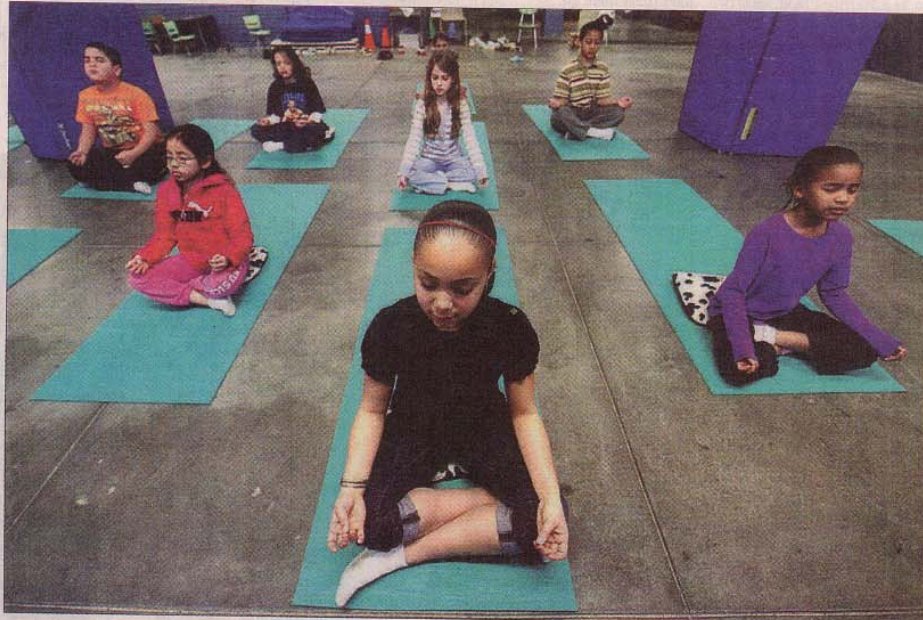


## Calm ... Concentration ... Confidence ...



PHOTOS BY PETER PEREIRA/HE STANDARD-TIMES

Third-graders at DeValles Elementary School in New Bedford perform yoga breathing exercises to help them achieve better concentration.

## Yoga a beneficial part of students' curriculum

By JENNIFER LADE  
jlade@st.com

### NEW BEDFORD

NEW BEDFORD — Third-graders at the DeValles School got to stretch, bend and breathe deeply during class recently as part of an initiative that allows them to practice yoga in the classroom weekly.

Yoga instructor Tim Donohue said the classes instill

confidence and self-esteem in the children, who are often faced with overwhelming pressures.

"They really learn to focus on breathing to calm their minds down. Everything's coming at them so fast these days," he said.

"It's amazing how the stress level really trickles down to the kids. They need some coping skills."

Donohue started teaching yoga in his children's elementary school classes in 2000.

The teachers and students were so receptive, he said, that he decided to branch out.

Now he runs a small non-

profit, Yoga Kids Inc., with one other instructor besides himself.

He teaches about 20 classes a week, in school and after school, at a variety of area locations, including DeValles, Hathaway Elementary, the New Bedford Boys & Girls Club and St. Vincent's Children's Shelter in Fall River.

Donohue has received several grants, including a Shannon Grant, an anti-gang initiative, to fund his program.

He also has gotten donations from Rob Sudduth and Christina Bascom of Marion and Kate Carney-Larisa of Rhode Island. With that financial boost, he has been able to expand to more classrooms.

"The teachers really love because it seems to calm the kids down," he said.

In addition to poses a breathing, he said, students learn other skills, such as how to relax while speaking in front of the class.

"You can see their confidence grow right in front of your eyes."

Tim Donohue leads the weekly yoga session at DeValles Elementary School.



"They really learn to focus on breathing to calm their minds down. Everything's coming at them so fast these days."

TIM DONOHUE, instructor

