



**WELCOME  
TO  
THE  
TEAM !**

**RACINE  
GYMNASTICS  
CENTER TEAM  
HANDBOOK**



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# Racine Gymnastics Center

## *Welcome to the Team!*

Thank you for your interest in RGC. The adventure you and your child are about to embark on will be a very special one. 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.

Gymnastics is the greatest overall body and conditioning activity that you can have your child involved in. 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, 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, 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.

The purpose of this team manual is to give you a better idea of what our goals are and how we operate as a TEAM called Racine Gymnastics Center. After reading this manual, if you have any questions about any aspect of the program, please ASK! The coaching staff will be happy to answer any questions or provide you with options to help you solve your problems. Once again, welcome to Racine Gymnastics Center. We are glad to have you as part of our TEAM.

### **Mission statement**

Our goal at Racine Gymnastics Center is to build self-confidence through fitness and fun. To teach the sport of gymnastics in a safe environment and to raise the child's level of self-esteem.

Our coaching goals for our teams are to provide the mental and physical discipline needed for competition within a framework of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Learning to be comfortable in a competitive situation which is a positive experience and which adds to a child's development.

### **Team philosophy**

Racine Gymnastics Center has the belief that gymnastics is the root of all sports. Gymnastics, when taught properly, can be the vehicle with which it delivers 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 in the basic attributes of gymnastics. Many of the world's most advanced nations still use gymnastics as the core of their physical fitness programs.

Physical skill development is certainly a bi-product of a good gymnastics program. Gymnastics as a sport is an age limited experience, however. You don't see too many over 30's flipping and swinging away their afternoons. With this in mind, RGC has made it a primary goal to ensure that our program delivers more than physical development. Properly taught, gymnastics teaches self motivation, self discipline, dedication, determination, work ethic, time management, team work, team spirit, leadership, sportsmanship, 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 their non-flipping years. We measure our 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.

**Current Racine Gymnastics Center Staff:**

**Club owner(s):** Tom Auer  
Aimee Mickleson

**Front office staff:** Mary McNamara  
Diane Poulsen  
Loretta Ferraro

**Preschool Director:** Aimee Mickleson

**Recreational Class Director:** Sarah Kleba

**Head Coach (Men's/Women's):** Tom Auer

**Level 7/8/9 Coach:** Kristy White

**Level 6 Coach:** Sarah Kleba

**Level 5 Coach:** Rachel Sommer

**Level 4 Coach:** Melanie Rigby

**Assistant Coaches:** Carissa Cahoy  
Jennifer Barboff  
Damica Harris

**Boys Coach:** Brandon Duval

**Cheer Coaches:** Erica Confer  
Jennifer Barboff  
Victoria Schuebel

**Dance instructor:** Courtney Miller

## **Introduction**

*The decision to enter competitive gymnastics is an important and exciting step in the life of your child!*

Competitive gymnastics is a unique sport requiring the backing and support of the family for any gymnast to be successful. Therefore when making the selection for team gymnasts we also look closely at the team parents. Can they also make a commitment to the program? This need not be a difficult or demanding task, only one that shows each family is interested in and committed to providing their child with a positive learning experience through the competitive aspect of women's gymnastics.

You are to be congratulated because you are taking the time to think through the consequences of team membership. Many parents are so thrilled when their child is asked to be on team they do not take the time to assess what the consequences will be on the rest of their lives.

### **Gymnastics goals**

Does your son or daughter plan to make it to the Olympics, get a scholarship to college, or do they just enjoy the achievement of new skills and the companionship of other team members? Any of these may be valid reasons for joining the team, but it may be important to assess their goals in a shorter time frame, such as within the next six months to a year.

Gymnastics is a specialized sport that demands many hours of hard work and dedication. In this day and age teaching children to delay gratification for the attainment of a worthy ideal is all but impossible. Everything they see and hear on television they absorb and internalize as the way the world is supposed to be. If a 30 second commercial can get us to buy a product, a 30 minute sitcom or drama will surely sell us a lifestyle.

The problem with television is that it condenses what in the real world takes years of hard work and dedication to achieve. Please understand if your child says they want to be on a gymnastics team, or go for the gold at the

Olympics, that's great, but it will take lots of hard work and dedication to make it there. It certainly will not happen overnight.

