

CONGRATULATIONS ON BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE ATLANTIC GYMNASTICS TRAINING CENTER TEAM, TEAM ATLANTIC. IT IS BOTH AN HONOR AND A TRIBUTE TO YOUR FINE TALENTS. YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION HAVE EARNED YOU THIS PRIVILEGE. WE HOPE YOUR PAST EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE AND BE EXPANDED AS THE YEAR PROGRESSES. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT COMMUNICATION IS A KEY FACTOR IN ANY SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIP. THIS TEAM HANDBOOK, ALONG WITH YOUR WILLINGNESS TO COME DIRECTLY TO US, SHOULD A PROBLEM ARISE, WILL HELP US REALIZE YOUR GOALS! READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY. BOTH PARENTS AND GYMNAST SHOULD READ THIS. IT CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED TO KNOW REGARDING YOUR TEAM MEMBERSHIP.

ATLANTIC GYMNASTICS TRAINING CENTER

The adventure you and your child are about to embark on will be a very special one. (Yes, it will be your adventure too). Over the years we have had the pleasure of watching hundreds of children learn, grow, develop and mature into confident young adults who are ready to face the world. We look forward to the unique opportunities which working with your child will present.

The undertaking will give your child a stage on which to develop her confidence, poise, individuality, mental and physical discipline, determination, appreciation for dedicated effort and self-respect. Your child will mature among individuals and circumstances that will demand her finest efforts and judgments. They will develop close relationships with other young athletes who demand the best of themselves and expect the best in others. Educational opportunities will be made available which will compliment and enhance the experiences they will have in the gym. They will also have a lot of fun.

Welcome to TEAM ATLANTIC!

The Coaching staff would like to personally congratulate each and every one of you for choosing gymnastics for your child. Gymnastics is the greatest overall body conditioning activity in which you could have your child involved. A study was done testing the components of physical fitness (strength, flexibility, coordination, etc.) of a number of college athletes involved in various sports. When the totals were added up, gymnasts proved to be the most physically fit. Some of the physical attributes that you will find developing in your young gymnast will be: strength, flexibility, kinesthetic awareness, muscular control, muscular endurance, coordination, timing, explosive power, agility, running speed, balance, and grace. Some of the mental attributes that we hope to develop are positive self-image, self-motivation, tenacity, patience, and willingness to sacrifice for personal development, goal setting, courage and enjoyment. It is rewarding and fun to work hard, improve your skills, and achieve your goals.

GYMNASTICS IS THE ROOT OF ALL SPORTS

Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center was founded with the belief that gymnastics is the root of all sports. Gymnastics, when taught properly, can be the vehicle with which to deliver life long knowledge of physical fitness. Jumping, running, rolling, strength and flexibility are the basic aspects of many sports. No better foundation can be laid than one built on the basic attributes of gymnastics. Although the public schools in this country have regressed in this area of thought, many of the worlds most advanced nations still use gymnastics as the core of their physical fitness programs.

Physical skill development is certainly a byproduct of a good gymnastics program. Gymnastics as a sport, however, is an age-limited experience. You do not see too many over 30s flipping and swinging away their afternoons. With this in mind Atlantic Gymnastics has made it a primary goal to insure that our program delivers more than just physical development. Properly taught, gymnastics teaches self-esteem, self-motivation, self-discipline, determination, work ethic, time management, teamwork, team spirit, leadership, sportsmanship, respect for danger, respect for others, poise and grace. When our students are done turning cartwheels they will have established a base of life skills that will undoubtedly assist them through all of their non-flipping years. We measure success not by the number of trophies on the wall, but rather on what each child can take with them once they leave the sport of gymnastics.

EVERY CHILD IS A CHAMPION AT ATLANTIC GYMNASTICS

Atlantic Gymnastics believes that children are the worlds most precious gift. Our goal is to see to it that children who participate in our program receive the same quality instruction regardless of their ability. Accomplishing this insures that each child will feel as special as they truly are.

BACKGROUND

TEAM ATLANTIC is one of the many programs offered by the ATLANTIC GYMNASTICS TRAINING CENTER (AGTC) The Owners of Atlantic Gymnastics are Tony and Stephanie Retrosi. Atlantic Gymnastics was opened in 1994. In the spring of 2005 the Dover location was opened.

GYMNASTICS PROGRAM

The basic philosophy of the TEAM ATLANTIC program is that of establishing a TOTAL program which includes:

- A program that allows for and facilitates the realization of any students interests and goals.
- To be receptive to each students wishes while being organized in a manner that keeps interests from conflicting.
- To provide a safe and nurturing environment that helps build each students confidence and self esteem.
- To provide a competent and stable staff that stays current with the latest technical and educational methods.
- Most importantly, to always work on the lines of communication between all facets of our program.

TEAM ATLANTIC

The philosophy of TEAM ATLANTIC is a simple one. We strive to ensure that each and every child in our program is made to feel special. We offer growth in areas as strength, flexibility, peer interaction, development of self-confidence and overall well being in conjunction with gymnastics skill acquisition. It is our belief that an emphasis on correct form, proper technique, and precise execution will result in not only higher scores (every child's goal) but also a higher level of gymnastics. Our goals are to offer every child the best professional instruction, in a well organized gym, with new state of the art equipment, and a fun filled and controlled learning environment. We hope that your child's dreams come true with TEAM ATLANTIC.

TEAM ATLANTIC views gymnastics as a sport of opportunity an opportunity for young people to grow with dedication and determination, an opportunity to achieve dreams, and an opportunity to grow to healthy and honorable adulthood. This is no easy task. Both individual and family dedication and sacrifice will be required and each advancement through the USAG system will demand additional effort. We stand ready to contribute our energy, our knowledge and experience, and our love and support to your efforts. We welcome you to our program and we look forward to helping you and your child achieve your dreams.

We believe that gymnastics is a tool to help kids grow into happy, healthy, and responsible adults. We believe that through gymnastics training the children learn more than just cartwheels and somersaults. We agree with psychologists who say that the basic attitude common to happy, healthy, responsible adults is a true love of learning. We know that the best way to foster a love of learning is to help our athletes associate learning and challenge with purpose and fun. The athletes come to the gym excited to learn and to meet new challenges. They come to share a big part of their life, talk about their dreams, and train to master the skills that will take them where dreams come true.

Competition is the American way. It is part of our daily lives. We strive to be the best we can be in athletics, business, scholastics, government, and as parents and educators. This competitive spirit, however, must be learned and developed. This is best started

during the early character-shaping years. The spirit of competition lies within the human psyche, waiting to be nurtured and developed for real world application throughout our lives. We at TEAM ATLANTIC are committed to fostering the spirit of competition among our young athletes.

The Olympic Creed

The important thing in the Olympic Games, is not to win, but to take part; the important thing in life, is not the triumph, but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered, but to have fought well. To spread these concepts is to build up a stronger and more valiant and, above all, more generous humanity.

-Baron Pierre de Coubertin

The philosophy of TEAM ATLANTIC closely mirrors the above statement. The program was founded on the belief that there can be a place for everyone on the competitive gymnastics field; and the reality that a rare few will ever make it to the top. It must therefore be the process, and not the outcome, that is emphasized. Character, indeed life, is truly shaped by the day to day toil and struggle that is the measure of the human soul. Accomplishment and success come to fruition only after a sometimes long and arduous process. Our Challenge then is to nurture the student-athlete in a healthy, wholesome, enjoyable environment, stressing sound progressive fundamentals, so as to become a model for others to live by. Success, in its own disguise, for each of us will follow.

The coaches at TEAM ATLANTIC believe that it is important for every gymnast to get as much out of this sport as they possibly can, while at the same time having an incredibly positive experience. The approach that we take with our teams is similar to the approach taken by many successful people in their adult lives. Through gymnastics our athletes discover the link between desire, dedication, and direction and the achievement of their dreams. At TEAM ATLANTIC we define success as: To be the best that you are capable of becoming.

TEAM ATLANTIC athletes learn many valuable qualities inherently from the sport of gymnastics. Qualities such as self discipline (knowing what work is to be done in order to achieve a goal), self motivation (working hard because they want to), respect (for the sport of gymnastics, teammates and coaches) and sportsmanship (playing by the rules, learning how to deal with failure, and winning graciously). Still more qualities are: dedication, leadership, concentration, time management, team work, friendship, gracefulness, nutritional awareness, and physical fitness. Gymnastics excellence means becoming the best you can be individually. To achieve this excellence takes setting goals (long and short range), and an incredible amount of effort to achieve those expectations. At AGTC each gymnast can expect a rigorous, regimented program. We will strive to be the best, recognizing the fact that...
If its worth doing at all - Its worth doing right!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TEAM ATLANTIC

TEAM AWARDS

1994 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10

1996 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10

1997 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 7

1998 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 5. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9

1999 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 6. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10

1999 STATE CHAMPIONS (WINTER) LEVEL 6

2000 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 7. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9

2000 STATE CHAMPIONS (WINTER) LEVEL 6

2001 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 7. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10.

