

Teaching tips for Yoga Poses

There are several ways a yoga instructor can create an atmosphere of community learning for children that might differ from teaching adults. When working with children, the instructor/parent needs to be able to provide grounding guidance without making the yoga poses or class seem like *work*. Singing, making sounds or just being silly with the poses are a few great ways to make trying out yoga poses fun in a lively and structured environment. Including breath work and quiet meditative time allows children to process the activities individually and gives each participant a chance to recognize their abilities and contributions to their own practice as well as to the group experience. However, trying to sit still and breath may be challenging for children. Provide a set time limit, goal or visual anchor to help children learn more calming breathing and relaxation techniques.

Some ways to create great group interaction and to decrease competition, nervousness or even hyperactivity in class or at home when reading the Tommy and Tina books are:

- Don't stress about reading the entire book at once
- Let go of absolute proper alignment cues – kids move around a lot and have different levels of proprioception
- Make the experience positive and if the child is being negative try to give them a positive feedback on something they are doing
- Don't have the child watch himself/herself in a mirror (unless they like to do so)
- Use a reading/teaching format with children and teacher/parent facing each other
- Get the wiggles and giggles out first
- Repeat lines from the books or repeat practicing different poses from the books
- Be supportive and grounded for your children