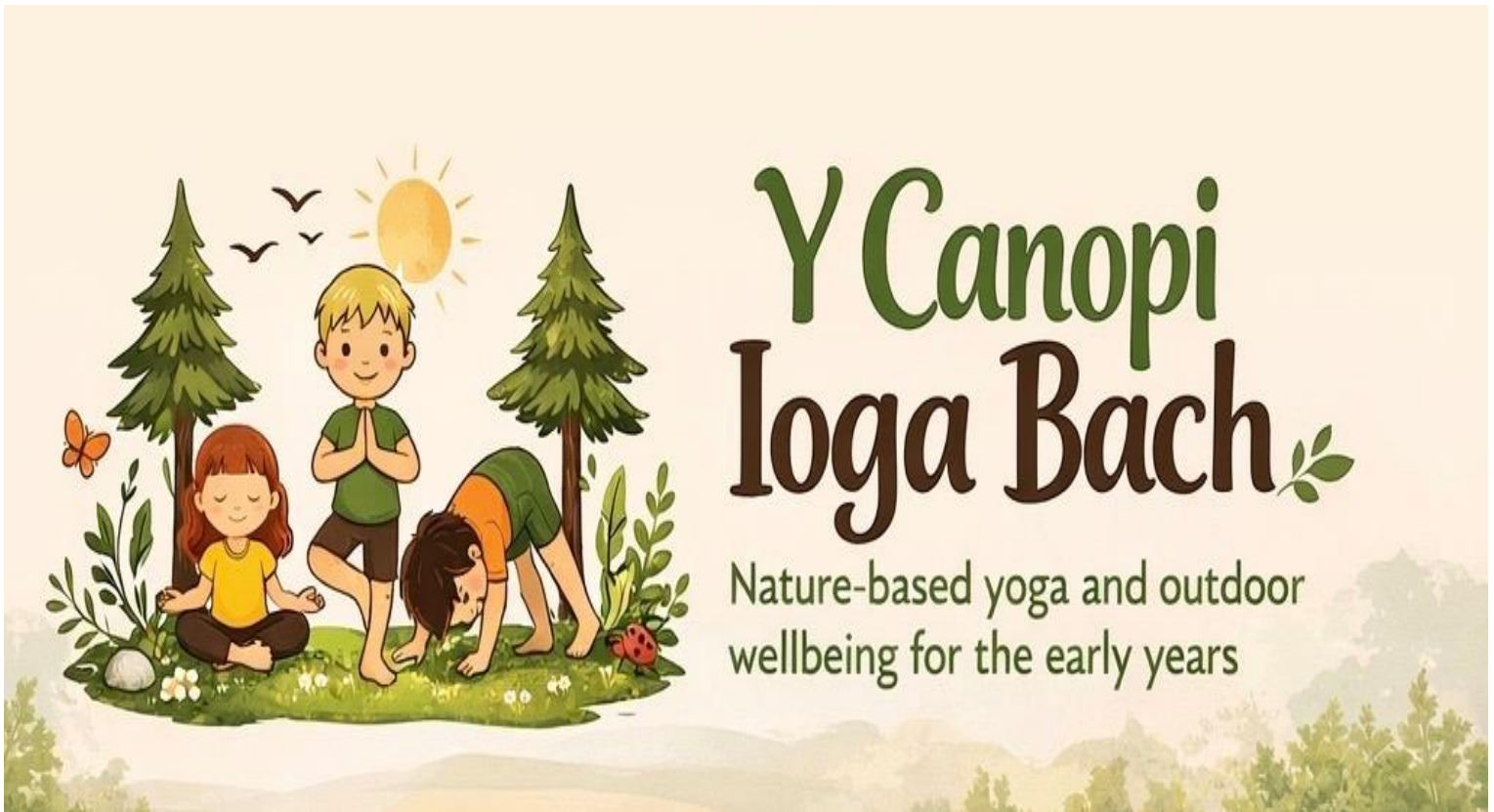


I Canopi Ioga Bach

A nature-based yoga and outdoor wellbeing for early years children.