**Life changes to keep in mind**

- At the lower team levels the number of hours of practice per week are relatively few. As your son or daughter progresses up the competitive ladder the hours and days of workout will continue to build.
- You will have to change your schedule to the extent that you are available to drive your gymnast to and from practice. (you could start a carpool with other team parents)
- There will be gym meets that take up a number of weekends during the competitive season.
- Homework will have to be done much more efficiently and with better study habits due to shorter periods of time available. *(Most students who are involved in a team program such as gymnastics tend to have good grades and are better at studying because they have learned to budget their time more effectively than their peers.)*
- Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life (and yours). Your son or daughter will have less time at home and less time to spend with friends outside the sphere of gymnastics influence.

Be warned, however, that once a child has developed a taste for the sport of gymnastics (especially the competitive aspect) it is an addiction that will grow and become a part of your child for life.

When that happens you will have no choice!

## Competitive program policies

### One month trial phase

All incoming competitive gymnasts will be evaluated by the coaching staff concerning acceptance and placement in the competitive program.

After evaluation new competitive gymnasts may be able to enroll for a period of one month on a trial basis, and then be re-evaluated at the end of the month concerning final acceptance.

Parents of potential team members will be informed of club policies and philosophies concerning the competitive program. Parents are encouraged to join the booster club, which helps support, and promote the competitive program.

### Team guidelines

Gymnastics training is exclusive to this club. Gymnasts may not train at any other gym while competing and/or representing this facility.

Each gymnast is required to attend all regularly scheduled workouts. Be on time to all workouts. That means on the floor ready to workout when your workout begins, not talking in the locker room or hanging around out front. If for some reason you will be late or absent you are required to call the office and notify the coaches so that they may adjust the workout accordingly.

Proper workout attire is a must. Girls, a properly fitting leotard is the only acceptable workout attire. No shorts or shirts, however, spandex (bikers) are acceptable. Hair should be appropriately tied so as not to interfere in any way during the workout. No jewelry of any kind may be worn during the workout.

All gymnasts are required to bring to each workout a gym bag with the appropriate equipment as listed by the coaching staff.

Absolutely no food, drink, or candy is permitted on the workout floor. All snacks or meals must remain in the locker room. Gymnasts may not leave the workout or competition floor without the expressed permission of the coaching staff.

Interaction between gymnast and parent (visually or verbally) during workouts or at gymnastics competitions is not appropriate. A distracted gymnast is a prime candidate for injury. Contact the front desk or the coach first if you need to communicate with the gymnast on the workout floor.

All gymnasts are expected to maintain the best physical condition possible

All injuries, no matter how small, must be promptly reported to the coach.

Coaching technique and discipline are not subject to compromise with parents or gymnasts. The coaching staff has the final say in all competitive program matters, as they are ultimately responsible in the eyes of the law for each child's well being.

All competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. In addition, the gymnast must be in good health and have attended every workout the week prior to any competition. Special situations should be discussed well in advance of the competition with the coach.

The majority of this section has focused on the gym and competition, however, the coaching staff believes that **the order of importance always needs to be family, education, and then gymnastics**. If you choose to be a member of our program, we make the assumption you have allowed appropriate time for family functions and that your child's study habits and school work is of exemplary quality.

From time to time the coaches may have discussions in which they seek the opinion of team members and even parents. There may even be a vote, but it is opinion only – the coach has the final word on any decision that affects the competitive gymnastics program. This will be most evident in determining workout structure and training styles, but also includes routine construction, choreography, choice of music, choice of leotards and warm ups, what meets we attend, and workout times.



## Competitive program – Financial policies

### **Team is a year round commitment.**

The competitive program tuition is determined on a yearly basis; however, payments may be made on a monthly schedule. Tuition is due on the first day of the month. There is a one week grace period and if you pay by the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the month please deduct \$5.00. If you would like to use a credit card you may arrange it with Mary in the office and she will take care of it automatically every month. Competitive program accounts must be current and paid in full to enable your gymnast to participate in the competitive season.

Notice of intent to cancel enrollment must be made in person, and reduced to writing at least one month previous to the gymnast's final workout. If you choose not to notify the office you will be charged for the month following your gymnast's last workout.

There are no make-ups, discounts, or prorated accounts due to absence of any nature. The competitive program is already greatly discounted in comparison to other club programs and is in fact effectively subsidized by the class programs.

Each gymnast must maintain up to date USAG athlete registration and club registration fees.

