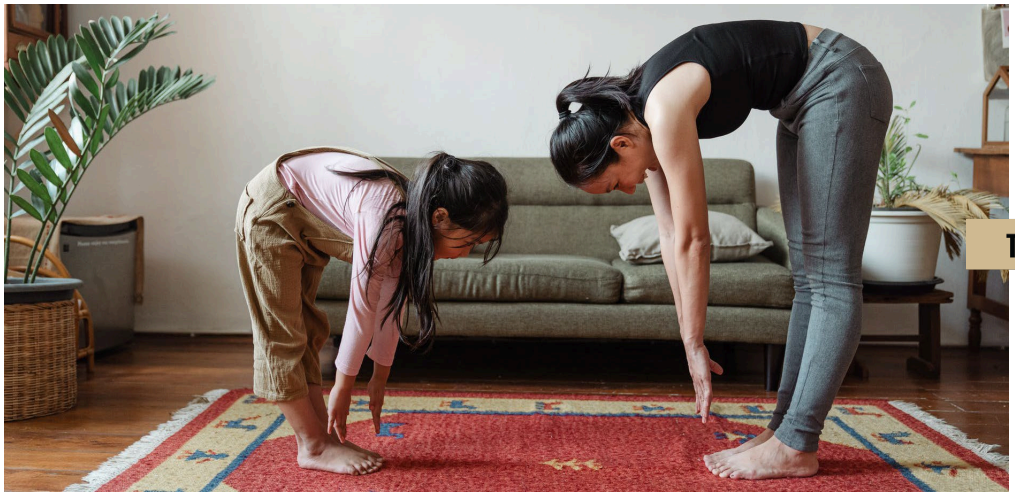


FAMILIES TOGETHER

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

Wellness Wednesday

What does science tell us are the health benefits of yoga? Yoga can help ease stress, anxiety, and help improve heart health by reducing risk factors for heart disease. Researchers agree, the main benefit of yoga is that it slows you down and it relaxes you. The practice of yoga can help you balance your body, breath, mind, and spirit while fostering self-awareness. It helps you focus your attention on your body's abilities in the present moment without judging yourself. Focusing on the present moment promotes mindfulness and studies show that people who practice yoga are more mindful eaters. Practicing yoga helps you be more aware of how your body feels and what your body needs.

Yoga

When the world feels out of control, or when you are going through a challenging time, practicing yoga can help clear your mind and relieve stress. Regardless of your age, or how fit you are, yoga has the power to calm the mind and strengthen the body. The first thing to do, is to ask yourself "what does my body and mind need?" If you are new to yoga, you can access free and paid content online to get you started or sign up for a local socially distanced class. Yoga for Everyone provides guidance on the 10 yoga poses that are the building blocks to a regular practice. If you are considering going to an in-person class, talk with the yoga studio ahead of time to find out if they are following the recommended CDC protocols. Tips for practicing at home:

- Choose or create a quiet, uncluttered space in your home for your practice.
- Set realistic goals, starting out with small pockets of time (15-20 minutes). If possible, make yoga part of your daily routine.
- Be present in the moment. Allow yourself to be aware of how your body feels, your emotions, and thoughts.
- You do not need a lot of supplies to begin practicing at home, a non-slip yoga mat is helpful, but not required. Blocks can be used for poses, but books or other household items can be used instead. Pillows and blankets can also be helpful to have around during your practice. Be creative!
- If possible, practice with a friend (virtually/socially distanced) or family member. Being held accountable by others can help you to be consistent in your practice and strengthen social connections.
- Allow time for self-reflection, self-compassion, and self-awareness.

Dimensions of Wellness Related to Yoga

- Physical
- Emotional
- Social
- Spiritual
- Environmental (when practicing in nature)

