

DLS Helps to DIY

Parents, September brings a change of seasons to cooler weather and we tend to turn inward and inside. September is also National Child Obesity Awareness Month, Healthy Aging Month, and Pain Awareness Month, among other things. With that focus in mind, we can improve the entire family's health by doing some simple stretching or, dare I say it, family yoga. Before you groan and swipe out of this tip, please bear with me and read on.



Yoga often has a negative connotation to it, so let's just use the term stretching. There are many benefits to stretching such as reducing stress, toning muscles, weight management, protection from injury, increased flexibility, and improved sleep just to name a few.

Tips to keep in mind:

- Laugh and have fun!
- One stretch may take only one minute! Take as much or as little time as the family decides.
- You do not need any expensive equipment; just an open space.
- Music sets the mood. Choose songs that match the mood you wish to create. If you want to be more active, play a peppy song; for more calm, play a soothing song such as a lullaby or nature sounds.
- Ask the children for suggestions about what stretch they would like to do; don't worry about the names. Perhaps they have seen one online or in gym class. (For example, bending at the waist, toe touches, windmills, etc.)
- Everyone gets a turn to demonstrate and everyone copies each other.
- If you experience pain of any kind, stop.
- There are videos to check out from the library or view online to use as a guide.

Furthermore, any physical activity completed with other people has been proven to burn more calories than doing it alone! It builds a sense of comradery which can motivate someone to do more than they would on their own. And, if you laugh and enjoy the time spent together as a family, you burn even more calories. It is a win-win!

For additional information about the benefits of yoga, please visit <https://osteopathic.org/what-is-osteopathic-medicine/benefits-of-yoga/>. And about yoga for beginners, see <https://www.verywellfit.com/how-to-get-started-with-yoga-4165462>

Nina Solomon, Development of Living Skills Instructor, Ohio State University Extension, Butler County