Meet expenses for all coaching fees (i.e.: gas, mileage, food, lodging, and session fees) must be shared by all gymnasts competing or by the parents' booster club.

As a member of this competitive program all gymnasts are required to attend and be actively involved in all gymnastic activities related to this facility. (i.e.: fundraising projects, exhibitions, meets, etc.)

## **Parent commitment and responsibilities**

Parents play a huge roll in the development of a successful gymnast. Your role is every bit as important as that of the gym and the coaches. It is also every bit as difficult. That is why we welcome your presence at every practice, 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 child achieve her dreams.

On the physical side it is your job to insure that your gymnast gets enough sleep, gets enough of the proper kinds of food, gets to and from the gym on time, and has the proper clothing and equipment.

The emotional side is just as important. It is your role to provide unconditional love, encouragement, and support. Your love is not based on whether your child made their kip in practice; your support is not dependant on them scoring a 36.0 in the all around; and your love is not conditioned on your child making you look good by being the best in their group, on their team, in the state, or in the country.

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

1. Make sure your gymnast attends all regularly scheduled workouts, meets, and special functions. Communicate with the coaches regarding any problems
2. Check the bulletin board and team mailboxes regularly to stay current with team activities. We work very hard to get information to you in a timely way by putting handouts, newsletters, and meet information in your child's mailbox as soon as they are printed. Gymnasts are no different than other children and they loose and forget the handouts they pick up.
3. Please come to your child's coach if you have a problem or concern. If we cannot help you, we will explain why, and we will work to find

another way to solve any problems. Complaining to other parents cannot solve your problems, nor can we solve it if we do not know about it.

4. Parents perform their role at home and outside the gym area. 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/gymnast relationship which is critical for success.
5. Membership in the booster club. Attend the scheduled booster club meetings. Notice will be sent home with the gymnasts. Please check gymnasts mail box for all team information.

### **The Booster Club**

The primary function of the booster club is to support the team financially. All parents of RGC team members are encouraged to join this organization.

The booster organization is a nonprofit group which supports the efforts of the gymnasts, coaches, and the team program at Racine Gymnastics Center through paying coaches travel expenses, purchasing team specific equipment for the gym, paying meet entry fees, USAG fees, and other expenses.

Our booster club is a group of parents who are committed to the success of this program and are willing to give their time and effort to raise money for the team and at the same time to drive down their tuition costs.

Gymnastics can be rather expensive. The booster club gives all families an opportunity to reduce this expense. Booster club members are expected to participate in certain booster activities. In no way does this affect the way in which your child will be coached or treated in our program. This is strictly your decision.

### **Why should I get involved with the booster club?**

Whether your son or daughter is at a competitive level or not you benefit from the fundraising activities of the booster club. The high cost of obtaining quality coaching requires the booster club to assist in funding coaches' salaries. Very few clubs can afford to subsidize the cost.

The recreational gymnastics class program with higher student to instructor ratios and higher per hour fees make recreation classes a viable program. In order to have the quality of coaching necessary to produce successful team gymnasts, the competitive program gymnast to coach ratio is lower and the cost per hour is also lower. In effect, teams get the higher paid professionals for less than the cost of recreational training.

The booster club through its efforts has created the potential for this club to have a successful gymnastics team by offsetting those costs. Whether your child is entry level or accomplished gymnast, the booster club already has and will continue to create the conditions for every gymnast to have the best possible instruction and training equipment.

We ask that you join with your fellow parents and support the efforts to continue this successful program by lending the booster club your thoughts, ideas, and abilities in their fundraising activities.

### **Booster members commitment**

- Develop and maintain an attitude of team work, respect, and commitment to RGC, its coaches, athletes, goals, philosophy, and expectations.
- Support the team whenever possible by traveling to competitions, identifying your self as a RGC supporter, cheering for all gymnasts, and by acting in a way that brings respect to RGC and to the sport of gymnastics.

- Booster meetings are held throughout the year. Attendance is encouraged at all of these meetings.
- Every year RGC hosts between two and four meets. These meets are the biggest fund raisers the boosters conduct each year.
- Raise a minimum dollar amount for the year through the various fund raisers RGB hosts. Booster members have their booster account maintained by the booster treasurer to keep track of funds raised and funds used.

### **Competitive season information**

**USAG fees:** the Racine Gymnastics Center team competes in the USAG competitive system. USAG dues are \$47.00 per year (Aug. 1 – July 31). These dues are subject to change. Competition begins at level 3. USAG fees must be paid prior to competition year your gymnast plans to compete.

