



# handstolove

"where difference does not equal disability"

## Adaptive Yoga: Finding Bliss on the Mat

For the past month, Hands to Love has been offering FREE, virtual adaptive yoga classes for children with upper limb differences. The goal is to boost children's confidence by improving their strength, balance, flexibility, and posture as well as help them overcome everyday challenges relating to their mental well-being. Through these classes, we hoped to build a community and connect families with others around the nation with similar stories, and we did just that.

As an occupational therapy student, I was looking for ways to partner up with Hands to Love to provide a service that is not only fun for families and friends, but also restorative and functional for everyday living. Soon, I leaned into creating an adaptive yoga program as a creative and unique way to incorporate movement into everyday life.

For kids with what seems to be boundless energy, adaptive exercises are essential for improving their quality of life, especially for those of us in the upper limb difference community. For instance, adaptive yoga can enhance physical strength, flexibility, and coordination while also promoting stress relief, mental well-being, and self-confidence. There are many styles of yoga that are hands-free, and through our yoga classes, we modify yoga poses to suit every individual's needs and abilities.



Natalie Grazian, an occupational therapy master's student at the University of Washington and adaptive yoga enthusiast with a limb difference, led one of our classes and shares what yoga means to her.

*"Yoga is wonderful for so many reasons, but for kids with upper limb differences, I think it has some unique benefits. It strengthens core muscles and improves joint flexibility, which makes everyday activities easier as we move through life without two hands to use for stability, balance, and leverage. Also, crucially, yoga helps us learn to breathe through frustrations instead of giving in to them. I was so happy to see these kids bring their awesome energy to yoga class."*

-Natalie Grazian

Remember, yoga is suitable for all age groups and can be adapted to any fitness level. It is far more than a physical practice; rather, it is a pathway to self-discovery and confidence, allowing us to foster resilience and compassion within ourselves. At Hands to Love, as we continue to build a community around yoga, we strive to create a supportive network where individuals can share their journeys, celebrate their progress, and uplift one another, regardless of their capabilities or differences.

-Angel Nguyen, OTS, University of Florida Department of Occupational Therapy.



## H2L Innovation Station

### Limb Different Toys Matter- Here's Why

I have never had a toy with a limb difference like mine. Growing up with a partial hand, I tried so hard to adapt to the limb typical world that it didn't occur to me that toys with limb differences like mine could be possible. I can only imagine how much my 5 year old self would have loved one of these dolls!

But of course they're not only possible - there now are so many incredible options available! Here are the dolls and toys I know about; if you know of others, please message me through [social media](#) so that I can add them to my [website resources page](#).

For children with limb differences, these toys can:

- boost self-esteem - encourage them to embrace their differences
- offer belonging, comfort, & connection - remind them they aren't alone
- provide representation - help them see themselves positively

These toys can ALSO:

- foster imaginative play that includes their differences
- offer opportunities to practice responding to questions about their limb difference
- open conversations with peers & siblings

For children with typical limbs, these toys can:

- normalize disabilities & differences in body shapes/sizes
- promote acceptance, empathy, & understanding of differences
- serve as powerful tools for inclusion

Where do these toys belong? Wherever children live, learn, play, & visit, such as:

- daycares
- extracurricular activities
- homes of peers & loved ones
- public libraries
- recreational & after care centers
- schools & educational facilities
- summer camps

How can people who are raising or work with "limb typical" children be allies?

- promote inclusive toys with educators, librarians, & program staff
- encourage children to role play by asking kind questions

Who makes limb difference toys?

- Plush dolls & stuffies
  - [A Button and a Stitch](#)
  - [A Doll Like Me](#)
  - [Budsies](#)
  - [Crochet-ABLEs](#)
  - [Kikilishop](#)
  - [Mayana & Friends](#)
  - [Reindeer in Here](#) (Blizz has one smaller antler)
  - [Vermont Teddy Bear](#) (in collaboration with Amputee Coalition)
- 18" "realistic" dolls:
  - [customized American Girl dolls](#) by A Step Ahead Prosthetics
  - ["My Life" as a gymnast](#) with prosthetic leg by Walmart
  - ["Our Generation"](#) with prosthetic leg by Target
- Action Figures
  - [Lego®](#) Autumn has a partial arm

At what age can children benefit from playing with inclusive dolls?

- the younger the better!
- it's never too early to make the world kinder & more inclusive

Transparency: I do not do not receive any commissions or kick backs for toy recommendations. Occasionally companies send me free products to try.

**Laura Faye Clubok, MS, OTR/L**  
**[On The Other Hand Therapy](#)**  
 Columbus, Ohio



**WE NEED YOU!**

Hand Camp 2025 is scheduled for April 4th-6th with Teen Camp occurring on April 3rd-4th at Keystone Camp and Conference Center in Starke, FL.

Volunteer registration is FREE, but we encourage you to consider donating to the John Dufek Volunteer Fund, which helps cover the costs of volunteer provisions and background checks.

Apply [HERE](#)

\*Email [info@handstolove.org](mailto:info@handstolove.org) with any questions!\*

**HANDS TO LOVE****VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

NOW OPEN

**APPLY TODAY**

## Recurring Donations

1. Navigate to [handstolove.org](http://handstolove.org) and click on the "Donate" tab on the top right
2. Scroll down and click the blue "Make a Donation" button
3. Click the blue "Donate" button on the right side of the screen
4. A pop-up will appear with amount options. Instead of choosing "One-time," consider setting up a monthly, quarterly, or annual donation.

Feel free to email [info@handstolove.org](mailto:info@handstolove.org) with any questions!

## OUR MISSION

"Hands to Love (H2L) empowers children with upper limb differences and their families through connections, support, and resources"



Hands To Love is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. We strive to provide all H2L events and activities at the lowest possible cost to our families. We rely on the donations of generous supporters like you in providing services to upper limb different youth and their families.

Thank you for helping us make a difference!

To give, click [here](#)