2002 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 4, STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 5, STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 6. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 8. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10.

2003 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 7. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10.

2004 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 4. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 6. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 7. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 8. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10.

2005 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 5. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 8. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10.

2006 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 4. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 5. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 6. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 8. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 8. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9.

2007 STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 5. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 6. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 7. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 8. STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9. Level 9 team UNDEFEATED SEASON

2008 STATE CHAMPIONS. LEVEL 6, STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 9, STATE CHAMPIONS LEVEL 10

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

1994 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Lexa Evans

1995 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Lexa Evans

1996 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Lexa Evans, Tanya Joseph, Molly Pennington

1997 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Tanya Joseph

1995,1996,1997 USA CHAMPIONSHIP Qualifier Shannon Bowles

1997 USA National Team Member, Shannon Bowles

1997 TOPs National Qualifiers, Danielle Baker, Kaitlin Harrison, Stacey Peterson, Lindsay Shumway

1997 TOPs National Team Member, Kaitlin Harrison., Melissa Roeder

1998 American Challenge Competitors, Molly Pennington, Kaitlin Harrison

1998 Level 10 National Qualifier, Laura Hudson

1998 Level 9 Eastern National Qualifiers, Kaitlin Harrison, Jessica Kimball, Nicci Bradder

1998 US Challenge Competitor, Kaitlin Harrison.
1998 TOPs National Team, Melissa Roeder , Danielle Baker, Kaitlin Harrison
1999 American Challenge Competitors, Danielle Baker, Kaitlin Harrison, Stacey Peterson, Luci Vance
1999 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Danielle Baker, Kaitlin Harrison
1999 Level 9 Eastern Qualifiers, Morgan Fishbein, Stacey Peterson, Luci Vance
1999 National Elite Training Squad, Kaitlin Harrison, Luci Vance
2000 American Challenge Competitors, Luci Vance, Justine Turner, Kayla Rossi
2000 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Danielle Baker, Justine Turner
2000 Level 9 Eastern Qualifiers, Morgan Fishbein, Krystal Polychronis.
2000 US Challenge Qualifiers, Kaitlin Harrison, Justine Turner.
2000 NATIONAL GYMNASTICS FESTIVAL Qualifiers, Kaitlin Harrison.
2000 National Elite Training Squad, Kaitlin Harrison, Luci Vance, Justine Turner
2000 TOPs National Team. Melanie Tamposi
2001 LEVEL 9 Eastern Qualifiers, Kristin Fairburn, Krystal Polychronis
2001 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Morgan Fishbein, Kaitlin Harrison, Melanie Tamposi, Justine Turner, Luci Vance
2001 American Challenge Competitors, Justine Turner, Luci Vance,
2001 NATIONAL GYMNASTICS FESTIVAL Qualifiers, Justine Turner, Luci Vance
2001 NATIONAL ELITE TRAINING SQUAD MEMBERS, Justine Turner, Luci Vance
2001 TOPS National Team member, Justine Foster.
2002 American Challenge Competitors, Luci Vance.
2002 Level 9 Eastern National Qualifiers, Lindsay Shumway, Kendra DeWitt, Justine Foster.
2002 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Melanie Tamposi, Melissa Morganstern, Kaitlin Harrison, Morgan Fishbein.
2002 US Challenge Competitor, Melanie Tamposi.
2002 National Elite Training Squad Member, Melanie Tamposi.
2003 Level 9 Eastern National Qualifiers, Melissa Doucette, Britany Calley, Camille Quarles, Britney McMahon
2003 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Kaitlin Harrison, Justine Turner.
2004 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Kaitlin Harrison, Justine Turner. (Justine Turner 2nd Place Vaulting Champion)
2004 National TOPS Team. Samantha Doucette
2005 Level 9 Eastern National Qualifiers, Jessica Wood, Julie Pitkin.
2005 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Luci Vance, Justine Turner, Justine Foster. (Justine Foster 2nd Place Vaulting Champion, 1st Place Floor Champion)
2005 National TOPS Team. Samantha Doucette
2006 Level 9 Western Qualifier, Lindsey Hanson
2006 Level 10 National Qualifier, Justine Foster. (Justine Foster 2nd place Floor. 5th place Vault, 11th AA)
2007 Level 9 Eastern National Qualifiers, Jessica LaChance, Samantha Doucette, Lindsey Hanson, Natalie Sroda, Kate McGeever, Colby Chaput, Samantha Peterson, Kate Batchelder, Taylor Carr.
2007 TOPS National Qualifier, Annie Christman

Eastern National Champions, Colby Chaput, Kate McGeever, Lindsey Hanson,
Samantha Doucette
2007 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Britany Calley, Justine Foster
2008 Level 10 National Qualifiers, Justine Foster, Jessica Wood, Kate McGeever,
Melissa Doucette
2008 Level 9 Eastern National Qualifiers, Kate Bachelder, Ryleigh Osborne, Meegan
Daigler, Natalie Sroda
2008 TOPs National Qualifiers Annie Christman, Maura Sweeney

TEAM ATLANTIC GYMNASTS IN COLLEGE

Lexa Evans 1996; University of Alabama (full scholarship)
All American, Academic All American. NCAA Women of the Year 2000
Shannon Bowles 1997; University of Utah (full scholarship)
All American, Academic All American. NCAA Women of the year 2002
Kelly Lovejoy 1997; Kent State University (full scholarship)
Molly Pennington 2000; North Carolina State (full scholarship)
Nicci Bradder 2001; Rutgers University
Kendra DeWitt 2003; University of West Virginia.
Kristen Riffanacht 2003; University of Utah(full scholarship)
All American
Kaitlin Harrison 2004; University of Pittsburgh(full scholarship)
Melissa Morganstern 2004; James Madison University
Morgan Fishbein 2004; University of Maryland.
Justine Turner 2005; University of New Hampshire(full scholarship)
Becca Jackson 2005; University of Rhode Island(full scholarship)
Luci Vance 2005; North Carolina State(full scholarship)
Britney McMahan 2006; The Ohio State University
Jennifer Liston 2006; University of New Hampshire
Colby Chaput 2008; US Air Force Academy (full scholarship)
Kate McGeever 2008; University of New Hampshire
Kate Bachelder 2008; Rhode Island College
Justine Foster 2008; Auburn University (full scholarship)

TEAM ATLANTIC COACHING STAFF

Tony Retrosi, Owner, Head Coach, Program Director.

Tony has a MA in History from UNH and was teaching in public schools before he decided to coach full time. He has been awarded many State, Regional and National awards for his coaching accomplishments and service. He has coached at many national and inter-national competitions. He has lectured Nationally for many years on Safety and Risk Management as well as many technical lectures. Tony served at the Vice-Chairman of the National Elite Program Committee and Region 6 Elite Chairman for 12 years. Tony is the Director of The National Gymnastics Training Center summer camp in Huguenot, NY.

Cori Cunningham, Head Coach.

*Head Coach and Choreographer

*Responsible for coaching team levels 4- 10 on all four events and developmental team

*Education - University of NH - BA in English (graduated 1993) and MEd in Elementary Education (graduated 1996)

*Gymnastics Experience - gymnast with Giguere Gymnastics in Cherry Valley MA from 1980 to 1989 - was a Class 1 gymnast at graduation. Competed for University of New Hampshire on Vault, Beam and Floor from 1989 to 1992. Assistant coach for University of New Hampshire from 1993 to 1996. Been coaching with Tony since 1993 (15 years!!!)

*What makes me special...gymnastics and dance have been my passion from as early back as I can remember. I traveled the county as a gymnast and loved every minute of it and I still do the same as a coach. I have been a regional and national clinician. I have choreographed floor and beam routines for club gymnasts and collegiate gymnasts. Our team regularly sends gymnasts to Regionals and Nationals where we represent ourselves well and I am proud to be a part of that.

My family is involved with gymnastics as well. Anya my daughter is a Level 4 this year and my son Spencer loves to flip around in the gym.

Cori has her Masters in Education from UNH. She has been nominated as Elite Choreographer of the year by the US Elite Coaches association.

Jennifer Pellend. Development Team Director and Coach

Responsible for Developmental Team Program, Coaching level 4-10, and Skill Development for the Recreational Class Program utilizing the Star Skills Program.

