

Yoga Adventures in Early Intervention: Adapting Delivery for Young Children in Natural Environments

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Background

Yoga is an emerging and understudied intervention in early childhood. Evidence suggests yoga may support motor development, social participation, and executive functioning skills, particularly self-regulation.

Occupational therapy (OT) emphasizes participation in meaningful activities within natural environments. Adapting yoga to be play-based and developmentally appropriate may increase accessibility for young children in early intervention (EI).

Methods

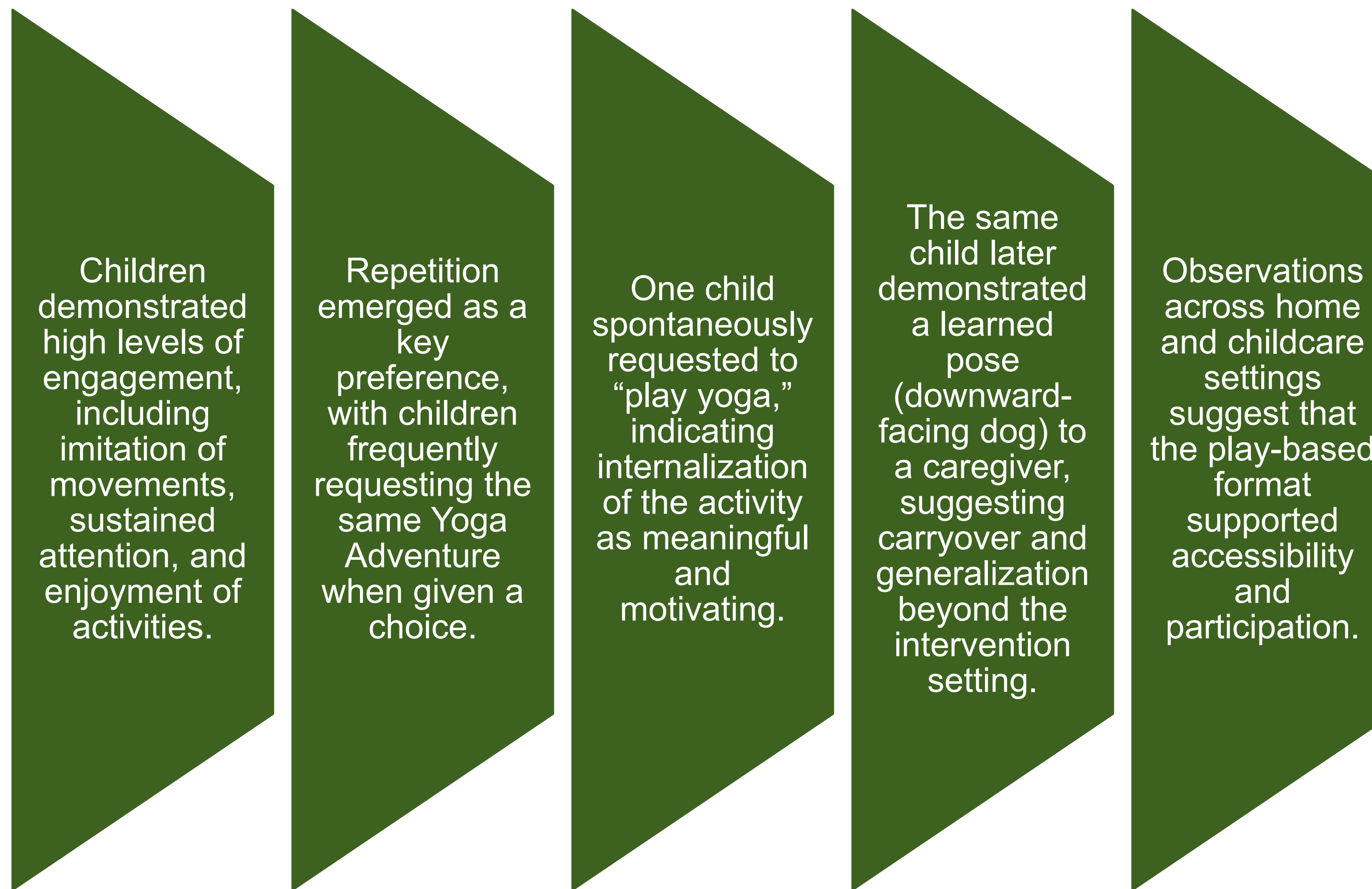
This project adapted a preschool yoga toolkit for use in EI. The intervention, "Yoga Adventures," consists of play-based, themed movement sequences designed to promote engagement through storytelling and imitation.

