

## 10 IDEAS TO KEEP CHILDREN MOVING & ENGAGED

It's hard to keep thinking up new ideas to motivate children to move. We look at 10 ways you may not have considered as well as some tips on how to get them engaged with yoga.

You may feel you've exhausted your creative abilities by now but these 10 open-ended activities using everyday household items explore concepts of science, maths, art, language as well as keeping them active and away from screens and will give ideas for places to start.

- Challenge balancing skills by walking lines made with tape on the floor or chalk on a driveway or pavement. Get creative by making straight, squiggly, or zigzagging lines.
- Think of as many animals as you can and how they move. Write each idea on a lollipop stick or index card and keep them to hand. Whenever a movement break is needed, pull a card to get started: gallop like a horse, wiggle like a worm, and fly like an eagle!
- Explore all the different ways that you can use hula-hoops. Go beyond a classic spin around the waist by rolling it on the floor, using it like a jump rope, and hopping from hoop to hoop.
- Make a maze. You can design a vertical maze in a hallway by connecting strings from wall to wall, build a cardboard maze to crawl through, or tape lines on a floor that you can walk or guide a ball across.
- Get crafty by making your own movement games. Create a beanbag toss by making paper plate targets on the floor. Add numbers to each plate and add up your score as you play. Or, make bowling pins using plastic water bottles or paper towel tubes. Stand your pins up, aim, and roll!
- Try revisiting familiar songs and games to get moving. Songs like the Hokey Kokey and Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes will help get our bodies going. Games like Grandmother's Footsteps, Simon Says and Red Light, Green Light combine movements with listening skills.
- Use boxes, pillows, string, and more to create an indoor obstacle course. Make sure there are plenty of hurdles to go across, through, over, and under.
- Dancing to music is a great option for indoor exercise. Listen to music with different tempos and adjust the motions of your body to match. Add dancing ribbons, scarves, or instruments.
- Keep track of your movements throughout the day with a pedometer. Notice that you are running low on steps? Take a break every so often to jog in place, do some jumping jacks, or any other exercise that gets your heart pumping.
- Challenge your body and relax your mind with yoga. See the tips below for advice on starting yoga with children.

### Tips for Yoga With Children

With just a yoga mat or two, you and your child can do something together that is good for both of you.

- Start at the beginning. Whether you have practiced yoga for years or are just beginning, children need to conquer the basics first. Poses like downward dog, tree pose, and warrior II are going to be easier for children to master and will help them gain confidence before moving to the next pose.

- Make it fun for kids. Focusing on poses with animal names can help make yoga feel more relatable to children while allowing them to be playful and silly.
- Focus on progress, not perfection. Children are learning and may need adjustments at times to make poses easier for them. They may even need more of a challenge at times to accommodate their flexibility.
- Keep their attention span in mind. While we might be craving a long restorative session, children will do better if you start with short intervals and work your way up.
- Part of the fun of any sport is getting your own gear. Let children pick out their own yoga mat to use during your sessions.

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