

## **From Yoga Journal.com Yoga in the schools article: Modifying Your Methodology**

The introduction of yoga into schools has not come without some controversy, however. When Yoga Ed. founder Tara Guber introduced the program to a school in Aspen, Colorado, school officials and fundamentalist parents opposed having yoga in their children's school, claiming it to be a religion.

As a solution to this potential misunderstanding, Yoga Ed. came up with new terms for concepts their opponents deemed religious—*time-in* instead of *meditation*, and *oneness* instead of *samadhi*. "We sing, but we don't chant," says Yoga Ed.'s Kalish. "We never use the word *spirit*, we use *breath, body, mind, silence, space, understanding*. To teach in the school, we have to be very, very careful about not stepping across any lines that make it spiritual in any way."

Wenig says she has met some resistance (one editorial in the local paper claimed that "Yoga leads children to the devil"), but she can count those instances on one hand. And for Lynda Meeder, a school counselor for the past five years, the YogaKids program has been an invaluable tool. Most children's first introduction to Meeder is through the yoga she brings to classrooms. Children with problems at school or home come into her office, and they already know her, and already have tools to solve their problems. If they are dealing with anger, for example, she'll ask how they can calm down. "They know the answer immediately. They're using yoga at home in conflict resolution with siblings," Meeder says. "At an early age, kids can develop these skills they're learning through yoga."

Meeder isn't the only one who notices that yoga makes a difference; kids and teachers love it, too. "It brings a sense of calm to the classroom," Meeder says. "Kids are so stressed out. They tell me this is the one time they have to relax."

For further info about yoga for kids:

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Or listen to her video about teaching yoga in the classroom.