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Introduction

Y Canopi Ioga Bach is an early year's wellbeing workshop to combine outdoor learning. This idea is a continuation of Forest School principals and child-friendly yoga practices to support the holistic development of young children. The layout of the workshop would provide structured outdoor sessions where children would explore their natural environment, while also learning movement-based yoga activities to support calming mindfulness practices within natural environments.

This idea is also to support children by building on skills in yoga to help them develop their holistic development. In the sessions there will be structured outdoor sessions where children will explore nature and movement-based activities and be able to experience mindfulness practices.

This idea has been developed from 6 years of professional experience working firsthand in the early years. From observations there were repeated opportunities of positive responses when outdoor learning took place. Children often become more engaged and focused when in nature as they can more freely interreact with their peers but also with the natural environment.

In Wales, outdoor learning and wellbeing in childhood education has become increasingly recognised as an important experience. The Curriculum for Wales states that children need to develop as confident individuals who can control and understand their physical and emotional wellbeing needs (Welsh Government, 2022). Additionally, more recent Welsh Government policy emphasises how important it is for practitioners to support children's wellbeing and resilience in early years settings, especially due to the social impact of COVID-19 (Welsh Government, 2023).

Outdoor experiences that can be combined with relaxation sessions such as yoga can help children achieve or work towards the Welsh education aims of developing emotional awareness, physical confidence and positive social relationships.

Why This Idea Is Different?

Across the United Kingdom, approaches such as forest schools have become more popular, the schools provide children with different experiences and opportunity to explore the environment around them, develop their resilience and to engage in experimental risks in their new environment.

However, Y Canopi Ioga Bach explores outdoor learning with a structured and mindfulness centred approach within yoga activities that will be specifically adapted for younger children, allowing children to explore the natural world by integrating structured exercises outside will give children opportunity to develop skills such as self-regulation and emotional awareness.

Research has found that schools that have incorporated yoga-based activities within the school environment can improve mental health, can build attention and support wellbeing among children (Khalsa and Butzer, 2016). Similarly, having children engage in mindfulness practices can help children become more aware of their emotions and how they respond to stress in their life (Carsley, Khoury and Heath, 2018).

With schools integrating the workshop it shows that there is a broader educational movement. It emphasises sustainability and allowing children to take responsibility of their environment in early childhood education. Davis and Elliot (2014) argue that for children their early childhood education is a vital role in helping children understand sustainability and that they can make connections to their natural environment.

Allowing children to explore the natural world around them or in an education setting this allows them to engage in reflective activities. The yoga workshop aims to support wellbeing and allow children at a young age to become aware of their environment.

Benefits For Early Years Development

Experience's children have during their early childhood can have significant impact on their long-term development. Workshops that can incorporate movement, play and exploration can help support other areas of their growth and development.

Physical Development

Outdoor learning encourages children to become active during their play, which supports their development of their growth motor skills, coordination and balance. Allowing children to experience climbing, running or balancing on natural surfaces helps build their confidence of the natural world around them. Yoga can improve children's flexibility, posture and special awareness. When these activities are adapted for younger children, poses can be playfully introduced through storytelling to gain attention but also engagement, while also supporting and encouraging the use of their imagination. Practitioners should allow time for children to part-take in physical activities as this is recognised as being essential for physical and cognitive development (Tovey, 2020).

Emotional Wellbeing and Self-Regulation

Another benefit of yoga activities is that it supports children's emotional regulation. Mindfulness activities like breathing exercises, stretching and reflection can help children learn to handle their strong emotions appropriately. The research suggests that interventions on mindfulness in a school environment can improve attention and emotional wellbeing (Carsley, Khoury and Heath, 2018). Yoga workshops that can be delivered in educational settings have also shown great progress in reducing anxiety and behaviours within the settings (Khalsa and Butzer, 2016).