Education: BS in Kinesiology, 2001, Masters in Arts in Teaching: Physical Education K - 12 University of New Hampshire

NH Department of Education Teaching; Physical Education k-12, since 2002

USA Gymnastics Safety Certified Instructor, since 1999

Experience:

My experience in gymnastics started when I was 6 years old and just like every other kid in the world - I wanted to be Mary Lou. Well that for sure never happened not even close! However, my love for gymnastics and the coordination it gave me led to a lifetime filled of sports. After several years of gymnastics I tried several other sports

(going to college on scholarship for Field Hockey and Lacrosse) only to end up missing it all too much. So, in 1999 I answered an add in the UNH student newspaper to come and teach gymnastics! Long story shortmany years later, many championship teams later (gymnastics, field hockey and lacrosse), many different job responsibilities within gymnastics later (Program Director, Rec Director, Team Coach, NH State USAG Board Member-Compulsory Chair, Class Instructor), many teaching experiences later (physical education teacher K-6 and 9-12), a marriage to an elite gymnast, and the birth of a future male gymnast here I am!

Allison Tiberghien. Team Coach

Matt Yellis. Team Coach and TOPS Manager

Responsible for coaching levels 4-10, developmental levels, and TOPS/Pre-Elite Education - Currently enrolled at the University of New England working towards a BA in Applied Exercise Science (expected graduation date Spring '09)

Gymnastics Experience - Did gymnastics as a child until age 12. Coached all levels of gymnastics at Kennebunk Gymnastics for 18 months. Employed as a full-time coach at Atlantic from January 2003 - current (5 years!). I have served as the TOPS Manager for the State of NH for the past three years.

Goals - I want to use gymnastics as a way to positively impact the lives of the children and parents. My desire is to see each athlete reach their highest potential both in the sport and as a person. I am involved with many Regional J. O. Clinics as well as the TOPS and Pre-Elite Programs at a National level.

Questions concerning the AGTC Team program

If you have a question, you should go to:

If you have any questions that involve the running of AGTC or the policies of:

Contact 1st, Stephanie Retrosi

Contact 2nd, Tony Retrosi,

Contact 3rd, Cori Cunningham

If you have any questions involving the running of the Team Atlantic program or the policies of:

Contact 1st Tony Retrosi

Contact 2nd Cori Cunningham

If you have any questions that involve your daughters specific progress or problems:

Contact 1st, Your daughters coach

Contact 2nd, Cori Cunningham

Contact 3rd, Tony Retrosi

If you have a question concerning fees and/or payments:

Contact 1st, Atlantic Office

Contact 2nd, Stephanie Retrosi

If You have a question concerning competition leotard, warm up, etc.:
Contact 1st: Alli or Cori

If you have a question concerning travel arrangements for over night meets:
Contact 1st: Cori

If you have a question concerning Team fees/payments
Contact 1st: Tony or Cori

If you have a question concerning ATLANTIC TEAM FUND
Contact 1st: Tony or Cori

COACH, PARENT, ATHLETE MEETINGS

In order to facilitate communication between the coach, gymnast and parent we will try to hold individual meetings once per year. At the meeting we will explain what lays in the season ahead for your daughter. Also covered at this meeting will be any change in your daughter(s) training time.

If you have a question concerning your daughter that you would like to discuss, our coaches are willing to meet before or after most practices by appointment. Tony and Cori have office hours daily 1-3.

COMPETITIVE STRUCTURE

All members of the TEAM ATLANTIC program will be participating and competing in the USA GYMNASTICS program. Its main office is located in Indianapolis, Indiana, and is responsible for the administration of all Women's, Mens and Rhythmic Gymnastics as well as Trampoline and Tumbling in this country. It is their responsibility to produce the competitive structure, along with its rules, regulations, and the athletes that represent our country in international competitions. Included in this responsibility is the developmental and age group programs that direct our gymnasts from the beginning stages.

There are 11 levels to the USA GYMNASTICS Women's Program. Levels 1-3 are non-competitive levels that center around teaching the basic core skills for each of the 4 Olympic events. They consist of doing individual skills and small routines while showing proficiency on 4 main points of each skill. When the gymnast successfully completes each skill and routine required on an event they may move on to the next level.

COMPULSORY OR OPTIONAL EXERCISES

The athletes compete either compulsory or optional exercises or both. Compulsory exercises (also called routines), are developed for each nation by the national governing body (USA Gymnastics in the United States). The compulsory routines are developed with varying levels of difficulty so the athletes use the compulsories to develop their skills progressively. Optional routines are choreographed (i.e. put together) by the gymnast and the coach. Optional routines are usually unique to each particular gymnast while compulsories are performed by all gymnasts in much the same manner. Scoring for compulsories and optional is similar except that the gymnast must follow a prescribed sequence of skills in compulsories.

Levels of Competition

Level 4 to Level 10 and Elite

The girls start with competing level 4 and go up to level 10. Levels 4, 5, and 6 are compulsory levels. Levels 8, 9, and 10 are optional levels. Level 7 is an optional level with certain compulsory skills required on each event. The Elite Level is too complicated and confusing to go into in this space.

The first competitive level is Level four. It consists entirely of compulsory routines. Compulsory routines are a pre-choreographed series of skills that each competitor must perform. Once again they are made up of core skills needed for each event, built on the skills from a previous level. The philosophy of these routines is for the athletes to practice toward perfection of these basics. The minimum age for this level is 6 and there is no maximum age. The athletes are arranged in age groups at competitions. At Level 4 awards are given in ranges rather than places.

Level 5 and Level 6 are also a compulsory only level of competition. Each level builds on the skills of the previous level and likewise is judged with higher expectations. The USA GYMNASTICS structure is based on a progressive step by step building of physical, emotional and psychological skills. Proficiency of all aspects of the gymnast at each level is expected and required to insure a safe smooth movement through the levels. The minimum age for this level of competition is 7.

Level 7 is an in between step. It bridges the gap between the all-compulsory levels of 5 and 6 and the all optional level of 8. The gymnasts have required skills that can be put together in an optional routine.

The first level of all optional competition begins with Level 8. Optional competition consists of each gymnast performing her own routines for each event. The Federation of International Gymnastics (FIG) produces the optional rules every 4 years in conjunction with the Olympics. This book dictates what each routine needs to contain, (composition), the value of what is done, (difficulty), and how to evaluate how well it is done, (execution). There are three optional only levels 8,9,10. The minimum age for level 8 is 8, while for levels 9 and 10 it is 9. As with the compulsory levels, the requirements and expectations from one level to the next increases.

Level 9 is the second level of optional competition. Its difficulty requirements and expectations are harder than at level 8.

Level 10 is considered a Pre-Elite Level and for the truly dedicated and motivated gymnast.

Elite is the 11th level of competition. Like level 10 it is for the truly dedicated athletes. The Elite level is broken up into 2 categories. National (pre-elite) and International. Children and JR. National Elites compete skill testing and optional routines. JR. International and SR International compete optional only. It is from the INTERNATIONAL rank that our Olympic and World Championship teams are chosen.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT A COMPETITION

Competition is the ultimate goal of this program and many of the life skills that we are attempting to teach are learned or honed through competing. However competition should never be undertaken in this sport for the mere sake of competition. The Russians, Romanians, Chinese, and others do not compete their athletes until they are 10 years old or older.

This is not to say that there will be no competition. There WILL be competition. We realize that many of our gymnasts (and their parents!) seek competition and like getting awards. They are valued and important. We agree. We will offer numerous opportunities to compete and win awards. It is just that we will not do so within the confines of the traditional gymnastics setting.

Traditional Gymnastics Competition: This is what you have seen on TV. The gymnasts march out and are evaluated on vault, bars, beam, and floor by dour ladies in ugly blue uniforms. The reality is actually much worse than you see on television. At the beginning levels the gyms are crammed with kids, the competition seems to last forever, and only the lucky few get meaningful rewards.

Our gymnasts will begin competition within the traditional setting after 2 - 4 years in the Developmental Program. These competitions will be local, small, and low key. The judges try to be warm and cheerful. The coaches will be the dour folks in sloppy warm-up suits. The competitions will serve a developmental purpose as they will begin to teach the athletes about competition and the connection between what they do in the gym and what is expected in a competition. It is our hope and expectation that our athletes will be over-prepared for these competitions and that they will have a great deal of success when they are performing before the judges for the first time.

WARM UP

The competition will begin with a warm up. Although it is called a warm up these periods closely resemble a workout. During the pre-competition warm up the gymnasts will begin stretching and other activities and then move to the apparatus for pre-competition skill and routine rehearsal. The gymnasts will usually rotate from event to event during the warm up with strictly applied time limits for each athlete or team so that everyone gets the same amount of time to practice.

MARCH IN

Following the warm up the athletes will assemble at some designated place. They will have changed into their competitive attire. They will then march in. Each athlete or team will generally march to music onto the floor area to be introduced. The judges are also introduced. This is a long standing gymnastics tradition. Then the national Anthem will be played. All will stand.

30 SECOND TOUCH

Following the march in the gymnasts will disperse to their first competition event. They will first stop to pay homage to the judges (bribes have been known to be exchanged. Candy is the most frequently used commodity.) After acknowledging the judges the optional level gymnasts will normally warm up yet again. Yes, it is exhausting. One reason practices have to be so long and tough is to condition the gymnasts so they can survive the warm up period in a typical meet. This second warm up period is called the 30 second touch. This is true even though the gymnasts receive 50 seconds on the uneven bars and can perform two vaults no matter how long it takes. This touch time is so coveted that guards are assigned to monitor this time with a stop watch.

