Creating a Mindfulness Club for Lower School Students

When lower school teachers combined their love of yoga, movement, and meditation and channeled it into a new club for students, they created Mindful Mornings. This session details their experience starting a mindfulness club for students throughout the school year, how they lead boys in these sessions, and how the club benefits boys.
What is your experience starting a club?

What is your experience with yoga and mindfulness?
Our inspiration for starting *Mindful Mornings*
Research Repository on Yoga, Meditation and Mindfulness for Children, Adolescents & in Schools

Yoga 4 Classrooms® Supporting Research

In the last decade significant progress has been made in the scientific investigation of yoga and mindfulness as supporting a whole child approach to development, learning and well-being, as well as classroom climate. This research base has created a sound framework for the theoretical and practical approaches at the core of Yoga 4 Classrooms®.

Scientific Evidence for School-Based Yoga, Meditation and Mindfulness Practices

Research on school-based yoga and mindfulness suggests that these programs may have a number of positive effects on student health, behavior, and performance (Butzer et al., 2018; Ferreira-Vorkapic et al., 2015; Khalsa & Butzer, 2018; Serwacki & Cook-Cottone, 2012). The following list outlines some of the benefits of school-based yoga and meditation practices that address the whole child, thus maximizing the development of academic, social and emotional competence in addition to benefits for teachers and classroom climate:

- Provides students with healthy ways to express, balance, and regulate their emotions and behavior (Bergen-Cico et al., 2015; Darlottis et al., 2016; Daly et al., 2015; Razzia et al., 2013).
- Promotes a more relaxed, comfortable state of being - the perfect state for teaching and learning (Dai et al., 2015).
Research Outcomes

- Provides students with healthy ways to express, balance, and regulate their emotions and behavior
- Has a positive impact on students’ academic performance
- Brings students into the present moment – the basic requirement for learning
- Encourages respect for oneself and others
- Provides opportunities for beneficial motor breaks throughout the day
More Research outcomes

- Eases anxiety and tension (such as pre-test or performance jitters)
- Reduces anger, depression, and fatigue
- Cultivates balanced psychological and physiological responses to stress, such as improved stress management, reduced problematic stress responses and decreased cortisol concentrations
RELAX.
YOU’VE GOT THIS.
2016 YOGA IN AMERICA STUDY

Highlights from a national survey of more than 3,700 people.
© 2016 Yoga in America Study conducted by Yoga Journal and Yoga Alliance

36.7 million
The number of Americans likely to try yoga in 2016
(Ups from 26.4 million in 2011)

80 million
*1 person equals 10 million Americans

Americans believe that yoga...
- Is good for you
- Increases flexibility and strength
- Enhances athletic performance
- Relieves stress

Gender Division
- 28% Male
- 72% Female

79 percent of yogis engage in other forms of exercise such as running, cycling, and weight lifting

74 percent of yoga practitioners have been practicing for 5 years or less

Top 5 places yogis practice
1. Home
2. Gym or health club
3. Yoga studio
4. Community center
5. Park

$16.8 billion
Amount yogis spend on classes, yoga clothing, equipment, and accessories (An increase of $6.1 billion since 2011)

The 2016 Yoga in America Study was fielded by Ipsos Public Affairs. #YogaInAmerica
yogajournal.com/yogainamericastudy yogagainamericastudy
There are 36.7M US yoga practitioners, up from 20.4M in 2012

Students spend $16B/year on classes, gear, and equipment, up from $10B in 2012

Women represent 72 percent of practitioners; men, 28 percent

The top five reasons for starting yoga are: flexibility (61 percent), stress relief (56 percent), general fitness (49 percent), improve overall health (49 percent), and physical fitness (44 percent)

86 percent of practitioners self-report having a strong sense of mental clarity, 73 percent report being physically strong, and 79 percent give back to their communities – all significantly higher rates than among non-practitioners
1.7 million American *children* under age 17 practice yoga

To address stress and anxiety

Place emphasis on individual abilities rather than competition

Provide a non-threatening and gentle method to increase physical fitness and enhance health

For overall well-being and emotional resilience
Promotion of a Mindfulness Club

Using Print Materials to display

Communication with Students, Parents, and Faculty

Announcements at school gatherings

Encourage classroom teachers to join us!

Student ambassadors for the program
Planning and Logistics

Identifying a location with ample space

What guidelines exist for instruction?

Do we use props or have students come as they are?

What amount of time works for moving and sitting still?

What time of day works best for students, teachers, and parents?
What We Offered - *Mindful Mornings*

First session was for students in Kindergarten through Second Grade for 7 weeks in the fall

Second Session was for students in grades Three through Five for another 7 weeks in the spring

Both sessions ran from 7:30-8:05am, before school began when the students have outdoor recess
An Antidote to Teacher Burnout: How Yoga and Mindfulness Can Support Resilience In and Out of the Classroom
Where Do We Go Next?

Dedicated space for meditation on campus

Program runs all year long

Create a program for faculty only

Visit other schools

Start a blog to share information
Please contact us with Questions, Comments, or Suggestions

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