



**YOGA THERAPY IN CHILDREN**

<sup>1</sup>\*Vd. Ganesh Baliramji Mande and <sup>2</sup>Vd. Vijaykumar U. Gawai

<sup>1</sup>P.G. Scholar, Department of Kaumrbhritya, Government Ayurved College, Nanded, 431601, Maharashtra.

<sup>2</sup>HOD, professor, Department of Kaumrbhritya, Government Ayurved College, Nanded.

**\*Corresponding Author: Vd. Ganesh Baliramji Mande**

P.G. Scholar, Department of Kaumrbhritya, Government Ayurved College, Nanded, 431601, Maharashtra.

Article Received on 11/12/2018

Article Revised on 31/12/2018

Article Accepted on 21/01/2019

**ABSTRACT**

Dating back more than 2,000 year, yoga is an ancient method of achieving mind, body and spiritual health. Today yoga has proven to be an effective form of therapy in our modern world. A growing body of research support yoga therapy as a mean for decreasing anxiety, stress and depression, while increasing coping, self-induced feeling of relaxation & powers of concentration and attention. Yoga therapy for children embraces the same theories and philosophies as adult yoga, but with a greater element of fun and playfulness when used as a form of therapy to help treat kids. The combination of breath & movement through various yoga postures improve balance and strengthens the entire body, as a result, yoga assists kids metabolic function & help the cardiovascular, respiratory, endocrine and musculoskeletal system to function more effectively & efficiently. Breathing and meditation or relaxation techniques also help to lower blood pressure & improve mood and concentration. Some of the most common pediatric conditions, which can be treated by yoga therapy include, Anxiety, Chronic headaches, generalized pain, Grief/Depression, post-traumatic stress disorders, steep issue, sports injuries. Therefore in this article we focus on Yoga therapy in children.

**KEYWORDS:** Yoga, Yoga in children, physical & mental health.

**INTRODUCTION**

Yoga-An ancient form of exercise which evolved thousands of years back in the Indian society and is being practiced continuously since then.it includes various forms of exercises to keep a person in good shape and to get rid of various forms of diseases and inabilities.it is also considered as a strong method for meditation which helps in relaxation of mind and body.

Children not only have new resources in their lives, but are also expected to perform well. Different people in children lives, such as family, school, media, friends constantly provide stimulation as well as expectations. These expectations and demands create stress in children lives, especially related to evaluation of their performances. A high stress level could become a chronic condition, which could result in health problems like anxiety, insomnia, muscle pain, high blood pressure and a weakened immune system. Stress can even contribute to the development of major illness such as heart disease, depression and obesity or exacerbate existing health issues.<sup>[1]</sup> Children dislike upsetting their parents and being the reason for adding to existing parental stress. Children interact with everyday life situation with world views that could be different from those of adults. Children depend on the environment set by society to facilitate their potential for development.

In this paper we discuss how yoga as a potential tool for the youth to deal with stress and to regulate themselves. Yoga provides training of mind and body to bring emotional balance.

Yoga leads to alignment and harmony. Yoga is a tool to listen to your heart.<sup>[2]</sup> Yoga may contribute to healthy development and good mental health, health promotion for children needs to include improvement of their attention , self-esteem, empowerment and self-regulation. Yoga may assist them in developing in sound ways to strengthen themselves and be contributing social being.

**Definition of Yoga**

The term „Yoga“ comes from a Sanskrit word meaning, „Union“

Yoga combines physical exercises, mental meditations and breathing techniques to strengthen the muscle and relieve stress.

**According to Bhagavad Gita**

1) “ समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥” भगवद्गीता २/४८  
Yoga is said to be equanimity.

2) “योगः कर्म सु कौशलम् ॥” भगवद्गीता २/५०

Yoga is Skill in action.

3) “दःख संयोग ववयोग संश्लेषतम् ॥” भगवद्गीता ९/२३

Know that which is called yoga to be separation from contact with suffering.<sup>[3]</sup>

**According to Yoga sutras of Patanjali-**

- “योगवित्तवृत्त वनरोधः ॥” पातंजली योग दशमन ९/२  
Yoga is the suppression of the activities of the mind.<sup>[4]</sup>

**There are eight limbs of Yoga listed in Patanjali Yoga Sutra-these eight limbs are-**

- 1) Yama-Five abstentions(or observances)
- 2) Niyama-Five inner observances
- 3) Asana-Meaning „Seat“ and referring to the physical posture needed for meditation.
- 4) Pranayama-Controlled or suspended breath.
- 5) Pratyahara-Withdrawal of the senses.
- 6) Dharana-Single pointed concentration.
- 7) Dhyana-Meditation
- 8) Samadhi-Liberation