Cognitive Development

Being able to explore the outdoors and giving children the opportunity to do so allows room for them to explore their curiosity and problem-solving skills, which encourages cognitive development in early childhood. Piaget (1964) emphasised that children learn through being active and engaged in their environment, which highlights the importance of real, hands-on experiences for children. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) pointed out how

important social interactions and adult guided learning experiences are. Allowing children to engage in group activities during the sessions will allow children to collaboratively learn with their peers but also with some guidance of practitioners.

Social Development and Play

In the early years, play is seen as a fundamental part of child development. Whitebread et al. (2017) indicates that play supports children's ability to be creative, problem-solve and build on their communication and emotional resilience.

Outdoor learning environments have been shown to support social interactions because they allow children the space to collaboratively play and explore using their imagination (Waite, 2017).

In Wales Organisations such as Play Wales highlight the importance of outdoor play in child development. Their research emphasises that outdoor play supports physical health, emotional wellbeing and developing the child's understanding of the natural environment around them.

Challenges and Barriers

Y Canopi Ioga Bach can offer many potential benefits, however there are challenges that would affect the development of the business.

Weather and environmental issues

Being an outdoor workshop this concept must adapt to the change in the weather conditions. While yoga and outdoor exercise can take place in a vast range of environments, it must come with carefully thought-out planning and to be prepared with appropriate clothing that is essential for the children's comfort and safety (NSPCC, 2025).

Training

As practitioners, it is important while providing care for children that training is up to date and relevant to the programme delivered and requires qualifications such as: -

- Forest School training
- Children's yoga Instructor training
- Safeguarding training
- Paediatric first aid
- DBS check

These requirements may be initial barriers to the workshop but not long term. They ensure that the safety and professionalism is a key factor to the business.

Safety and Risk

The outdoor environment will naturally be at risk of the elements. However, risk management strategies allow children to experience challenges that can encourage resilience and confidence (Tovey, 2020).

Financial considerations

The initial costs will include training, insurance and appropriate equipment. However, compared to indoor yoga businesses, the investments required will be low. Funding through the Welsh Government Schemes may be available to support outdoor learning and community wellbeing and early years development (Welsh Government, 2024).

Target Audience and Stakeholders

The success of Y Canopi Ioga Bach relies in collaborations within several groups within early years.

Children

The primary target audience would be children aged 3-7 years old. Children at this stage of their development would benefit from the sensory explorations of the outdoors and the storytelling to help their imagination and physical movements.

Families

Parents have shown a higher interest in activities that support children's wellbeing while also prioritising the use of the outdoors to encourage play. The use of work shops that encourage the limited use of screen time and promotes healthy physical activity are more sort out activities to families.

Education and community organisations

This business pitch can work as a partnering organisation with schools or communities to support the deliverance of outdoor wellbeing initiatives. Learning Through Landscapes Cymru actively promote the use of outdoor learning environments in early years settings. They highlight how nature-based learning and experiences benefits children when they explore the world around them (Learning through Landscapes Cymru, 2023).

Why this idea has been developed

The motivation to develop Y Canopi Ioga Bach has been based on six years of professional experience working in early years education. Through working with children, it is presented how the outdoor learning opportunities can be endless allowing children to build on their engagement, behaviour and confidence.

In person observations give teaching moments of how calm reflection breathing exercises and gentle movements can help regulate their emotions during busy environments and dealing with big emotions. These experiences allow practitioners to build their knowledge of children's developmental needs and how to adapt activities to support their individual learning and wellbeing. When combining professional

experience and evidence to support and expand on developments within the workshop, supporting children's holistic development through nature-based practises.

Conclusion

Y Canopi Ioga Bach is an approach to early childhood wellbeing by encouraging the use of outdoor learning, exploration of the environment and yoga-based relaxation techniques. The workshop aligns in accordance with Welsh educational priorities that focus on wellbeing, experimenting with the environment through learning experiences and making connections with nature. The yoga sessions encourage the development of emotional awareness and physical confidence to support children's development.

Even though there will be challenges to face such as training and environmental factors, the benefits for children's physical health, emotional wellbeing and social development are more significant. Overall, Y Canopi Ioga Bach intends to create warming, meaningful learning experiences to support children's health and long-term connection. To nature and later life experiences.

