

Hello,

We're writing to make you aware of a new yoga and wellness program for youth, 10-13 years old, at the Hunterdon Art Museum.

Professional studies and reports on the health of this age group continue to show an increase in anxiety and related health issues.

We have designed a program to give them the gift of respite from their hectic, overstimulated lives.

Julie Swenson has worked with youth for over 30 years as both a certified special education teacher and social worker and has also spent time as a crisis counselor and Vice Principal. She has taught yoga to pre-teens and teens for over 16 years.

Her experience has taught her that some days a student may need to simply rest on the mat and cry for a bit. Then they may want to doodle, write, or sit and be mesmerized by moving kinetic sand through their fingers before joining the class. Her yoga practice meets kids where they are and guides them to recognize and choose what they need in that moment to feel grounded.

Some of her students were thriving as gifted athletes, musicians, academic students, and well-rounded students but carrying a lot of pressure. Others were not excelling, but instead were challenged daily by life as a tween, some with anxiety disorders, some with other challenges, trying to get through each day.

All have shared that they felt the benefits of their time on the mat carry over to life off the mat.

If you have students who you think could benefit from our program, please direct them to our webpage to register for this 6-week course:

<https://www.hunterdonartmuseum.org/classes/youth-yoga/>

For questions about the class content or methods, please contact Julie at [jswenson@soulshinefarm.com](mailto:jswenson@soulshinefarm.com).

Julie Swenson, M.Ed., CSW

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