



Children are getting the Yoga bug

Today's children are often billed as either relentlessly hyperactive or lazy couch potatoes. Could yoga help? Luisa Cotardo finds out from East Finchley yoga teacher Laura Gate-Eastley.

Laura, why did you start teaching yoga to children?

After practising yoga daily for over seven years and teaching adults for two years I wanted to be able to offer this wonderful gift to children.

Why can yoga be important for children?

The moment a child starts school and spends time sitting at a desk they start to lose the natural flexibility in their spines. Yoga develops strength, stamina and flexibility as well as mental benefits. It helps with building confidence, improves concentration and helps them sleep better.

You teach through YogaBugs. What is that?

YogaBugs is UK-based but now has teachers worldwide. It's a training course which gives teachers the skills to teach yoga to children from the age of two to seven. The sister company Yoga'd Up teaches yoga for eight to 12-year-olds.

Can you describe some exercises done during your class?

In YogaBugs classes we take the children on a 30-minute adventure by telling a story; they interact with me by acting out the poses of the characters. Every week is different, we can be on the moon, underwater or in the jungle. Although they are learning traditional yoga poses we have fun with it.

Which is the one they have most fun with?

They really love being animals: Buster the dog, Dolly the dolphin, Mr Cranky the crab. Another favourite is answering the telephone, which involves bringing a foot up to the ear while sitting down: great for hip flexibility as well as making us all laugh!

Can these exercises improve their lives?

Parents tell us that their children sleep better after a yoga class. Having children focus inside themselves for a few moments brings a sense of centre and can really calm things down. It's a skill that will certainly have its uses outside the yoga class.

For more details or a demonstration at your school or nursery contact Laura on 020 8346 8198 or 07984 201843 or by email at: lauralotus@gmail.com.

Youth group with reason to celebrate

By Diana Cormack

Members and supporters of the East Finchley Youth Group gathered at the Methodist Church Hall, High Road, for a party to celebrate their first anniversary. The large turn out impressed the guests, who included Councillors Alison Moore and Colin Rogers, along with Judge John Parker who works with young offenders, representatives from the community police and Robina Spinks, representing the East End Road Youth Group on the Thomas More estate.

Tu Destino, the High Road florists, ensured things went with a bang by donating and decorating the room with beautiful balloons that could also be taken home. A wonderful spread of food was prepared by

those volunteers who regularly help the youth group, which is backed by the East Finchley Christian Fellowship.

A host of entertainment much appreciated by the audience was provided by mostly local youngsters. These included seven-year-old Luena Martins-Aguira rocking the audience with three power-packed songs, the teenage Matthews brothers rapping their own words accompanied by Vishal's music mixing and a girls' dance display supported by a youth group from south London. Des Brown was MC at the event in November and he also gave a shorter version of his previous talk to the youth club about how the rest of your life can be affected by the choices you make. (as reported in "Saying No to Knives" in THE ARCHER July 2006).

East Finchley Youth Group meets at the Methodist Church Hall in the High Road on Mondays between 7pm and 8.30pm.

This had us foxed

Residents living near Cherry Tree Wood were puzzled when a note from estate agents Foxtons was delivered through their doors.

The letter was requesting properties for sale in Springcroft Avenue and Brompton Grove for a serious buyer who was said to be ready to pay the full price and 'knows your street well'.

Sadly, it appears the buyer may not be as well acquainted with the area as the note suggests. Brompton Grove is a dirt road running alongside the wood and, apart from one side door, has no houses directly on it at all.

Calling all women entrepreneurs

By Avril Macdonald

How would you like to join a group of ambitious women with an entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to help each other?

Finchley Women in Business Network wants to put like-minded women together in a structured yet informal environment to help generate more business for one another.

We meet once a month over lunch at the Meze Bar on the High Road – a time chosen as the most convenient and productive for the many members with children and families.

Members are from a cross-section of businesses and include solicitors, web site designers, printers, alternative therapists and many others, but we all encourage each other in our shared aim, that of wanting to expand our businesses.

We have agendas, and the meetings are formal without being stuffy but will always be friendly and supportive.

Each lunch group allows one person per profession to minimise competitive conflict between members and there is a training session at each meeting to help members focus on marketing their business and themselves. All members have an opportunity to do a presentation about their business.

For people who work from home it's a great way to meet other business women and, although I am a member of a number of business organisations, I find that the Women in Business Network is the friendliest. It has also produced a number of business leads and opportunities.



Women in Business - Therese Lawton (left) and homeopath, Penny Hill, modelling Therese's jewellery.

Members can visit any of the other 20 existing groups as long as there is no professional clash and there are a further nine being set up, all in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Essex.

So, if you think you would like to visit the group, or to consider nearby groups, you can

check whether your profession is represented by visiting the website www.wibn.co.uk where you can see for yourself what WIBN can offer your business. Our next meeting is on Thursday 1 February. For further information contact Avril Macdonald on 020 8444 3849.

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