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Celebrating 100 Years of Occupational Therapy

2017 is an important year for occupational therapy, as it marks 100 years as a profession providing services to the community. Occupational therapy helps people across the lifespan participate in the activities they want and need to do each day. Occupational therapy is a holistic and customized approach to helping people with disabilities reach their full potential and be able to complete activities of daily living with as much independence as possible.

Occupational therapy within the pediatric population focuses on helping the child and the child's family develop the skills required to be an active participant in their daily



life. A child's life is made up of many "occupations" which include playing, learning, and socializing. Your Rady Children's Hospital occupational therapy team is committed to creating and implementing individualized treatment plans to ensure that your child can be successful within their home, school, and community environment.



The Fire Breathing Dragon

The Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Center for Disease Control recently published research that estimated more than 2 million children in the US have been diagnosed with ADHD, anxiety disorders or disorders of self-regulation. More than 1 million of those identified are on medication for it.¹ Studies done at the National Therapies Research Unit at the Royal Hospital for Women in Sydney Australia showed significant improvements in symptoms with children who were taught to meditate.² A breathing practice can help children to expand their "optimal level" of alertness for focus, attention and learning thus allowing them to be active members of social groups and their families.



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Supplies:

Empty toilet paper roll
Green paint, crayons or markers
2 large green pom-poms
2 wiggly eyes
2 black beans or small green pom-poms
2 pieces of red, orange or yellow streamers

Steps:

1. Paint the toilet paper roll green
2. Once dry, glue on large pom-poms, wiggly eyes, black beans (or small pom-poms) and streamers

What To Do:

Breathe in deeply through the nose; breathe out through the mouth and through the dragon.
Continue breathing with deep breaths until the dragon is calm and relaxed.

1. ADHD Estimates Rise. (2014, May 16). Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <https://www.cdc.gov/media/dpk/child-development/adhd-estimates/dpk-adhd-estimates-rise.html>

2. Manocha, R. (2001, June). Researching Meditation. *Clinical Applications in Healthcare. Diversity-Natural & Complementary Health (Magazine of the Australian Complementary Health Association)*, 2(5), 2-10.



Yoga with Children

Benefits

- Self-regulation
- Body awareness
- Awareness of breath
- Balance
- Hand eye coordination
- Attention/focus
- Coping strategies
- Strength and flexibility
- Self-confidence/self esteem
- Motor skills
- Social skills
- Promotes digestive health
- Promotes healthy sleep patterns
- Body part identification
- Language and communication
- Imagination

Key Pointers

- Make sure your child is breathing correctly while holding poses. Deep, slow breaths inhaling through the nose and slowly exhaling through the nose or open mouth (example: smell the flowers, blow the bubbles).
- Complete each pose 1-2x daily.
- Hold each pose for 5-30 seconds. Stop if the child appears to be in pain/discomfort.
- Do all poses within your child's ability.
- It is important to allow for at least 1-2 hours for food to digest before practicing yoga poses.

Poses To Try



Cocoon
Calming pose, supports digestion.



Child's Pose
Calming pose, supports digestion.



Spider Legs Up Wall
Calming pose, supports digestion and sleep. Relieves headaches.



Down Dog
Calms the mind and energizes the body, supports digestion.



Forward Fold / Rag Doll
Calming pose, supports digestion and sleep.



Butterfly Pose
Supports digestion and circulation, helps relieve feelings of depression, anxiety and fatigue

Visit the Rady Children's Hospital Occupational Therapy department webpage or use your QR reader to find more information on how yoga can support digestion for older children.
<http://www.rchsd.org/documents/2017/03/yoga-for-digestion-older-children.pdf>

