

Yoga and Autism

A one on one or group yoga therapy can bring in many changes in a child with autism.

1. Increased social communication

As our experiences reveal, performing the asanas along with simple rhymes and songs piques the children's interest and makes the actions fun and interesting. With time the children respond to the tune and sing along while doing yoga. The foundations of social interaction like saying 'hello' and 'goodbye' to all their classmates gets major attention in the yoga classes.

2. Comprehension and body awareness

Relying on short, simple instructions is vital during the yoga sessions. An instruction like "Fold your left leg" is specific, short and composed of only one action. The children find it easy to comprehend and also promotes body awareness and direction. The children are made aware of each body part and their function which are at times missed in the classroom and also develops control and dexterity. Asanas focusing on body balance help develop the proprioceptive and the vestibular systems.

3. Reduced anxiety and challenging behaviours

Asanas like Shavasana encourage complete relaxation as well as body awareness. Tensioning and relaxing each muscle of the body starting with the toes sounds challenging but has huge benefits. Usually done at the end of the yoga session, the teachers report the children come back to class visibly relaxed and calm.