The compulsory level gymnasts do not get to touch the equipment again. Perhaps, being relative beginners, they have not yet developed the need for further assurances that they can indeed survive the routines that they are required to perform.

TIME TO COMPETE

After all the marching, touching, and rehearsing, it is now time to compete. Parents will quickly determine that during the 4 - 5 hours they will typically spend watching a gymnastics meet, their child will actually compete a total of 3 or 4 minutes.

V, UB, BB, & FX

Gymnastics competitions for girls involve performances on four apparatuses called events: vault, uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise.

VAULTING

Vaulting consists of a run of about 70 - 80 feet followed by a jump to a small wooden and springing device called a spring board (what else?), and a diving flight to an apparatus which looks like a a Tongue (table) held up on metal posts. The gymnast lands on his or her hands on the table, usually somewhere around a handstand, and push off, performs some movement, and then lands on his/her feet. Vaulting requires extreme quickness, a fast run, a hard push from the table, some cool flips and stuff in the air, and a landing that is stuck.

UNEVEN BARS

The uneven parallel bars (bars) consist of two wood-coated, fiberglass rails held up by steel posts at different heights. Routines consist of 10 - 14 skills performed in a series. The gymnasts should show large swing skills, lots of handstands, a release and re-catch of the bars, some sort of somersaulting or twisting skill, and a dismount to the floor. The winner is the one who performs the most difficult routine with the fewest errors.

BALANCE BEAM

The balance beam (beam) is an apparatus made of steel and padding that is 16 feet long, 4 inches wide, and approximately 4 feet high. The gymnast will show a variety of skills from dance and tumbling and combine them into a routine which lasts from 70 - 90 seconds. Doing all that stuff on a surface 4 inches wide is difficult. The winner is the one who performs the most difficult routine with the fewest errors.

FLOOR EXERCISE

Floor exercise (floor) is performed on an area approx. 40 X 40. There is a platform under the pad and carpet called a spring floor. The spring floor can be comprised of either springs or foam blocks. There are approx. 1,600 blocks or springs under the floor. The girls perform to music. The routine should cover most of the area of the carpet, must include tumbling, and include lots of dance elements.

Competitions can be broken down into 6 categories.

Local meets may be conducted for any age division or level except elite. These meets are used to achieve a qualifying score to Sectional competitions. At a Sectional meet the gymnast is trying to reach a score to qualify to the State Championship. New Hampshire normally runs a split season where there are two state meets at levels 4,5 and 6. This year there will be only 1 state meet in the spring time.

At level 8 and above a gymnast may qualify to Regional Championships. We are in Region 6 which is composed of New York and New England. Level 9s can qualify to Eastern Nationals. Level 9s 10s and Elites may qualify from Regional to National Championships. The last type of competition category is Invitationals. Invitationals are team competitions. We have had teams compete at Invitationals through out the country. It is at these competitions that the gymnasts learn to compete as a team as well see how they compare to the other gymnasts in the USA.

SELECTION OF COMPETITIONS

Actual competition can begin as early as September for the compulsory levels and run through May. Level 8s and 9s Usually start competing late November and run through May. Level 10s and Elite season starts in December with the level 10s finishing up in May while the Elite season may run through August. The TEAM ATLANTIC coaching staff selects meets that we feel will most benefit the team. Some meets are chosen because they are required qualifiers to State Meets. Other meets are chosen based on availability, location, competition and need. A great deal of time is spent by the coaching staff scheduling competitions that will help the gymnasts peak at the correct time. Your daughter is expected to compete at whatever competitions to which they may be assigned. Any conflicting schedules should be cleared with the head coach.

There will be times when all gymnasts at the same level will not be competing at the same meet at the same time. Gymnast selection will be done by the coaching staff and will be based on recent meet scores, readiness, work ethic, practices, etc. In many meets we are simply required to enter no more than a certain number of competitors. We try to get everyone entered into a meet. That may mean than at times gymnasts will be competing as All Stars or on a 2nd Team.

The Coaching staff feels that it is very important to get the gymnasts out and get them national and even international exposure. We train the gymnasts to a national level and it is the exposure at these Invitationals which help them learn to deal with pressure situations. International experience is crucial to the development of an elite program.

MOBILITY

Mobility is the movement of the gymnasts from one level to the next. USA GYMNASTICS and The TEAM ATLANTIC program both have established rules of mobility. Each gymnast will be placed relative to their fulfillment of the criteria that USA GYMNASTICS and Atlantic Gymnastics have established. USA GYMNASTICS mobility is based solely on scores achieved in USA GYMNASTICS sanctioned competitions.

The specific mission of Atlantic Gymnastics is to develop happy, healthy, and confident children. One way in which we can help meet this demanding goal is to place gymnasts at the level where they can be happy, safe, and confident. What this means is that every gymnast must be able to perform the skills and routines required at a given level comfortably. The skills should not be at the edge of or beyond her ability level. We can never ask or expect our athletes to perform skills or routines in a competition which they cannot perform consistently in practice. Therefore, we plan to compete our gymnasts at about 75-80% of their current skill level. We will, however, work out at 100% of their ability.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that gymnastics is very a technical, perfection-oriented sport. Advancement in the sport depends solely on how well the basics are mastered. Similar to a pyramid, the larger a base of support (basics), the higher the pyramid will stand (ultimate goal level). With this in mind, it seems rather ridiculous to assume that gymnasts should merely achieve their mobility score and move to the next level. Programs which do that set up the athletes to eventually hit the wall, that is they stop learning because of missing mastery of the basic compulsory elements. The scores established by USA GYMNASTICS create a VERY BASIC proficiency level to attain before moving. IN NO WAY DOES IT AUTOMATICALLY MOVE THE GYMNAST TO THE NEXT LEVEL. The AGTC Team has established national standards for level placement. These standards are based on what the best clubs in the country are doing, not by what is being done in New Hampshire or New England. We feel that it is very important for a child to feel successful at gymnastics. One way we accomplish this is by having the gymnasts compete at a level that they are comfortable at and can achieve success in a meet situation. This allows them to perfect the necessary basic elements that will help them in the future.

REMEMBER: Being at a higher level does not make you a better gymnast....executing skills more precisely makes you a better gymnast.

The following criterion helps us decide the placement of each gymnast:

Physical Preparedness: an assessment is made of strength, flexibility, endurance, agility, quickness and suppleness.

Emotional, Psychological Readiness: these attributes are observable in a subjective way, as opposed to an objective manner. They readily indicate the child's ability to overcome reasonable fears, to make quick yet sound judgments, and their self motivation and dedication to achieving their goals.

Present Skill Level: by asking them to have acquired the skills needed in the next level routines before being considered to move up. By looking at this, we can project your skill and routine readiness for the coming competitive season.

Attendance and commitment to the TEAM ATLANTIC program

A positive attitude towards competition and the work ethic to give 100% effort even in times of frustration.

By combining all the above factors plus our day to day experiences with that child, we can pretty well determine at what level they will be the most successful. We have always believed that to be successful at competitions one must train at 100% and be able to compete at 80%. It is important to remember that we must train at the level we want to be, not necessarily the level we are at.

TEAM ATLANTIC Conditioning Program

There is no longer any excuse for an intensive gymnastics program without conditioning. Conditioning is essential for safe and effective gymnastics. However, conditioning for gymnastics is a complicated and serious issue. Conditioning programs must include adequate flexibility to be implemented in a variety of gymnastics settings.

TRAINING CONTENT

In order to understand and appreciate what goes into the development of a competitive gymnast, one must understand exactly what it is that we are trying to achieve during training. There are four fundamental areas of development which need to be addressed during the training: 1) strength, 2) flexibility, 3) skills, 4) mental aspects.

Strength development - As with all sports one object to the training is to make the difficult look easy. This is much easier to accomplish if the athlete has the strength required to master the skills. In most cases the stronger the better. This is certainly true of gymnastics. It is also true that strength training can also play a role in the reduction of injuries.

Strength development at the beginning or compulsory levels centers on building a base on which to build as the gymnast advances. General calisthenic exercises achieve this goal very well. Sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, running, and so on are used to achieve this goal. While it may appear that the gymnasts simply repeat these basic exercises over and over again through the course of the year, in fact there are subtle and at times not so subtle variations in the performance of these exercises. Technique may be changed or improved, the number or repetitions change, resistance is altered, the range of motion is increased, and the athlete is continually challenged to complete her assignment.

Strength development at the more advanced or optional levels is more complex and specialized. We utilize a five phase conditioning system which was researched and developed by Dr. Larry Nassar, The USA Gymnastics team doctor since the 1996 Olympic Games. Those five phases are as follows:

Build up - General conditioning (similar to that described above) which prepares the body for maximum strength development later in the cycle.

