

Breathing Techniques for Early Childhood

Bellows Breath (Sanskrit: Bhastrika)

Direct Aim: To energize and invigorate the body. To connect the mind and body; to invigorate the central nervous system thereby invigorating both the mind and body.

Indirect Aim: To achieve, maintain, and preserve health and prevent disease in both mind and body.

Procedure:

1. Start by practicing Deep Belly Breathing for several breaths.
2. After doing several Deep Belly Breaths exhale fully, breathe in fully and then forcefully exhale through your nostrils using your diaphragm.
3. Exhale and inhale forcefully and deeply through your nose at the rate of about one second per cycle.
4. Remember to only use the diaphragm and keep your head, neck, shoulders and chest as stable as possible as the belly moves in and out.
5. Do a set of 10 breaths followed with normal breathing while noticing how your body feels.

Notes:

Do not perform Bellows Breath before going to bed as this breath may stop you from falling asleep.

If you are feeling sluggish or lethargic during the day, several rounds of Bellows Breath will help energize.

As this breath involves forceful exhalations and inhalations, it is important that you stop practicing the breath if you feel dizzy or light-headed.

Extensions:

Pursed Lips Breathing – an easier and less impactful alternative to Bellows Breath

Procedure which may be a better alternative for Early Childhood students:

1. Start by practicing Deep Belly Breathing for several breaths.

2. After doing several Deep Belly Breaths exhale fully, breathe in fully through your nose and then forcefully exhale through pursed lips using your diaphragm.
3. Continue to exhale and inhale forcefully and deeply through your **mouth** using your diaphragm.
4. Remember to only use the diaphragm and keep your head, neck, shoulders and chest as stable as possible as the belly moves in and out.
5. Do a set of 10 breaths followed with normal breathing while noticing how your body feels.

Early Childhood Students:

Early Childhood Students need to follow a teacher-guide for the Bellows Breath experience and it is best for the students to only do 5-10 Bellows Breaths at a time. I recommend starting with Pursed Lips Breath technique first before moving on to the Bellow Breath technique.