



## ONLINE KIDS NEED YOGAKIDS

From an editorial from The New York Times Opinion

To the Editor:

Web sites aimed at young children like [Clubpenguin.com](http://Clubpenguin.com) and [Webkinz.com](http://Webkinz.com) may seem innocent, but we must ask what our kids are missing when they spend hours online. Many kids are not using their imagination to create their own worlds and may find that self-directed play pales in comparison with bells and whistles and roulette wheels on their screens.

Young computer gurus often argue that reading is “boring” and that they would much rather be online than play outdoors. A fair number of them have difficulty slowing down, playing alone and being mindful, as they become used to the intense level of stimulation and instant feedback they experience on “kid friendly” sites.

Our children have their whole lives to be multitaskers and sit in front of a computer. Can’t we just let them be kids first?

**Paul J. Donahue** Founder and Director Child Development Associates Scarsdale,

Children love these sites and they teach many great skills, yet we know sitting and staring at a screen for hours on end does not provide any physical fitness. So...what is the first missing link? I would say yoga. Anyone can do it. When children learn these techniques at a young age they will last a lifetime.

So.....Let’s start with at least continuous stretching every 10-15 minutes for our children (and ourselves) who spend too much time on the computer. I am guilty as charged and want to provide you and your kids with solutions.

Yoga is about balance in life and all things great and small. When presented in childlike and fun ways, yoga postures may begin to provide children with a sensory awareness of their bodies, physically and emotionally.

If your kids spend a lot of time on the computer, make sure they have great chairs that support their backs or are ‘on the ball’ so they are not ‘schlumped’ forward. Here are 2 seated



poses from our [YogaKids Tools for Schools](#) program that may help keep their posture on the up and up.

**Neck Stretch** Drop your chin towards your lifted chest. Slowly roll your right ear towards your right shoulder. Let your head lean gently back and slowly continue to roll you left ear towards your left shoulder. Tuck your chin into your chest. Do 3 to 6 rounds in each directions.

**Eagle Arms Bend** your arms. Cross your elbows. Twist your forearms together and press your palms together in the Namaste position. Let your eagle arms fly upward and your shoulders descend downward. Breathe into your upper back and change the cross of your arms.

Remind your children (and yourself) to repeat these simple stretches every 10-15 minutes while sitting at the computer.