Max strength - Intense conditioning designed to increase the strength and power of the athlete.

Rest and adaptation - A rest period to give the muscles time to rebuild and rest.

Conversion - Conditioning specific to the sport of gymnastics and at times specific to individual gymnasts.

Maintenance - Competition season when the performance is the priority and conditioning is minimized.

Flexibility development is also critical to the long term success of the gymnast. Superior flexibility adds to the aesthetic appeal of the performance, allows the athlete to master skills more easily, and plays a role in reducing the frequency and seriousness of injuries.

Every training session at Atlantic Gymnastics will begin with a warm-up. This warm-up serves to raise the core body temperature so that the body is ready for action (hence the name warm-up) and the warm-up contains some light stretching drills to reduce the likelihood of injury. The warm-up is not intended to be a time to improve flexibility. Once the muscles are warm and tired then they can be stretched and flexibility can be improved. This generally occurs at the end of practice.

Skill development - Skill development falls into two distinct but related categories: basics and new skills. Basics or core skills are like the ABCs of gymnastics. The gymnast uses these ABCs to compose their gymnastics sequences and routines. If any of these basic building blocks are missing or defective the entire performance is weakened. These core skills, the building blocks of the sport, must be continually refined in order to permit the gymnast and her coaches to continually improve their performances. The better the core skills the better the performance. That is why we continually review and drill the basics.

We insist that conditioning be done correctly with good form. Attention needs to be given to technique and execution. If I catch a gymnast cheating or not trying as hard as needed I ask them to repeat the entire set. If I catch them again they may be asked to repeat all the exercises and/or go home.

If an athlete is injured and is restricted on their involvement in gymnastics (sprained ankle, etc) They should still come in to workout. There are many things we can do which speeds their recovery as well as things to work their weak spots. **WE WOULD NEVER ASK THEM TO DO ANYTHING WHICH COULD FURTHER THEIR INJURY.**

STRUCTURE OF TEAM ATLANTIC COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

The Competitive program is broadly grouped into 4 main working groups. Pre-Team, Level 4/5, Level 6,7, and Optional Team.

PRE-TEAM

Gym Sharks

This is the first step in the series. It is generally for 6-8 year old gymnasts. The gymnasts will be working on the core skills that lay the base for gymnastics. Gym Sharks may also participate in the TOPS workout.

Pre-Team Level 4

As gymnasts progress and reach levels 3 & 4 they need a little more time in the gym. This group is designed for children who see competitive gymnastics in their future. If they are ready they will enter some competitions.

Level 5

The placement of a gymnast on to Level 5 is with the consideration that the gymnast WILL compete as a level 5 in the next season that occurs. Both these groups are training to compete or are competing at Level 5. These levels are to orient and educate the beginning competitors in the USA GYMNASTICS system of competition. At these levels, the gymnast is exposed to competitive gymnastics in a manner that should allow them to make decisions concerning their future participation and to what extent they will participate. Gymnasts at this level can expect at least, 5 local meets, 2 Invitationals within driving distance, 2 sectional meets, 1 or 2 State meet.

Levels 6,7

The expectations and skill level of these athletes are now on a higher level. They are more experienced and should be willing to make a higher level of commitment than Level 5. The skills are the main core elements that will determine their level of success throughout the rest of their competitive career. They will be trained to start focusing their energies along the lines of a disciplined athlete. Gymnasts at these levels can expect at least, 4 local meets, 2 Invitationals within driving distance, 1 invitational w/airfare, 2 sectional meets, 1 of 2 State meets.

Levels 8,9 & 10

By this level, the gymnast has made a full commitment to the sport. With the difficulty of the FIG Code and the stepping up of expectations, this will be a necessity. These levels will be for the gymnast who is motivated to move up the ladder as far as her talent and hard work will get her. Their yardstick for competition is based on a national outlook. These teams will be developed to compete regionally and nationally in competitions that will facilitate gaining the high goals which they have set for themselves. Gymnasts at these levels can expect at least:

Level 8, 3 local meets, 2 invitational within driving distance, 1 invitational w/airfare (possible international competition), 2 sectional meets, 1 State meet, 1 regional meet, 1 state training camp.

Level 9, 2 local meets, 2-3 invitational within driving distance, 2 Invitationals w/airfare, International competition, 1 state meet, 1 Regional meet, Eastern National 1 regional training camp.

Level 10, 2 local meets, 2-3 invitational within driving distance, 2 Invitationals w/airfare, International competition, 1 state meet, 1 regional meet, 1 National meet, 1 national training camp.

Elite

This level requires the biggest commitment by athletes, coaches and parents. The gymnasts who enter the ranks of elite have their eyes on international competitions. A gymnast at this level can expect at least 2 national meets, 2 regional meets, 4 regional practice meets, 2-3 Invitationals w/airfare, International Competition, 2 invitational within driving distance, 1 local meet , 1 National training camp.

Competition wear

Appearance is very important at competition. A gymnast must have their hair pulled back away from their face. A long Pony tail is a distraction and if it is too long the judge can deduct .1 from each event. Page 15 of USA Gymnastics Rules and policies states, A gymnast must present herself in the proper attire. All underwear (including sports bras) should not be exposed. They must be well groomed in her appearance: clean attire, hair secured away from face, and free from objects which may hinder her safety. (jewelry, etc.) A recent amendment implies that use of glitter and/or face paint or other forms of body art may result it a deduction.

TOPS

TALENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

The TOPs program is part of the USA Gymnastics Elite Program. It is designed to help coaches identify talented young gymnasts through strength and flexibility testing.

Atlantic participates in this program because we think it is valuable for our gymnasts in many ways. First, it forces our gymnasts to pay attention to increasing their flexibility which is important for injury prevention and for success in gymnastics.

Second, the girls are asked to do conditioning skills that will aid them in increasing their gymnastics skill level. In our regular practices we always condition but that conditioning changes from week to week as we go through our different training phases. At a TOPS workout we focus on the same specific exercises and the girls become proficient in performing these particular moves.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TOPS? DOES IT WORK?

ATHLETES benefit by seeing clearly how their physical abilities and skills compare to other athletes of the same age from across the United States. The athletes get access to some of the leading authorities in gymnastics via the regional and national clinics.

The athletes problem areas are identified and noted for more in-depth analysis and remediation. The athletes begin a tracking that will allow them to see how they have progressed from year to year.

Apparel

Gym Sharks may purchase the warm up tank Leo

Level 4 Competition leo, Warm up jacket and pants

Level 5 Competition Leo, Warm up jacket and pants.

Level 6/7 Competition Leo, Warm up jacket and pants.

Level 8 Competition Leo, Warm up jacket and Pants.

Level 9/10 Competition Leo, Warm up Jacket and Pants.

Option: Another competition Leo for Finals.

Elite Optional Team Warm up and 2 tanks. 3 competition Leos (compulsory, optional, finals).

We will be updating our competitive Leotards on alternating years.

CONCERNING COMPETITIONS

Competition and Travel

Competition, in itself is neither good nor bad; it is only appropriate or inappropriate. Competition is not for everyone. Some gymnasts are ready to compete at their present age and or maturity level, others will need more time, while a few may never prosper from the competitive experience.

Atlantic Gymnastics will always be dedicated to producing some of the nations top athletes in the sport of gymnastics. This does not mean that every child on our competitive team must have a burning desire to some day be an Olympian- Quite the opposite. The staff at Atlantic will treat each athletes goals and aspirations individually. Some kids do not have desire to train at an elite pace, nor should they have to. Workout structure, training time, training loads, and intensity can all be altered and adjusted to meet each child's needs. This is not to say that the staff at Atlantic Gymnastics will accept mediocrity in the training. We will always run a structured, disciplined program as it is our belief that gymnastics is too costly and far too dangerous to have training be nothing more than glorified baby-sitting sessions. Our staff will demand respect and a strong work ethic from our athletes. We will not, however, participate in humiliating or ridiculing a child in order to get our goals accomplished. If a gymnast can not (or will not) do a skill in their routine 2 weeks prior to a competition that skill is removed from their routine. In most cases they will continue to work the skill separately in hopes of adding it at a future date. Often this will lower their start value on a particular event. Nearly all the time they have increased confidence with the routine. Our job as coaches is to prepare the girls for competitions. That requires repetitions of routine and the skills in the routines. If a gymnast can not do a particular skill and we keep in then we are setting them up to fail. Sometimes you have to know when to fish or cut bait.

Another fundamental belief is that we want Atlantic Gymnastics to be as family-oriented as possible. The coach, athlete, parent cooperation/communication triangle is essential in the development of the total child/athlete. Parent/athlete concerns will be viewed by our staff as a way of gaining insight as to how to better ourselves as coaches, so we can be an effective support group all together.