Part B

An academic Evaluation of the Y Canopi Ioga Bach Concept

The concept of Early Years Development

The Concept of Y Canopi Ioga Bach is an outdoor yoga and wellbeing workshop to be targeted in early years education. This aligns with research based around holistic development in early childhood. Early childhood education emphasises and recognised the importance of physical activity, emotional wellbeing and play during outdoor learning to support development (Welsh Government, 2024).

Yoga-based workshops can support several areas of a child's development in their early years, this includes physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. Davis and Elliot (2014) research highlights how important it is so allow children to discover and learn about sustainability and wellbeing in early years experiences, especially when they explore and experiment in nature-based practises. The use of the outdoors for the workshop encourages to inform children on sustainability-based pedagogy, allowing children to develop positive relationships to their natural environment.

Physical development

Introducing yoga activities like stretching, balancing and being able to control movements support children's development of their gross motor skills, coordination and body awareness. These are vital developments of early childhood physical development that reflects the Curriculum for Wales framework, that states that movement and wellbeing is key to child development (Welsh Government, 2022).

Research based on yoga activities in educational settings suggest positives such as flexibility, strength and balance, which are important in early childhood when children are continuously looking for ways to strengthen their beginning motor skills (Khalsa and Butzer, 2016). Additionally, regular physical activity can improve attention and concentration which allows children to develop their readiness (Premier Education, 2026).

Exploring outdoor yoga activities may further explore physical engagement by encouraging children to move through their natural environment. Learning Through Landscapes Cymru (2023) emphasises outdoor environments can support exploration, children's ability to take risks and building on their physical skills, which all vital developmental areas on early childhood.

Social and Emotional Development

The social and emotional development of a child is a key area that Y Canopi Ioga Bach aims to support and evolve. Yoga emphasises that when children practise mindfulness and breathing exercises this will support their emotional regulation and, resilience and self-awareness (Khalsa and Butzer, 2016).

Emotional regulation is an essential skill for children to develop as this will affect their long-term wellbeing and learning. The Welsh Government's early childhood play, learning and care plan discusses that supporting children's emotional development and wellbeing are a goal in early years provision (Welsh Government, 2024). Yoga can add to this by giving children structured activities for children to practise strategies to support calming time and encourage emotional literacy.

Additionally, group activities in yoga allow children to engage in cooperation with their peers, observe and test out the use of empathy and communication as children participate in the exercises. According to Whitebread et al. (2017), activities that have been developed through play to support group participation allow social skills and collaborative behaviours.

Cognitive Development

Yoga activities have been linked to cognitive development by a combination of movement and mindfulness practices have been shown to improve focus and self-regulation in young children (Khalsa and Butzer, 2016).

The Welsh Government (2022) discuss the Curriculum for Wales and how pedagogical approaches integrate physical movement with learning and understanding the link between physical and cognitive development. Through imaginative storytelling and themed yoga sessions such as animal theme poses, children are taking in newly learnt language, creativity and problem-solving skills (Hagood, 2026).

Outdoor learning environments can enhance cognitive development by offering rich sensory experiences through exploration. Learning Through Landscapes Cymru (2023) states that outdoor learning encourages curiosity, investigation and critical thinking.

Barriers and challenges

The yoga workshop has potential benefits, however it is important to critically evaluate any possible barriers that could be associated with the implementation in an early year's setting.

Training and Practitioners

One potential barrier is practitioners may lack confidence or training. In early years practitioners may not have the confidence or knowledge to deliver yoga-based activities without training. According to Jones et al. (2020) practitioners to provide adequate care and learning opportunities, must have up to date training to understand and deliver to the best of their ability correctly.

Curriculum Pressure

A challenge faced is pressures to deliver the curriculum within a limited amount of time. Practitioners struggle to incorporate all additional programmes into the busy schedules (Mittermeier and Benade, 2023). However, the activities could be integrated into existing plans by creating a yoga session in physical development activities such as P.E, wellbeing sessions or outdoor learning, which then aligns with the current curriculum (Youth Support Trust, 2024).

