



Speech-language pathologists Maria Bratton, left, and Angela Moorad work on a yoga position with patients Elaina Fredrickson and Layne Yandell at the J.D. McCarty Center in Norman.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY J.D. MCCARTY CENTER

YOGA TEACHERS TOUT BENEFITS FOR SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN

BY JANE GLENN CANNON

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Angela Moorad knows the benefits of teaching yoga to children with special needs.

In weekly sessions with patients at the J.D. McCarty Center in Norman, she has seen children become more focused, more confident and more willing to try new things.

"Children's yoga is nothing like adult yoga. Kid's yoga is movement-based, very fun. We use pictures and books. It's very interactive," Moorad said.

Moorad has teamed with national yoga teacher Ann Robideaux, an Oklahoma City native, to present a workshop in Edmond on Saturday to

IF YOU GO

The workshop will be from 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday at Third Street Yoga Studio in Edmond. The fee is \$125. To register, call 330-2211.

spread the word about yoga's benefits for special-needs children.

The workshop will include strategies for working with children with autism, sensory issues and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Robideaux, founder and director of Asana Alphabet, based in New York City, will talk about adapting yoga poses and using safe techniques.

Moorad, a speech-language pa-

thologist, said she became interested about two years ago in the therapeutic aspects of yoga for special-needs children.

"I love working with children with autism, but they can be very withdrawn and isolated. They don't always come to the therapy table," she said. With yoga, the children relax and enjoy themselves, she said.

Robideaux has practiced yoga nearly 20 years.

"It is about improving oneself, rather than competing with others, which makes it a fabulous type of class for developing self-esteem," she said.

The exercises deepen the breath, helping create calmer thought patterns "and, ideally, a stress-free mind," she said.