Yoga Adventures were used with four children ages 2 and older receiving EI services, including one childcare setting.

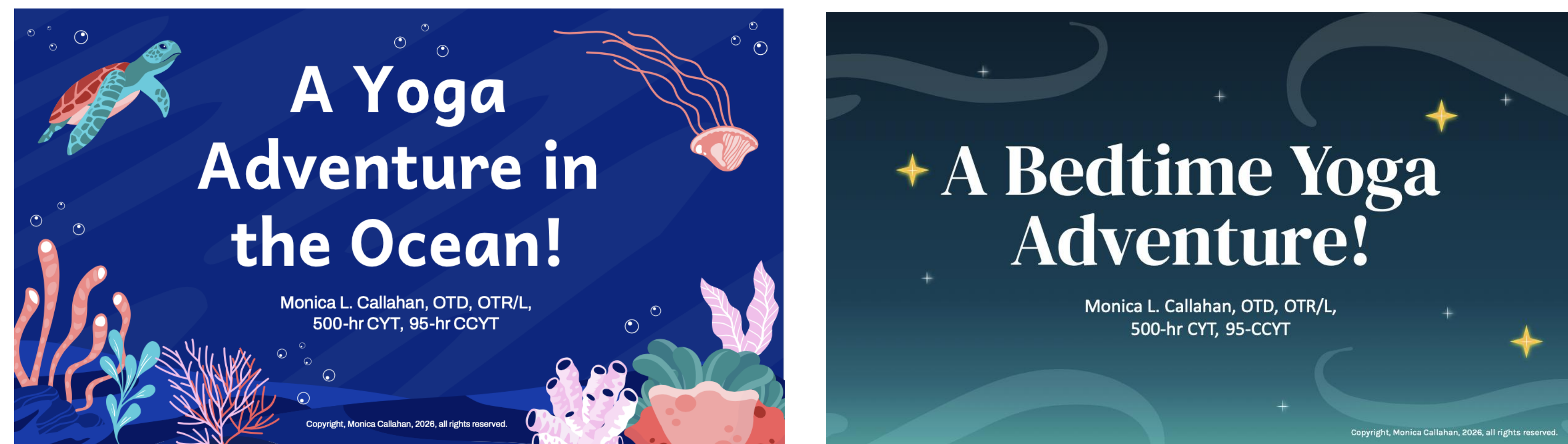
Adaptations included simplifying postures, incorporating repetition, and using developmentally appropriate breathing techniques. The intervention was guided by the Model of Playfulness to support intrinsic motivation and engagement.

Caregiver education was provided through parent handouts. Data collection included informal observation of child engagement, participation, and caregiver feedback.

Results



Examples of Yoga Adventures



Examples of Educational Handouts
(see full versions via QR code)



Scan below for Educational Handouts and References



Conclusions

Yoga Adventures were successfully adapted for the EI population through simplification of postures, repetition of familiar sequences, and use of developmentally appropriate breathing techniques.

Embedding yoga within playful, themed narratives supported attention, motivation, and participation. These findings suggest that play-based approach enhances accessibility of yoga for young children in natural environments.

Implications

Yoga-based, play-driven interventions can be feasibly integrated into early intervention and natural environments, including home and childcare settings.

High levels of engagement, including spontaneous requests to participate, suggest that yoga may function as a child-initiated occupation when presented through playful contexts.

This approach aligns with OT's focus on participation and may support early executive functioning and self-regulation skills.

Limitations: Small sample size and qualitative observations; findings are preliminary.

Acknowledgement

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