**Athlete registration form:** to be registered for competition each gymnast must complete and sign a USAG athlete registration form. These forms must be turned in along with the USAG fee by August of the competitive year.

### **Meet scheduling**

At the beginning of each season (August or January), a preliminary schedule of meet locations and dates will be handed out to the gymnasts. Meets may be added, changed or canceled. It is very important that you circle the meets that you know you can or can not attend. If you are not sure about a meet, mark that meet as a YES. It is much easier to enter your child and remove her from the meet than it is to try to get her in last minute.

### Home meets

RGC runs 2-4 meets each year. To make these meets a success, each family is required to be involved in our team program and needs to participate and to volunteer their time. The money that is raised from these meets directly benefits all of our team gymnasts. RGB pays for coach education, coach certifications, and equipment.

Running a meet is not an easy job and there is a lot of work that goes into it. Because the booster club helps run the meets, they will inform you of your required hours per gymnast per meet. All duties that are still open after the sign-up deadline will be assigned. If you are unable to fulfill your assignment, you are responsible to make other arrangements. Duties will range from pre-meet preparations to the meet itself and post-meet clean up. Your assignments will depend on how many gymnasts are on the team and the work load. Remember, many hands make the load light.

### Meet information sheet

1-2 weeks before a competition, participating gymnasts will receive a meet information sheet that includes times, gymnasts & coaches attending, host hotel (if needed), phone numbers, and a map. There will also be a copy of the times and gymnasts competing up on the team board. Gymnasts competing in a meet will be given only one notice. No other reminders will be given.

It is not uncommon for host clubs to send out meet information late or make last minute changes. Information in many instances is not received until the night before competition. It is a good idea to clear the whole weekend of the meet on the chance that there will be last minute changes that could conflict with your previous plans.

### *The meet takes how long?*

The average meet can take as little as 3 ½ hours or as long as 6 hours. Some competitions begun back in the 80's are still not finished. Ok, that is an exaggeration, but I suggest that you bring reading material or some other project (head phones to listen to the Packer's game) with you to help pass the time while at one of your child competitions.

Most competitions run in a format similar to the one listed below.

**Open warm up:** usually a half-hour long. This time is for general stretching and getting equipment settings specific to the gymnast.

**Timed warm up:** every gymnast present warms up on each of the apparatus. This procedure can take from an hour to an hour and a half, sometimes more.

**March in:** all of the gymnasts line up and march in to the gym to be presented to the audience and judges. Usually the National Anthem is played. This takes about ten to fifteen minutes.

**Competition:** the gymnasts now actually compete and receive scores from the judges at each event (except level 3). This may take an hour and a half to two hours to compete. Longer if it is an optional meet and one touch warm ups are necessary.

**Awards:** if the organization running the meet is on the ball you may only have to wait five to ten minutes before the awards are handed out. It has been known to take significantly longer to get the awards ready. Once they are prepared it can take from fifteen minutes to a half hour to hand out the awards.

### *Moving from level to level*

Moving up from one level to the next is decided by the coaches based upon scores from the meet season, attendance at workouts, skill level, and the attitude of the gymnast. The coaches will discuss the move before a final decision is made. This decision will be made in the best interest of the child. As a gymnast moves up, their responsibility to workout and to participate in scheduled meets increases.

Although one criteria used to advance gymnasts from one level to the next are meet scores, gymnasts whose scores qualify them to move to the next higher level are not necessarily required to do so.

### **Meet etiquette for gymnasts**

The following guidelines will help each gymnasts make competition a fun and successful experience.

- Be friendly and use sportsmanlike conduct at all times. Everybody has a unique way of experiencing gymnastics competition. Some people look for the fun in the experience, others are simply hoping to cope with their fears, while others are focused to the point of excluding everything else around them – including you!

This may at times make it seem difficult to be friendly with some gymnasts at a meet. Just remember, everyone is doing the best they are capable of at that moment.

When the opportunity presents itself, introduce yourself to the other gymnasts and coaches in your competitive rotation. Most of the time you will have the chance to develop some new relationships, however, when another gymnast is being given directions by her coach or preparing to compete, you must allow them time to concentrate without distraction.

- Stay focused on the competition. Talking with parents, relatives, or friends is inappropriate during the meet.