Why We Travel

Atlantic has always set a high priority on rewarding the effort and accomplishments of our gymnasts by providing them with an opportunity to participate in great competitions in exciting or exotic places. The traveling that we provide is a reward for their efforts, a motivation for continued excellence, and an opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of the world as a complement to the training they receive in gymnastics.

Lets be honest. Fewer than 1 in 5,000 gymnasts will ever make a national team and represent the USA in national or international competition. If we wait for a call from the USAG to invite any of us to go to Europe for a competition we might be waiting a long time and then it will involve only one gymnast.

Our goal is to have every gymnast on our team attend at least one super competition each season. We cant win them all or even contend in many of them, but the experience is good for the gymnasts. They get to see what it takes to compete at such a meet, and that in turn motivates them to work harder in the gym. We are trying to stay on the cutting edge with other elite clubs who are participating in international competitions. It also gives them experience in handling themselves in high pressure situations which prepares them for regional and national USAG competition.

This commitment to travel and explore will continue to be an important component of the competitive and educational experience at Atlantic. We know that the vast majority of our families applaud these efforts and appreciate the fact that the coaches at the gym are willing to take time away from their own families to plan and conduct these trips.

Eligibility for Competition and Travel

Gymnasts must be current on all gym financial obligations.

A gymnast may not be sent to a competition if they have not mastered all the skills required. We would never want to embarrass a gymnast by placing them in a situation in which they do not feel confident and comfortable.

Attendance - missed practices can mean missed competitive opportunities.

A positive attitude toward the coaching staff and training is important. The gymnasts must be emotionally ready to compete.

RULES AND POLICIES FOR COMPETITION

Obtain a USAG number from the USAG office and be prepared to show the membership card at all sanctioned meets. The athlete membership and number are obtained each year in or around August.

Arrive at the competition venue 15 minutes before the open warm up is scheduled to begin.

Find your coach as soon as you arrive.

Remain in the area designed for the gymnasts as either competitors or observers throughout the course of the competition. Obey all warm up regulations and procedures.

Present yourself in proper attire including an Atlantic Gymnastics warm-up leotard (if applicable), competition leotard, and warm-ups. The Atlantic Gymnastics jacket and bag should be worn and taken to all competitions.

The gymnast should be well groomed. The gymnast's hair should be pulled up away from the face and arranged in a bun if requested by the head coach. Jewelry should not be worn unless you get specific permission from a coach. The use of make up should be limited.

Accept your place in the line-up and the scores you receive with dignity and without comment or criticism. There is no place for crying and uncontrolled emotions during a gymnastics meet. You cannot control the scores you get nor can you control the performances of any other gymnast. You can only control what you do. If you do well and receive a disappointing score, ask your coach about it when the meet is over. If you make mistakes and are disappointed in your performance, do not make matters worse by giving in to your emotions and ruining your chances for good performances on upcoming events. Remember too that you are part of a team. The team needs you to be in control and ready to perform. They do not need you bringing the spirit of the entire team down with your wailing and whimpering.

-The gymnasts should not keep track of their even scores, all around scores, or placement during the competition. Parents and coaches will keep track of those things. You will have plenty of time to review them later. Your concentration should center on your performance and on the performance of your team.

-Be prepared to assist the coach with the boards, mats, music, bar settings and so on during the meet.

-Be courteous, respectful, and polite to all meet officials, hosts and hostesses, competitors, and coaches. The only time you should approach a meet official is to thank them for hosting or judging the meet.

-Remain seated at all times when not performing. Keep all belongings in your competition bag which is to be placed under your chair.

-Bring an extra copy of your floor music and your back-up pair of grips to all competitions.

-Stay with the team until the competition is over and the coach has released you. Once a gymnast has entered the competition area there should be no contact between the gymnast and her parents unless there is an emergency.

-Stay for awards dressed in your Atlantic Gymnastics warm-ups. Most meets have a formal system for presenting awards. As a participating athlete you have an obligation to stay for all awards and to accept any presented to you with courtesy and gratitude. It is customary to accept awards with a firm handshake and a warm smile. Congratulate and shake hands with other athletes as well. Remember that you are not just representing yourself. You are acting as a representative of Atlantic Gymnastics as well.

When traveling you will always act in a well-mannered and well-disciplined fashion.

Always remember that you represent many people from this organization when you travel.

MAKE THEM PROUD

CONDUCT WHILE TRAVELING WITH TEAM ATLANTIC

Proper conduct by gymnasts, coaches and parents while traveling with Team Atlantic is a REQUIREMENT. While away from our gym, each individual will be associated with AGTC during competitions, clinics, or training camps no matter what the behavior. Gymnasts will have a curfew to be in rooms and in bed during all away competitions. This curfew will be set by the Head Coach/Delegation Leader. Excessive horseplay, or loudness in restaurants or hotels is of course unacceptable. What activities the gymnasts partake in while away on the trip, whether it is the day of competition or not are upon approval of the delegation head. We work hard to prepare the gymnasts for big competitions and feel the reason for going should remain the priority. We do not wish to have their focus distracted as on a family vacation

DISCIPLINE

It is our job as teachers (not just coaches) to help each child learn how to handle this concept. When a gymnast does not follow a rule, it is up to us to explain to them why the rule exists and to be sure they understand. No instructor should ever go toe to toe with the gymnast on the floor for any reason. The gymnast, at times, will have to accept the judgment of the coach right then because of the other things going on at that time which the coach cannot ignore. But the gymnast does have the right to question and get an answer at a later more appropriate time.

If the gymnast cannot control herself at the time, the following procedure will be followed:

If the gymnast does not follow a rule or loses self control, either during a practice or a competition, they will be removed from the floor and not allowed to return to the group until they can come back and work respectfully and responsibly with the problem addressed.

If it occurs a second time in the same day they will not be allowed to return to practice or the competition.

If they are removed from practice or a competition for a second time in a month, they will not be allowed to return to practice or compete until a meeting with the parents, gymnast, and coaches takes place.

If the gymnast is upset about something, it is her responsibility to inform a member of the staff. They need to believe that it will be handled as quickly and as fairly as possible. Everyone has bad days. Part of maturing does mean learning how to handle those inevitable days.

Showing Respect to the Sport of Gymnastics

The way you act in the gym is a private reflection of your respect to yourself, to your teammates, and to Atlantic Gymnastics. The way you act at competitions, while at team functions, and while traveling to and from the competitions and functions is a public statement about how you feel about yourself, Atlantic Gymnastics, and to the sport of gymnastics itself. Only the highest standard of behavior will be acceptable. The following actions show respect and are expected of a member of the Atlantic Gymnastics Team.

Participate in all scheduled competitions. We are a competitive gymnastics team. We measure our work and progress by going out on the competition floor to do our best in front of our families, our coaches, our friends, and our teammates. While winning is not so important, trying to win represents everything we strive for. Trying to win means that you come to practice every day, you work hard every day, you overcome fear, and that you get up every time you fall down. We do not try to win in the abstract. We try to win in the real world where rules apply, comparisons are made, judgment calls are the norm, grace under pressure is expected, and where falling and failing are part of every day life. (Sounds a lot like real life, doesn't it?)

Attend every practice leading up to important competitions. Every competition is important in some way, but some competitions are more important than others. Sectional championships, state meets, regionals, and nationals are important. So are the big invitationals where we test ourselves against gymnasts from other parts of the United States and other countries. Prior to these important competitions we expect our athletes to attend every practice. It shows your respect for your hard work over the prior year, respect for your coaches, and respect for your team to give your very best efforts before these important competitions. Gymnasts who miss more than one practice in the ten days prior to these important competitions risk losing our respect for them and their dreams. In general, we only compete gymnasts who we respect.

Demonstrate the highest regard for our sport and your hard work by arriving to all competitions on time, by conducting your self with grace and courage during the competition, by accepting all scores in a positive manner since we know that we learn as much from our mistakes as we do from our best efforts, and by thanking your coaches, parents, and the organizers of the meet for spending their time on your behalf. During the competition gymnasts are to wear their competition leotard and their team warm-ups. All gymnasts must be in warm-ups for awards. All gymnasts are expected to remain for awards.

Other Policies and Procedures of Atlantic Gymnastics

Workout attire: Gymnasts are required to train dressed in a manner which reflects positively on our program.

Leotards with briefs shall be worn.

Sports bras are required as needed.

No two-piece workout attire is permitted.

No jewelry is permitted because it causes safety problems for both the gymnast and her coach.

Hair should be pulled up and away from the gymnasts face. Barrettes made of hard or sharp material may pose a safety hazard and are not permitted.

Body art has no place in competition or in training. If you want to wear it where it cannot be seen, then do so.

During competition season you will have a designated "LONG SLEEVE LEOTARD DAY" each week. This gives us an opportunity to train in a similar leotard that you will compete in.

