.

- To help children become aware of appropriate health needs at particular age(s) through information and communication. To encourage them to learn desired skills and form right habits about food, exercise, sleep, rest and relaxation in their everyday life.
- To help children know and accept individual and collective responsibility for healthy living at home, school and in the community.
- To help children to be acquainted with nutritional requirements, personal and environmental hygiene, sanitation, pollution, common diseases as well as measures for their prevention and control.
- To help children know their status of health, identify health problems and be informed for taking appropriate remedial measures.
- To create awareness among children about rules of safety in appropriate hazardous situations to avoid accidents and injuries. To acquaint them with first-aid measures about common sickness and injuries.

- To help children learn correct postural habits in standing, walking, running, sitting and other basic movements so as to avoid postural defects and physical deformities.
- To help children improve their neuromuscular coordination through participation in a variety of physical activities contributing to their overall fitness so that they live well and work better.
- To provide skills for dealing with psycho-social issues in the school, home and the community
- To create interest among children for the practice of yogasanas and meditation through which they learn the skills / art of self-control, concentration, peace and relaxation to avoid the ill effects of stress, strain and fatigue of routine everyday life.
- To address the physical, psycho-social needs of differently abled children.

Aim:-

- Personal health, physical and psycho-social development
- Movement concepts and motor skills
- Relationships with significant others
- Healthy communities and environments.

THE YOGA EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

There are some additional requirements for implementing the curriculum for yoga education and these include the following:

- Yoga should be introduced in schools from the fifth class onwards but in the earlier classes awareness of body, the relationship between food and health; maintaining correct posture etc. are to be emphasized.
- Enhancing teacher training institutions and increasing the capacity for training yoga teachers.
- A separate stream needs to be identified for yoga teachers and yoga therapists

- Standardisation of yoga education at school is essential
- There is a need to motivate the principals and staff in schools regarding the importance of yoga education.

YOGA FOR HEALTH AND FITNESS OF CHILDREN

Both yoga and physical education have not been given the due importance in the school curriculum and neither has their contribution to the health and overall development of the child been adequately acknowledged. The constraints faced by yoga and physical education is related to a number of factors that affect the quality of school education in general and health and physical education in particular. These constraints include lack of appropriate school environment in terms of physical infrastructure, furniture, lighting, ventilation, water supply etc.; lack of budgetary support lack of transport services; lack of adequately trained teachers and institutions for their training; lack of proper documentation and systematic evaluation of the area and lack of coordination between the education and health departments.

As far as physical education is concerned the available studies show that this area does not get the importance that it should and this gets translated into a negative attitude on the part of the teachers and head masters of schools. An evaluation of the physical education curriculum at the lower primary stage in Mysore district showed that eighty percent of headmasters, sixty percent of general teachers and 90 percent of physical education teachers had a positive attitude towards physical education. A significant percentage of general teachers had a negative attitude towards physical education. As far as the curriculum and syllabus is concerned, the aims and objectives of this area was not clearly stated and the existing syllabus for this area did not contain minimum levels of learning and the activities prescribed under yogic exercises were found to be inappropriate. The infrastructure for physical education was

found appropriate but fifty percent of the lower primary schools of Mysore city did not have physical education teachers.

The experience of introducing yoga in school curriculum has been quite a mixed experience. There is a tendency for yoga to be reduced to mere physical exercise that defeats the very essence of this practice. At present there is a shortage of trained yoga teachers that is related to the non-availability of adequate number of institutions that have the capacity and expertise for this purpose. If yoga is to be effectively integrated then the government would need to overcome the shortage of yoga teachers beginning with the senior secondary level and then consider classes from sixth to tenth. In the interim period teachers who are trained in physical education are also getting some training in yoga education.

Adolescence is a critical period for development of self identity. The process of acquiring a sense of self is linked to the physiological changes and also learning to negotiate the social and psychological demands of being young adults. So that they can hope with these concerns that are related to their process of growing up.

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