



**2020 Press Kit**

## Debby Kaminsky



Debby Kaminsky is the founder of the Newark Yoga Movement, a 501c3 that since 2009 has transformed tens of thousands in the Newark, New Jersey community. Kaminsky develops and shares yoga and meditation programs that have positively affected over 32,000 students, 5,000 educators as well as veterans, firefighters and Rutgers University faculty and staff and the community. Her organization also goes into correctional facilities and corporations with her transformative programs.

Kaminsky is a former advertising executive who decided she wanted to promote the benefits of transformation through yoga. She took her first yoga class in 1997 while her twins were in pre-school. Feeling great from the experience her interest and yearning blossomed and in 2004 she left her powerful corporate job at Ogilvy to become a full-time yoga instructor. Her passion has always been to help manifest positive change.

Upon reading that the high school graduation rates were way below State average in Newark, she began her mission to use the many life tools of yoga to help foster change. This has evolved to working with children of all ages and ability in Newark from Pre-K through 12th grade including those who have varying degrees of special needs. Eager to impact change, in 2009 she founded the Newark Yoga Movement. Kaminsky believes that anyone who can positively impact children, should experience and share the benefits and life skills of yoga, which is why she believes in starting with administrators and educators within the educational system and build consensus around these skills through experience as well as working directly with students. Kaminsky believes when schools have a stage of calm, academic and life learning happens.

Not only is Kaminsky's organization effectively transforming the youth, but she also teaches Veterans yoga through Kula for Karma and has brought yoga to clients who have suffered brain injuries. Kaminsky served until 2014 as Peace Ambassador for the Global Mala NJ, a worldwide yoga event bringing people together in service of peace. When traveling, she always finds a way to share yoga, and has proudly taught in aids patients in Kenya, an entire middle school in Tanzania, and the military in Israel. When not thinking about yoga, she finds family time with her husband and her adult twin daughters.

Kaminsky is E-RYT with Yoga Alliance and holds two advanced vinyasa certifications and a 500 hour certification from Shiva Rea's Samudra Global School of Living Yoga and she is honored and privileged to assist Shiva when schedules permit and mentoring teacher trainees in her training program. Kaminsky earned her degree in Marketing from Penn State University and has been a featured speaker or panel participant at Kripalu Yoga in Schools Symposium, New Jersey Educational Association annual convention, National Kids Yoga Conference, Omega Institute and Rowan University's NJ Yoga in Schools Symposium.

# Newark Yoga Movement Company Profile



*"Because of Newark Yoga Movement's work, over 500 students at our school have tools to reduce stress, help them concentrate and remain calm in difficult situations." --Darleen Gearhart, Principal, Sussex Avenue Renew School*

[Newark Yoga Movement](#) is a 501c3 non-profit organization founded by Debby Kaminsky in 2009 to help students and faculty pre-K through 12th grades in Newark, NJ through yoga and meditation. Newark Yoga Movement yoga teachers bring yoga and meditation to Pre-K through 12th grade students in over 30 Newark New Jersey Public Schools throughout the year. Since its inception, over 32,000 children have practiced yoga with Newark Yoga Movement. Newark Yoga Movement effectively gives children tools to help them reduce stress and anxiety, increase focus, increase peacefulness and confidence, find new approaches to conflict resolution and unleash creativity. Newark Yoga Movement is also helping educators foster better results. At Newark Yoga Movement, we say YOGA = "You Only Get Awesome."

Newark Yoga Movement knows that all schools and all children are not created equal. The organization's model is tailored to the needs of **both** the school and its students. In addition to physical yoga exercises, Newark Yoga Movement also teaches children how to breathe so that they can learn important self-regulating techniques to use throughout life. Their program seamlessly integrates into each school's schedule so that in effect, their programs enhance existing curriculum, rather than creating new curriculum. "Mirrors," or volunteers, join certified yoga teachers at these classes for students to have an extra adult to follow, while educators help provide continuity through self care professional development sessions.