Attendance: We accept team members through a tryout process. There are always more athletes who want to be on team than we have room for. Therefore, if you do not come to practice you are taking the place of someone else who would like to be a part of our team. For this reason Atlantic Gymnastics expects every gymnast to try to come to every practice. This is particularly true at the highest levels.

In order to help control blood-sugar levels, a nutrition break will be provided during practices that last longer than three (3) hours. The types of food that should be consumed at that time include fruit, nonfat crackers, juice, pretzels, and other nutritious and low-fat snacks. Never bring candy, soda, or other sugared foods. They will not supply an instant source of energy. What they will do is cause the athlete to crash once the body metabolizes the sugar. Each gymnast should bring a water bottle of non-breakable plastic to practice and keep it with them every day. The water bottle is for water.

The Atlantic coaches will assist every college bound athlete in locating a college of their choice. We will establish contact with any college that you are interested in and assist you in earning a scholarship. Colleges seek out the best private club athletes in the state and in the country and we have had a great deal of success in helping our graduating seniors earn a scholarship.

Of course, the most important thing that you can do to help yourself is to maintain good grades and to score well on both the ACT and the SAT. All juniors should take both tests and then repeat them in their senior year. Even the best gymnasts will fall short of their college goals if the grades and test scores are low.

General Rules of Behavior

RESPECT to all coaches, judges, teammates and opponents AT ALL TIMES! As a member of the Atlantic Gymnastics Team, whether you like it or not, you are an example and role model to all other gymnasts and their families in all the other programs. We are very proud of our facility we would like each person to treat the facility with the same respect as you treat the coach.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO OR ILLEGAL DRUGS will result in immediate dismissal from the team.

AT NO TIME should the gymnast have anything on in the practice or competitive floor that they do not need for the activity.

DRINKS ARE ONLY ALLOWED IF IN A SEALABLE CONTAINER.

DO NOT BRING OR LEAVE LYING AROUND ANYTHING OF VALUE. Respect each persons property and do not touch anything that is not yours. The gym is not responsible for your clothing or valuables.

AT ALL TIMES THE COACH NEEDS TO KNOW WHERE AND WHAT YOU ARE DOING.

We are responsible for your whereabouts and safety while you are in this gym. You never leave the group without going to the coach you are working with and talking to them.

NO PROFANE LANGUAGE OR ACTIONS - You are the example to many younger children & students in the gym. They look up to you.

COMMON COURTESY shall be extended to anyone involved in our sport. If you do not have something nice or positive to say to a team mate do not say anything at all.

Other Things We Do

Nutrition Education

Atlantic Gymnastics will continue the use of our nutrition guidelines. This packet of material is designed to help our athletes and their families make better decisions when choosing their meals. This has never been intended to be closely monitored. They are meant to be educational and nothing more. Athletes with high goals and aspirations will use this knowledge to their benefit. Team members who do not care to follow the guidelines are free to ignore them, but we do ask that when you are in the presence of your coaches and teammates that you eat smart.

Sports Psychology

It has been said that gymnastics is 90% mental and only 10% physical. Those who work in the gym every day know this to be nonsense, but only because the ratios are off, not because mental and emotional readiness is not important. Indeed, the mental game of gymnastics often separates the good from the great.

Atlantic Gymnastics has used and will continue to use a sports psychology program to help our athletes develop the mental strategies that will help them achieve their goals. The areas of concentration are stress management, goal setting, relaxation techniques, visualization, and team building. In general, our sports-psych sessions will be held during or immediately before or after a regularly scheduled practice.

Big Sister Program

Experienced athletes possess resources that can be invaluable to our new and up and coming gymnasts. Our Big Sisters program attempts to harness that knowledge and experience in a way that will help guide, inspire, and comfort our beginning level athletes. Depending on the number of Big Sister candidates, we will divide our competitive teams into families with one or more big sisters appointed to each family. (We might also assign a big sister to one or more specific gymnasts).

Each big sister will be responsible for meeting with her little sister at times during the year, will accompany her or them on one or more special activities, and will try to be present at one or more of her competitions to cheer her on. In addition, the big sisters will be encouraged to make small gifts and cards for their young charges before competitions and if they see their little sisters struggling in the gym.

Please understand that the big sisters donate their time and effort for this cause and that they signed on voluntarily. Our upper level gymnasts are certainly not required to take on this additional responsibility. It is our hope that the little sisters will respond in kind and will be there to support the efforts of their older teammates. Support and kindness is a two-way street.

PARENT REQUIREMENTS & OBLIGATIONS

How Parents Show Respect for The Athlete, Atlantic Gymnastics and Our Beautiful Sport

Parents play a huge role in the development of a successful gymnast. Your role is every bit as important as that of the gym or of the coaches. It is also every bit as difficult. That is why we welcome your presence at practices, at every team function, and at every competition. We try to be very family friendly and oriented. We want your input and your support because we want your child to succeed. Here is what you can do to help your daughter achieve her dreams.

On the physical side it is your job to insure that your young athlete gets enough sleep, gets enough of the proper kinds of food and drink, gets to and from the gym on time, has the proper clothing and equipment, and receives proper instruction from knowledgeable and caring coaches.

The emotional side is just as important. It is your role to provide unconditional love, encouragement, and support. Your love should not be based on whether they made her kip in practice; your support should not be dependent on her scoring a 36.00 in the all around; and your encouragement is not conditioned on her somehow making you look good by being the best in her group, on her team in her state, or in the country. Your support for your daughter should stem from the realization that they as an individual is trying her best to achieve her personal goals.

It is through performing these tasks that you show your respect for your gymnast and the effort he or they is putting into their sport. Any more or any less does a disservice to your child and will limit her opportunity for success.

Please come to any of your child's coaches if you have a problem or concern. We are in business to serve you and your child. Your thoughts are important to us. If we cannot help you we will explain why and we will work to find another way to solve whatever is bothering you. Complaining to other parents cannot solve your problem, nor can we solve them if we do not know about them. If you respect us enough to allow us to play a large role in your child's life, please respect us enough to know that we have your child's best interest at heart.

Parents perform their role at home and outside the gym area. Within the gym the coaches and administrators of the gym play their roles. Please do not coach your child. Your comments detract from what the coach is doing, they give the gymnast another thing to think about, and it interferes with the development of the coach/athlete relationship which is critical for long term success.

Please stay in the waiting area and out of the gym. Parents who venture out on the floor create a danger to themselves and to the athletes. Parents are often unaware of traffic patterns and often get in the way of the gymnasts performing their skills. If you need to contact your child ask any coach, the secretary, or even another gymnast to contact the coach who is working with your child's group.

Please let a coach know before practice if you think your child might have a problem due to illness, medication, or injury.

It is the philosophy of Atlantic Gymnastics that the coaches, the gym, the parents, and the gymnasts are all part of the team. We encourage all of our parents to attend every competition. Having a strong cheering section does wonders for team motivation and it is something we can be proud of. But, as parents you should be aware that as a member of the Atlantic Team, you too represent Atlantic Gymnastics. With that in mind a few guidelines for parents during competitions seems in order.

Cheer loud and often, but do so in a courteous manner. Obnoxious yelling is for the other teams, not for us.

Cheer for all the members of the Atlantic team and feel free to cheer for fine performances turned in by the gymnasts of other teams. In a very real way we are competing with them not against them. If you allow yourself, you will become friendly with the parents of the gymnasts of other teams you see several times each season over the next few years.

Promote Atlantic Gymnastics in every way you feel is appropriate: T-shirts, sweatshirts, banners, and cheers: but never ever speak in a negative way about another club, coach, gymnast, or judge in the process.

The only time a parent should approach the meet director or a parent from the club hosting the meet is to thank them for a job well done and for inviting us to their meet. If you have a complaint you need to bring it to the attention of your coach. If you cannot say anything nice, don't say anything at all.

Under no circumstances is a parent or a gymnast ever to approach a judge or meet official before, during, or after competition to comment on, complain about, or even ask about a score.

Please do not contact or talk to your gymnast once they are on the competitive floor. We ask them to focus all their energy on the competition and we want as few distractions as possible. After the meet is over they will come to see you. This rule is clearly spelled out in USA Gymnastics Rules and Policies. Sometimes the gymnasts get excited and want to run up and tell you something. This is a deduction!

Gymnastics must come second to school. Although the vast majority of our gymnasts are very good students, there may be times when a pressing assignment or test might mean a shortened or missed practice. Just let us know. It will always be fine. A copy of your child's report card should be turned in to your head coaches every grading period. If you have any specific requests as to something you would like them to say to your child about her grades, please put that information in writing, seal it, and attach it to the report card. Your coaches may have some things to say about the grades in addition to any remarks that you might want them to say. At Atlantic Gymnastics we are educators first and gymnastics coaches second.