Weather and Outdoor Limitations

Y Canopi Ioga Sessions is an outdoor based workshop, so the delivery of the scheme will face challenges based on the weather conditions, particularly in Wales. While it is positively promoted in Wales, settings must provide appropriate clothing, shelter and thorough risk assessments are in place (Adam, 2024). Nevertheless, Research has shown that outdoor learning does not have to be limited due to most weather as learning can take place in a range of conditions when planning has been implemented (Play Wales, 2023).

Accessibility and Inclusion

Another consideration is ensuring that the workshop is inclusive and accessible to diverse needs and abilities. Adaptions may be needed for any children with physical disabilities or additional learning needs (ALN). Benefits of outdoor learning for children with ALN allow rich sensory experiences and chances to widen their physical activity and social development in an inclusive environment (The Department for Education, 2026)

Inclusive practise is a key principle of Welsh early years policy, new workshops should be designed to be adaptable to diverse learners (Welsh Government, 2024). Yoga can be adapted through seated positions or simplifying poses to ensure accessibility.

Practise, Policy and Research in the Curriculum for Wales

The Y Canopi Ioga Bach concept has several key policies and frameworks within Wales.

Curriculum for Wales – Emphasises a holistic approach to physical activity and health, wellbeing and outdoor learning (Welsh Government, 2022). Yoga-based activities are clear support to the curriculum in the health and Wellbeing area of learning, which explores children to develop physical competency and emotional resilience.

Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care Plan- The Welsh Government's Early Childhood Play, Learning and care plan (2024) points out the importance of providing rich environments that encourage the wellbeing of children, play and development. The workshop aligns with this strategy by allowing active play, emotional wellbeing and outdoor opportunities.

Outdoor Learning and Play- Outdoor learning are hugely promoted in Welsh policy and practice. The Organisations such as Learning Through Landscapes Cymru and Play Wales are advocates for gaining increased time in the outdoors and play opportunities for children as they provide support to children's mental health (as Learning Through Landscapes Cymru, 2023, Play Wales, 2023).

Sustainability and Environmental Awareness – The yoga concept also aligns with education and sustainability, which helps encourage children to develop healthy and positive relationships with the environment (Davis and Elliot, 2014). Outdoor yoga sessions could explore nature and mindfulness in spaces but also become aware of the environmental needs around them such as recycling to protect nature (Heathfield Knoll School, 2025).

Future Developments

Small scale - Y Canopi Ioga Bach has potential to further develop throughout the future of early years. Initially the workshop could be tested on a small scale in individual early years settings in Wales to allow practitioners the ability to experience the sessions and to gather feedback from children, families and staff. The beginning sessions could

develop outcomes related to children's wellbeing, engagement and physical development. Feedback will there for be the key factor for the growth of the business to hear directly from the participants for the best outcome to improve each session and to acknowledge areas of improvement to expand on skills (WJEC, 2019).

Expanding Across the Early Years – If successful, the workshop could be expanded wider and be introduced into further settings such as nurseries, schools, flying start programmes or as a community family support event. Local authorities or early years organisations could help support training opportunities for community development through funding from the Government to fund parents to attend support services to promote bonds and attachments within their families (Gov 25 check)

Professional Development – Future development could entail creating a training programme for practitioners in early years or adults, enabling them to integrate yoga and mindfulness practices into their everyday learning. Research found by Jones et al. (2020) states that practitioner training is essential for establishing new schemes in the workplace especially in early childhood education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Y Canopi loga Bach is an innovative business idea that is focused on early childhood education by encouraging yoga, outdoor learning and wellbeing practices all combined into one. The workshop aligns that current Welsh early year's policy and research, focusing on physical development, emotional wellbeing, play based learning and outdoor education. Evidence showing that children in the outdoors benefits children's gross motor skills while exploring rich sensory experiences through holistic learning.

Overall, Y Canopi loga Bach has the potential to positively contribute to early childhood practice. With further research and implementation sessions, it could evolve into a supportive and educating environment giving children enriched experiences in the early years.

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