

Parent or Guardian Information Sheet

The children/teenagers' course offers children between the ages 8 and 12 years old (teenagers between the ages 13 and 18 years old) an introduction to Anapana meditation, which is a practice of the observation of natural breath to concentrate the mind. They will learn to practice Anapana and begin to take their first steps on the path of Dhamma. The entire path of Dhamma, rediscovered and taught by Gotama the Buddha more than 2500 years ago, is a universal remedy for universal problems and has nothing to do with any organized religion or sectarian tradition. For this reason, it can be practiced freely by all, in any place, at any time. Its practice does not conflict with any race, community or religion and will prove equally beneficial to one and all.

Children/teenagers who have started practicing Anapana have realized many benefits. Their ability to concentrate becomes enhanced, their memory gets sharper, their ability to comprehend a subject improves and they become calmer. In general, they feel they have a practical tool to use in the face of any type of adversity or challenge.

During the course, there will be meditation instructions as well as other activities such as games, art, and storytelling. The children/teenagers will be divided into groups according to their age for many activities. They will be assigned group leaders who will personally accompany and assist them throughout the course, providing support and guidance as needed.

The intent of the children/teenagers' course is serious. It is not appropriate for children/teenagers who are too young or otherwise unable to follow directions or to participate in organized, self-modulating activities. It is also not appropriate for children/teenagers who are unable to understand the meaning or purpose of the daily timetable and Code of Conduct. Segregation of the sexes will be maintained at all times in the meditation hall and during much of the course.

It is not mandatory that a parent or guardian accompanies your child to the course. Parents or guardians who are students of Goenkaji or his assistant teachers are welcome to stay at the course site. Only those children/teenagers who feel comfortable staying at the course site separate from their parents are encouraged to attend. We ask that parents and affiliated adults refrain from communicating with or contacting their children/teenagers throughout the course.

Parents or guardians who have not completed a ten-day course with Goenkaji or his assistant teachers are welcome to stay with their children/teenagers during registration, but should then leave the course site until the course is over.

Before applying for the course, please make sure that both you and your child have read and understood the Code of Conduct and Sample Timetable.