Gym Communications: Communicating effectively with everyone on our team is a challenge. We work very hard to get information to you in a timely way by putting handouts, gym newsletters, and meet information in the girls folders as soon as they are printed. We also post a copy of whatever we put in the folders on the bulletin board by the folders. We also place any extra copies of the information we place in the folders in a general team folder which you will find in the front of the team folders. You can help us communicate more effectively by checking your child's folder on a regular basis. Gymnasts are no different than other children and they lose and forget the handouts they pick up. Just because you do not get a flyer does not mean that we did not put one in your child's folder. You should also check the bulletin board to review all the information that has gone out in recent weeks.

The Role of a Parent in the Atlantic Gymnastics Family

The parent of a gymnast on our team can have one of the most difficult of all jobs. While all members of our family, which includes the gymnast, the coaches, and the parent, are all equally important, the parent has the smallest role in actually controlling the performance of the athlete. At the same time the parent may feel the greatest sense of emotional attachment to that performance. This combination of a high emotional stake in the performance with little or no direct control over the outcome can produce stress and can lead to some bizarre behavior. Parents have been known to lose sight of the important role that they have to play. They often step outside their sphere of influence and enter the domain of other members of the family. This often creates conflicts with the coaches.

The coaches do their job in the gym and on the competition floor. When a parent starts to coach their child they actually interfere with the very performance they are trying to improve. The gymnast can only concentrate on one part of their performance at a time. If a parent is telling the child to keep their legs straight, or to run faster, or to smile, they are directing the child's attention away from what their coach is telling them. The child cannot make two corrections at once so either they do both poorly, or they focus on one and not the other. No matter which choice they make, someone is going to be upset with them and they will not progress in the way that they should. Coaching your child puts them in a no-win situation. It's unfair to them and to their coaches.

In addition, you are interfering with the development of the coach/athlete bond which is critical to any long term success in the sport. The gymnast must be able to trust her coach, rely on her coach to direct her training, and to receive important emotional support from their praise. You interfere with all of that when the child is confused as to which way to turn for direction or support.

Finally, do you really think that the coaches do not notice that her legs are bent?! Of course they notice! If they are not working to improve their appearance it is because they are working on something more important at this point in her training. Perfect execution often comes late in the mastery of key skills.

Some Guidelines for Parents Feeling Stress

Danger signs - watch for these. If you recognize yourself in these descriptions you probably need to reevaluate your actions, your role, and your attitudes.

Observing every practice - intently.

Praising or punishing your child for what you observe during these daily observations.

Finding your sense of worth and happiness dependent on the success of your gymnast.

Constantly comparing your child and her progress to others in her group, on her team, or in competition.

Verbally abusing the gym, the coaches, and the program while still placing your child under their control.

Video taping each competition and requiring your child to review it at home with you.

Inappropriate Comments	Appropriate Comments
You finally beat Sally!	That was one of the best routines I have seen you do.
How many (current difficult skill) did you make today?	How was practice?
I'll give you \$20 if you win today.	Do your best and have fun.
That judge always scores you low.	Work hard and you'll do better next time.
I cannot believe they moved Sally up and not you!	As long as you are safe and happy with your progress. I'm Happy

Great gymnastics is not the result of a million repetitions.

Great gymnastics is the result of a million Corrections.

ATLANTIC GYMNASTICS TRAINING CENTER TEAM

I have read and understand the enclosed information. I understand that this is policy and will be followed at all times both in the gym and out of the gym.

I understand that as a member of the AGTC Team program I am required to help out at home competitions and other

Fathers signature: _____

Mothers signature: _____

Athletes signature: _____

GYMNASTS NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH ___/___/___

PARENT or GUARDIAN LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD:

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

While my child is at practice, I can be contacted at:

1) Location _____ 2) _____

Telephone # _____

Between hours of _____

Special instructions _____

Other Emergency Contact Person:

Person who can assume responsibility for child if parent(s) or guardian(s) cannot be reached immediately in an emergency.

Name _____ Relationship _____

Telephone _____

Child's usual Physician _____

Telephone # _____

Insurance Carrier _____

Policy or group # _____

MEDICAL EMERGENCY STATEMENT

I hereby give permission for AGTC staff to give my child, _____, simple first aid when necessary or in the event of a more serious accident, for my child to be transported to a hospital or other emergency medical facility to receive emergency medical treatment. I also authorize ambulance/rescue squad attendants to administer such treatment as is medically necessary. I authorize the hospital to undertake examination and emergency treatment if warranted on behalf of my child.

Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Does your child have any medical condition which would limit her participation in gymnastics? (Asthma, Allergies, Diabetes, etc. BE SPECIFIC.)

Is your child currently taking any medication? _____

For what condition? _____

Does your child have any allergies to medication? _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

As the parent or legal guardian of _____,

I hereby consent to the above named person participating in the programs offered by The ATLANTIC GYMNASTICS TRAINING CENTER. I recognize that potentially severe injuries, including sprains, strains, broken bones, permanent paralysis or death, can occur in any activity involving height or motion, including gymnastics. I UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THAT RISK. I also realize that my child will be performing and training on all gymnastics events plus various other training devices including trampoline.

I further understand that while the payment of tuition and registration fees constitutes a part of the consideration due to the Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center for allowing my child to use the facilities and equipment at Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center, an additional and important part of the consideration due to The Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center is this signed release form.

Therefore, in consideration for allowing my child to use The Atlantic Gymnastics Training Centers equipment and facilities, I hereby forever release The Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center, its owners, officers, employees, teachers and coaches from all liability for any and all damage and injuries suffered by my child while under the instruction, supervision or control of The Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center, its owners, officers, employees, teachers or coaches.

As the parent or legal guardian of the aforementioned person, I hereby agree to individually protect for the possible future medical expenses which may be incurred by my child as a result of injury sustained while training at, or under the direction of The Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center.

This acknowledgment of risk and waiver of liability, having been read thoroughly and understood completely, is signed voluntarily as to its content and intent.

SIGNATURE

DATE _____

ATHLETE PUBLICITY INFORMATION

NAME: _____ D.O.B. _____
ADDRESS: _____ AGE: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____
NICKNAME: _____
SCHOOL: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
PRINCIPALS NAME _____ PHONE # _____
Fathers Name: _____ Work Phone: _____
Occupation: _____
Mothers Name: _____ Work Phone: _____
Occupation: _____
YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER: _____

Name and e-mail of sports editor _____

SPECIAL INTEREST

Hobbies:

Favorite musical groups, Type music, Song:

Favorite Movie/Star:

Favorite Gymnastics event, why:

Gymnastics Achievements:

Last CD Purchased:

Last Book read:

Favorite Snack:

Favorite Junkfood:

Favorite Pastime:

Most embarrassing moment:

My worst habit is:

If I could spend 5 minutes with anybody Living OR Dead it would be:

And I would ask the following question:

If Hollywood ever made a movie about my life it would be called:

The actor/actress who would play me is:

The one moment I will remember until I die is:

The most memorable Sports moment is:

My future goals are:

Favorite Inspirational Saying:
One word that best describes me is:
My teammates say that I :

TEAM ATLANTIC FEE STRUCTURE 2008-2009. The fee structure for the competitive gymnastics program is based on the goal of breaking even. The yearly fee is divided into 12 payments. The best coaches, (which also are the highest compensated), along with the added specialized equipment and schedule that competitors need, make it expensive. Each year the budget will be reexamined and adjusted with fees to reach that break even goal. As a gymnast increases her skill and proficiency level, it dictates more time in the gym. As the number of hours per week increases, the hourly rate will be discounted.

This monthly tuition covers the instruction/training of the competitive gymnasts during the week in our facility. This includes paying the instructors, covering materials and equipment and many other costs incurred by the competitive program in their training. All monthly payments are due the 1st of each month. If after 30 days you have not paid or have not notified the office of a problem, we will prohibit the gymnasts participation in class. All competition fees need to be paid up front in advance. Bills will be sent out at the beginning of each month or when meet fees occur. All other competition related fees are billed through the Atlantic Team Fund. For your convenience these can be included into your monthly tuition. Team Fund assessments are determined by coming up with a competition budget. Subtracting money from fundraising goal and then by propose expenses per level.

EXAMPLE:

\$20,000 competition budget

10,000 Fundraising goal

10,000 assessment

The 8,000 in assessment will be broken down by level.

EXAMPLE:

1,000 Level 4

2,000 Levels 5/6

5,000 Levels 7-E

Each amount per level is then divided by the number of gymnasts.

Any money above the \$10,000 fundraising goal will be carried over into the next year to reduce assessments.

PRIVATE LESSONS/ OPTIONAL ROUTINE CONSTRUCTION

There will be times when it is necessary for a coach to work one on one with an athlete. The Coach will request a private lesson and arrange a time with the athlete and parents. The cost of a private lesson will be determined by the coach and paid to the COACH at the time of the lesson.

When an athlete needs to develop an optional routine a time will be scheduled with the coach. The cost of an optional routine will vary upon the time the coach puts into it. That price will be paid directly to the coach.

Atlantic Gymnastics Training Center
150 Gosling Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 433-0404

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