

"Kids Yoga: Christmas Edition" Class Promises Holiday Calm and Fun

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - River Bend Yoga will combine holiday fun and mindfulness with their Kids Yoga: Christmas Edition class on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023.

From 1–3 p.m., kids can experiment with basic yoga movements and breathwork while making crafts, playing games and enjoying a few holiday treats. Stephanie Greenhaulgh, the class's instructor, explained that it'll be a fun day with all the benefits of a normal yoga class.

“This one’s a little fun because it’s not just movement and breath,” she explained. “We’re throwing in a little holiday twist.”

During the class, kids will be making reindeer food, ornaments and graham cracker reindeer. They will also decorate sugar cookies and enjoy cups of hot cocoa while they make cards for local nursing homes.

Some of the yoga and breathing exercises that Greenhaulgh usually teaches during her kids classes will also have a holiday feel. She said her students will learn the “cocoa breath” technique, where kids breathe in like they’re smelling a cup of cocoa and then breathe out like they’re blowing on the cocoa to cool it. Exercises like this can have a big impact on kids as they learn how to calm themselves and handle stress inside and outside of the yoga studio.

“When they start on the mat in a safe space in the studio, then it transfers into the real world,” Greenhaulgh said. “Instead of hearing something and getting upset immediately, it’s, ‘Oh, I hear something and my heart’s racing and I feel nervous, what do I do now? Now I take a deep breath instead of freaking out.’ It regulates mindfulness and thinking.”

Greenhaulgh has been teaching kids since January, and she often watches her students grow over the course of a class. She explained that they might play games or tell stories while learning about mindfulness and moving through yoga flows. The kids usually leave class feeling more regulated and confident.

“I love it when they kind of go from cowering with their parent to participating in the class, feeling their own sort of inner power, feeling their strength, and then it really starts to flow. It’s really cool to watch,” Greenhaulgh said. “If this is your first class, you’re going to be great, you’re going to find success, you’re going to feel confident. If this is your 15th class, you’re going to feel great, you’re going to find success, you’re going to feel confident.”

She is especially excited to make Christmas cards with the kids and share them with the nursing homes. Greenhaulgh believes that teaching kids about giving and mindfulness at an early age helps them develop into kind, calm adults.

“We can bring that little bit of peace, that little bit of joy, and spread that holiday cheer, and then also instill that in our youth, because the only way we’re going to make big changes with adults is if we start with the kids,” she added. “So it’s not thinking about today, it’s thinking about what future we’re building in ten years, 20 years, 30 years.”

Kids Yoga: Christmas Edition costs \$35 and runs from 1–3 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023. Parents are welcome to stay but not required. For more information or to register,

visit the [official River Bend Yoga website at RiverBendYoga.net](http://RiverBendYoga.net) or their [Facebook page](#). You can also stop by River Bend Yoga at 100 W. 3rd Street in Alton or call (618) 581-5691.