**Why Yoga is important in children?**

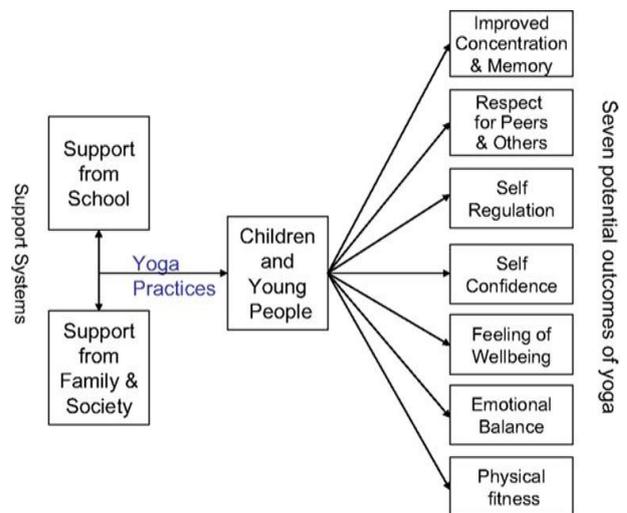
A greater number of children are diagnosed with conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Increased pressure is also exerted on them to succeed in school now than in previous times. Such increase emphasis on education and self-discipline can be challenging. Thus there are more psychological problems among children, many worry excessively, have sleep problems and experience hopelessness and stress. 15-20% of children ages 3-18 years have reduced functioning abilities due to mental problems such as anxiety, depression and behavioral disorders.<sup>[5]</sup> The pressure on children also varies, encompassing academic, commercial/marketing and relational issues as well as succeeding in school, being popular, having a fit or slim body, wearing the right brands of clothes and owning the latest technological gadgets, etc.<sup>[6]</sup> This set of expectations creates stress which impacts children and young people's mental health and well-being as well as hampers their school performance.<sup>[7]</sup> Schools are faced with the challenge that students especially boys are more attracted to the internet, social media and gaming than the school curriculum.<sup>[8]</sup>

Children spend most of their time shunting between home work and school related extra- curricular activities. There's little time for free play. They face over stimulation, distraction and academic and peer pressure too early in life, plus they are plagued by their own insecurities and fears. Yoga can deals with this pressure-cooker environment and infuse energy and confidence into their personalities.

**Benefits of Yoga in Children**

- Yoga develops awareness of body, mind and breath

- Helps arrest a child's wandering mind build attention span and concentration power.
- Augments imagination and creativity.
- Relives mental and physical fatigue. Boost energy level and provide deep relaxation too.
- Helps overcome negative emotions like jealousy, fear and anger.
- Fosters a positive self-image and increases confidence.
- Increases breathing and lung capacity.
- Exercises, strengthens and lengthens different muscle in the body.
- Encourages healthy food habits, a blessing for parents who have to deal with picky eaters and junk food addiction.
- Reduces obsession with TV and other electronics devices



**Figure 1: illustrates some potential outcomes of yoga practice for children.**

**Some Yoga for children body and mind health:-**

- **Viparita virabhadrasana (Reverse warrior pose)** - This posture helps to open the ribs and make the body more flexible. It also gives a boost to self-confidence.
- **Navasana (partner boat pose/ double boat pose)** - It improves the digestion system, strengthens back bone and help to learn teamwork. It is a great stress-buster pose.
- **Urdhva mukha svanasana (upward facing dog pose)** - It makes the spinal cord strong. This posture not only opens your chest but stretches it too. It decreases the stress level and helps in asthma.
- **Setu bandha sarvangasana (bridge pose)** - It helps to stretch your back and neck. It is a great yoga posture to remove stress and depression along with strengthening the legs and improving the digestion.
- **Ananda balasana (happy baby pose)** - It helps to pacify the mind and body and decreases the level of

stress.<sup>[9]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Yoga could provide tools for children to remain centered or regain focus, so they may cope with the stress and challenges, they experience in their everyday lives. Pre-schools, schools and community centers offer yoga as part of the opportunities for children to enjoy learning and practicing it from an early age. The results of such all investment can be observed over the long term by having future generations experience less stress.<sup>[10]</sup>

## REFERENCES

1. Sifferlin A. The most stressed-out generation? Young Adults (2013). Available from: <http://healthland.time.com/2013/02/07/the-most-stressed-out-generation-young-adults/>
2. Langøien LJ. "Pay Attention – Listen to Your Heart!" Unfolding Practice, Change Realities and Awareness of the Embodied Self in Ashtanga Yoga [Ph.D. thesis]. Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology (2013).
3. Swasthavritya vidnyan, Vd. Vijay Patrikar, Yoga, 2010; 7.
4. Swasthavritya vidnyan, Vd. Vijay Patrikar, Yoga, 2010; 7.
5. Stortingsmelding 34. Folkehelsemeldingen. God Helse – Felles Ansvar (Population Health Report. Good Health – A Common Responsibility). Oslo: Helse og Omsorgsdepartementet, 2013.
6. Hagen I, Wold T. Mediengenerasjonen. Barn og Unge i Det nye Medielandskapet (The Media Generation: Children and Young People in the New Media Landscape). Oslo: Samlaget (2009).
7. Hagen I. The role of new media technologies and the internet in the promotion of mental health of children. Background Document for the Thematic Conference: Promoting of Mental Health and Well-Being of Children and Young People – Making it Happen. Stockholm: EU/Swedish National Institute of Public Health (2009). p.32–8.
8. Nayar U, Hagen I, Nayar P, Jacobsen DY. Mental health for the media generation: balancing coping and riskiness. In: Nayar U editor. Child and Adolescent Mental Health. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012: 96–112.
9. 30-easy to do yoga poses for kids. Home remedies - Natural and herbal. [Homeremedys.com](http://Homeremedys.com)>30-easy-to-do-y.
10. Ingunn hagen, Usha s. Nayar. Yoga for children and young people's mental health and well-being : research review and reflections on the mental health potentials of yoga. Available from : <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles>.