Benefits of stretching:
Stretching works by forcing the elastic connective tissue (the fascia) surrounding a muscle to lengthen. Frequent stretching can actually make the entire muscle longer. The most obvious benefit of stretching is increased flexibility, that is, a joint's ability to move through its entire range of motion. However, increased flexibility provides a number of other advantages, such as helping balance muscle groups within the body, improving balance and posture, increasing agility and decreasing the risk of injury. A lack of flexibility can contribute to stiffness, poor posture, back pain and movement limitations as muscles become shorter, tighter and weaker.

Safety tips:
• Before starting a stretching routine, perform a 5-10 minute full body warm up by walking stairs, marching or dancing.
• Carefully get into the stretch position and gently take up muscle slack until a stretch is felt.
• Pay close attention to posture and body alignment and stretch one specific muscle at a time
• Hold the stretch and take out slack as the muscle relaxes. Do not bounce while stretching. Simply hold the stretch, breathe deeply and relax.
• Use a chair or wall for support if necessary.
• Stretches should be performed at least once and ideally twice a day to achieve maximum increases in flexibility.
• Stretches should be performed both before and after activity. Stretches before an activity – either occupational or sport - can be specific to muscles used in that activity. Stretching to enhance one's general flexibility should be performed after an activity when the core body temperature is higher.