The organization's founder, Debby Kaminsky, knew that yoga could be an inexpensive way to create positive change in Newark schools aka "cheap intervention." Her programs has positive response in the Newark school system. 73% of Newark students enjoyed their 20-minute yoga session and wanted to do it again. 71% of Newark students and 83% of PE teachers felt yoga should be done on a regular basis. 64% of Newark students felt less stressed, more calm and peaceful after one 20-minute session. (\*Source: 2009 Informal pilot testing research among 300 Newark students In 5 schools, 171 responses)

# Newark Yoga Movement Best Practices



- Introduce yoga programs to *entire schools* in "required" environments e.g. physical education classes, classrooms, morning convocations/meetings. Overlay programs such as yoga clubs, after school, yoga for athletes. We have found this to be quite effective as so many children don't know what yoga is and once they try it, they are glad they did.
- Utilize yoga programs to "enhance" curriculum rather than "being" the curriculum.
- Build consensus with everyone--teachers, parents/guardians, students, administration, community, government, public safety.
- Provide self-care/professional development to teachers prior to launching into entire school and periodically over the course of the school year.
- Empower classroom teachers to provide continuity through daily yoga postures including important breathing.
- Keep it secular so the experience remains all inclusive. At the same time, sharing universal words in "yoga language" is exciting to children.
- Connect with everyone who can positively impact children. [Community outreach](#) is very important.
- Move slow. Conduct pilot testing/small scale program first to optimize for each situation. Assess and then expand to larger scale.

# Schools working with the Newark Yoga Movement over the last two years



- **13<sup>th</sup> Avenue School**
- **14<sup>th</sup> Avenue School**
- **Abington Avenue School**
- **Anne Street School**
- **Barringer Arts & Humanity**
- **Belmont Runyon School**
- **Bold Academy**
- **Branch Brook School**
- **Camden Street School**
- **Cleveland School**
- **Elliott Street School**
- **First Avenue School**
- **Franklin School**
- **George Washington Carver**
- **Great Oaks Charter School**
- **Harriet Tubman School**
- **Hawkins Street School**
- **Lafayette Street School**
- **Lincoln Elementary School**
- **Link Community Charter School**
- **Marion P. Thomas Charter**
- **Mount Vernon School**
- **Oliver Street School**
- **Park Elementary School**
- **People's Preparatory Charter**
- **Rafael Hernandez Elementary School**
- **Ridge Street School**
- **Rise Academy**
- **Roberto Clemente Elementary School**
- **Robert Treat Academy**
- **South Street School**
- **Spark Academy**
- **Speedway Academy**
- **Sussex Avenue Renew School**
- **Team Academy**
- **The Leaguers**
- **University High School**
- **West Side High School**
- **Wilson Avenue School**

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**Newark Yoga  
Movement  
in the Press**  
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Steve Adubatio Interviews Newark Yoga Movement Founder,  
Debby Kaminsky

Click here to watch the interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8Q2RimCci8>

Click here to view additional press mentions: <https://newarkyoga-movement.squarespace.com/press>

## Newark Yoga Movement Best Practices

“I came in here with a grudge. A little mad. We then did the breathing exercise and the negativity went away and then this positive stuff started going into my head.”

-8th grade student

“I am not stressed out anymore. I feel calm and happy. Yoga can help calm me down and I can stop all my problems in my life. Since this started, I wasn't mean anymore.”

-5th grade female

“I could actually take 70-75 breaths and not fight him.” -  
7th grade male

“This is the first Friday I don't have detention.”

-7th grade male

“This feels really good. I think this is what I need to calm my brain.”

-6th grade student

“The yoga program has brought a calm and peace into the gymnasium.” -Michelle Wilson, Newark High School Physical Education Teacher

“These five minutes save me 50 minutes in my classroom.”

-Middle School Teacher



## Newark Yoga Movement in Pictures



*"You don't have to try to meditate. You just do."*



*"Only from the heart can you touch the sky." -Rumi*



*"Smile Often."*



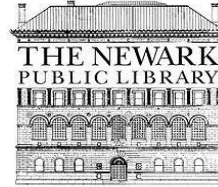
*"Finding Calm."*



*"Having Heart."*



## Sponsors and Partnerships



\*Lululemon



## **Newark Yoga Movement Mission Statement**

Newark Yoga Movement enhances the educational experience and provides easy access to increased peacefulness, focus and confidence as a complementary source of discipline and structure for all. Newark Yoga Movement meets every Newark child where they are, bringing them life skills through the practice of Yoga, breathing and centering at their schools and in their communities.



**Newark Yoga  
Movement  
Stats**

**Since 2009**

32,000+ children

5,000+ educators

100+ classes each week (when school is in session)



Instagram

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