Even with the best of intentions, relatives and friends may give advice that conflicts with what your coach says. What will you do when you receive advice from Mom that differs from what Dad told you, then the coach says something different? The answer is you will become more nervous and uptight because you do not know where to place your focus. During workouts and competition pay attention to the coach.

- Before leaving the competition, notify the head coach.



Always let the coach know when you are going to leave the facility. You should never leave the competition facility or go to the parking lot without specific permission from the coach. You should always be accompanied by another team member or coach when leaving the competition floor.

- There is absolutely no reason for you to be on any piece of gymnastics equipment unless you are warming up or currently competing.

If you are staying to watch another teammate compete, or you have arrived early for warm ups, stay seated in the bleachers do not wander out onto the competition floor.

- Competing gymnasts must stay in their rotation group sitting quietly until the last competitor has finished.
- Gym bags, warm up suits, grips, and any other stuff you brought with you should be placed inside your gym bag and kept near you or under your chair.
- Warm ups will be worn when accepting awards.

The meet is not complete until ALL the awards have been handed out. The other gymnasts have waited patiently to receive their awards and have applauded your efforts. You owe them the same consideration.

### *Win, lose, or wipeout*

It is important to remember that a score for any routine is an evaluation of one single performance in your career as a gymnast, not a label you must live up to (i.e. winning the all around this time means you must win it every time), or hang around your neck for the rest of your life. Each meet teaches you more about your abilities as a gymnast, competitor, and human being, and are necessary ingredients for success at higher levels of competition.

Regardless of the outcome of a routine or overall competition, you must learn that crying and feeling sorry for yourself is not an appropriate response to this situation or to most learning situations in the gym or normal life.

### Meet etiquette for parents

1. Team spirit is a big help... wear the team colors, or better yet one of your club T-shirts.
2. Remember, your gymnast is part of the Racine Gymnastics team. They competes not only for themselves but also their teammates, parents, coaches, the booster club, and the Racine Gymnastics Center.
3. Please show proper respect to all Officials and coaches at every competition. They are all there for one reason, to support your child's interest in gymnastics. Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, score keepers, etc.). If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you must contact your coach. Even the coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet, but must submit an inquiry through the meet director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.
4. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You NEVER KNOW who is sitting near you (i.e. parents of the gymnast you just made a remark about).
5. Once a gymnast has walked into the competition area for warm-up, they **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to talk or have contact with their parents until the competition is over. This has less to do with control than it does with FOCUS. Any distraction could disturb the focus necessary to have a successful routine. The coach's job at a meet is to monitor the gymnast's condition and teach her to respond appropriately. If the gymnast is too excited, the coach calms them down. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps them up and motivates them to do their best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to be over-confident. A terrible bar routine may actually provide an educational moment. At these times the gymnast needs to focus on their coach's advice, not distractions from off the competitive floor.

As coaches, we know that you mean well with your comments, but they may not be appropriate for the long-term training of your gymnast. If you have any questions about what happens at a meet, talk to the coach after you have returned to your gym and you have first had time to reflect.

6. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives of the gymnast **ARE NOT ALLOWED** onto the competitive floor. **YOU MUST** remain in the spectator's area. This also includes other relatives and friends. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet if a parent is in the competitor's area.
7. In case of injury during warm up or competition, **YOU MUST** stay in the spectator area until your coach flags you onto the floor.
8. **DO NOT** coach your child. Coaches should coach, everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the gymnasts' focus away from the coach's technique. Even the most helpful comment from you could have disastrous consequences.
9. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY** is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera in advance. Many cameras come with an automatic flash that will go off if it detects low light levels. If you can not manually disable this device, please do not take pictures during the competition.
10. On the day of competition your child should eat a well-balanced meal about three hours prior to the actual competition. This energy will carry them through the entire competition. If necessary, a gymnast may carry fruit juices and pieces of fruit in their gym bag to curb hunger pangs.
11. All gymnasts are expected to stay until the end of the awards ceremony whether they are receiving an award or not. They need to cheer all award recipients – especially their teammates.

## Expectations

Problems occur when a parent expects too much from an athlete who is new to the competitive arena. (New is defined as having only competed for two or three years.) It takes a number of years of quality competition for a gymnast to develop the poise and grace to continuously take top honors in a gymnastics competition.

