

Tips for Parents

The following is researched information, taken from a number of sources, which may help you, our parents, in assisting your children master the difficult and time-consuming sport of gymnastics.



Girls and Boys all ages and stages

- Talk to your child about their interests. Find out what physical activities or sports appeal to them.

Recognize and respect your child's reasons for playing a sport or practicing a physical activity. They might want to compete for medals and titles, or they might simply want to have fun and socialize through activity.

- Be **positive** when supporting your child, regardless of results. Children will retreat from activity when their parents become demanding about results!

Support your child's activities as a parent, not as a 24-hour coach. Your primary role is to assist with transportation, good nutrition, rest and a relatively balanced lifestyle.

- Support your child's coaches and instructors. If you have questions or concerns other than physical safety, approach them when they are not busy coaching or instructing.

Your child might pursue extra interests outside sport and physical activity, and things can get busy in a hurry. Help them to balance their time according to their best interests.

- Educate yourself on good nutrition and healthy lifestyle habits for your child. Consult sport and health websites, books, magazines and videos, and ask your child's coach or instructor for guidance.

FUNDamentals stage - Girls 6-8 years, Boys 6-9 years

If your child has a preferred activity, encourage her or him to participate two or three per week. Be aware that both the National Levels and Elite streams may require more from your child and try to compensate in other areas.

- At the same time, encourage participation in a variety of other fun physical activities if at all possible to develop a wide range of skills and abilities.

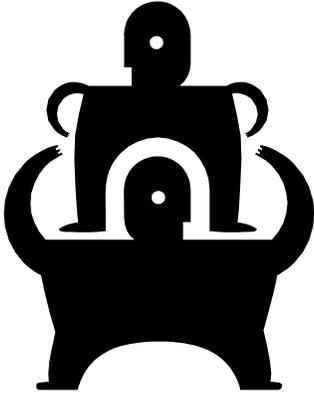
Encourage your child to different sporting activities during the school holidays, but still be outside.

Check if your child's activities address the **ABCs** of athletic development; namely:

Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed.



Learn to Train stage - Girls 8-11 years, Boys 9-12 years



Identify sports and physical activities that your child enjoys. Start to focus on one or two during the course of the year. This should be about the time that your child states that they really want to do competitive gymnastics and start training seriously.

- Encourage your child to focus on fun and mastering skills. **Winning should be secondary at this age.**

Recognize and celebrate your child's **individual** improvement.

- In team environments, help your child celebrate the success and improvement of the team.

Encourage your child to pursue unstructured play outside of organized sport and physical activity.

Train to Train Stage - Girls 11-15 years, Boys 12-16 years



If your child is identified as a special talent, **celebrate!** However, be cautious about specializing in one sport, event, or position before age 11 (girls) or 13 (boys).

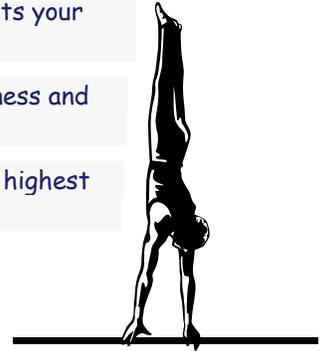
- Remember that your child might still have undiscovered talent and interest in other physical activities.

Be careful that your child does not over-train or over-compete, as injury and burnout can result.

- Ask the coach or instructor how the training program fits your child's stage of development.

Talk with your child about key values in sport and activity: fun, fairness and respect.

- Avoid putting pressure on your child to perform and compete! This stage has the highest rate of dropout due to pressure and stress.



Please remember that you are a parent,

and NOT your child's coach.

Please let your child rest and do not try to coach at home!

Please help us to coach your child to the best of our ability.