Some parents seem to have developed their own system of evaluating the scores their children earn during a gymnastic competition. When their child earns a 9.00 or better in the meet, the parents tend to walk around with the look and attitude "YES, my kid is hot!" If their child receives an 8.00, the parents are still happy and feel their child is a very good competitor.

However, if a child gets a mark around a 7.00, the parents start to wonder what needs to be fixed in the routine, or why the coach doesn't pay more attention to their child. As the scores get lower than a 7.00, the gymnast's parents hide in the bleachers and hope that no one they know will see them.

Obviously this is an over-simplification of what happens, and not all parents react in this manner. The key is to recognize when your child is working up to her potential. If they complete all their skills for the first time, without a fall, that is a winning routine regardless of what score they receive.

Comments from you should be congratulatory and positive. No mention should be made at that time of what they could do better, that would lessen the effect of this "victory" for her. The week after the meet your son or daughter's coach will go over those elements that need work and congratulate them on the elements they competed correctly.

Any score your child receives during a competition is no reflection on you as a parent. There is no reason for you to feel embarrassed if your child is having a bad meet. Everyone has good days and bad days, and it is how they learn to react to them that shows their development as a competitor.

Remember always that a score given to your child in a gymnastics competition is an evaluation of one single performance, not an evaluation of the child.

## **Gymnastics should build healthy attitudes**

At Racine Gymnastics Center we feel very strongly and work very hard to insure that the gymnasts should build healthy attitudes about themselves and their gymnastics experience. This will include the development and clarification of issues concerning morality, personal philosophy, inter-personal communication and growth, and personal as well as team goal setting. Gymnastics impacts all of these areas and is indeed, a lifetime experience.

Gymnastics demands total dedication, complete commitment, and a desire to be the best that you can be. The athletic skill and physical fitness one develops in gymnastics stays with many athletes long after they put their grips on for the last time. But, it is the mental soundness the gymnast develops, their intellectual fitness, that is of greater value.

Because of these beliefs, we at Racine Gymnastics Center take our responsibility towards your child's development very seriously. It is our hope that the rules and policies presented in this handbook reflect those beliefs and the care and concerns that we have for our gymnasts.

Racine Gymnastics Center 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 into a healthy and honorable adult. This is no easy task. Both individual and family sacrifice will be required and each advancement through the USAG programs will demand additional effort. We stand ready to contribute our energy, our knowledge and experience, and our love and support to your efforts. We look forward to helping you and your child achieve their dreams.

We at RGC believe that gymnastics is a tool to help kids grow into happy, healthy, and responsible adults. We believe that through gymnastics training the kids learn more than just cartwheels and somersaults. We agree with psychologists who say that the basic attitude common to happy, healthy, and 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 associated 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 their dreams come true.

Our program exists to provide every participant with a chance to succeed through the development of long-term life skills such as confidence, perseverance, a love of exercise, and a sense of accomplishment in their abilities. We believe very strongly in sportsmanship, goal setting and achieving respect of others, self-respect, and the development of strong work ethic. Perhaps central to our approach to gymnastics is our belief that the journey is the most important goal, not the destination or the result from any competition or contest. We guarantee that we will have as much fun as we can while focusing on and working toward the athlete's goal. Above all, we believe that nothing is more important than a child's sense of self-worth. We pledge to direct our best efforts toward achieving the high standards we have set for ourselves.

At Racine Gymnastics Center we believe that gymnastics is a sport different from all others and so it must be approached in a unique and specific way in order to insure success for every athlete. We believe that children need to experience that success because it fosters self-esteem and confidence. As the gymnasts move to the higher levels, that success will only be found through a great commitment of time and effort.

We have dared to dream, challenged ourselves to believe, and we have worked. Therefore, we have achieved.

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 the real-world application throughout our lives. We at Racine Gymnastics Center are committed to fostering the spirit of competition among our young student athletes.

The gymnastics professionals at Racine Gymnastics Center 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 team 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 RGC we define success as: “to be the best that you are capable of becoming.”

**Parent / Gymnast Acknowledgement**

I have read the document titled "welcome to the team!" from cover to cover and understand and agree to the guidelines set forth.

I also understand that the policies and procedures may change throughout the year. Modifications to this document may be made via letters or communications from the team coach and / or gym director

Should I have any questions regarding any policies or procedures, I understand that I should contact the gym director for the appropriate answers.

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Parent signature

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date

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Gymnast signature

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date