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Welcome to the Starz Academy competitive team. We would like to congratulate you and your child on your invitation to become an integral part of our team. First, and most important, providing a fantastic gymnastics experience is what this club is all about. We are here for young children, many who have hopes and dreams of being the best they can be in life and in this sport. We are here to support them in that dream.

It is our hope that the information contained in this packet will:

- ★ Help you in your transition to the competitive team.
- ★ Explain many of our team policies.
- ★ Answer many of the most frequently asked questions regarding our program.

We take particular pride in our team and hope you feel as honored to be a part of our competitive/developmental program as we are of you for agreeing to be a part of it. Please feel free to stop in the office or call if you have any additional or more specific questions. Starz Academy reserves the right to make any changes to any policies as we deem necessary.

Again, congratulations on becoming a part of the Starz Competitive/Developmental team. We look forward to growing with you in the sport of gymnastics!

Thank you,
Starz Academy

Introduction - Why be a member of "The Team"?

All team members share a unique camaraderie - a special support and enthusiasm between teammates, with whom they spend many hours practicing and learning. Developmental team members do not compete.

Team activities also include exhibitions at local events, big/little sister programs, and special activities such as swimming, bowling and team picnics.

The difference between team and classes: Students in our recreational gymnastics classes learn gymnastics skills in a low-pressure non-competitive environment. They probably will never have to perform in front of an audience, so they can focus on a wide variety of gymnastic activities without being overly concerned with aesthetics. Class students are not expected to do a skill that makes them uncomfortable. If, for example, a student were afraid to perform a skill on the balance beam, they would simply put off working on that skill and work on something different. If a team member is afraid of a skill, they will be expected to work through their fear and master the skill, with the help of their coach, if they want to progress on team. Team members are also expected to work harder on their weak events. Team members and parents must make a much greater physical, emotional, and financial commitment to gymnastics.

We expect the team gymnasts to set an example for the other members of the club. Team members spend more time in the gym. They represent Starz and we want to project a positive image.

We feel that the process of working hard to reach for goals is an important lesson that can help children grow into successful adults. Many gain a sense of confidence from competitive sport that remains with them throughout their lives. Several former competitive gymnasts have gone on to become doctors, teachers, scientists or other professionals, and credit much of their success to the lessons they learned in the gym.

Competitive Program Goals

- ★ To provide the opportunity for each gymnast to reach his or her full potential.
- ★ To provide the opportunity for each gymnast to train and compete for Starz Academy.
- ★ To provide a training facility that is safe and an environment that is conducive to effective training.
- ★ To promote overall personal development including self-discipline, motivation, courage, dedication, positive attitude, positive self-image and good sportsmanship.
- ★ To follow the standards established by USA Gymnastics to ensure all technical and program requirements are being met.

Safety

Gymnastics is inherently a very dangerous sport. This fact combined with the high difficulty level many gymnasts at Starz will achieve only adds to the potential for injury. All parents must be fully aware of the risk involved in the sport of gymnastics. Speed, motion, height, flipping and difficulty of the skill put our athletes in potentially life-threatening situations on a daily basis. At Starz are very aware of the 'potential danger' and make every effort to achieve and maintain a safe environment for our athletes. We believe in spotting whenever there is a doubt as to the consistency of a skill. We believe in padding, matting and using any training devices designed to make learning as safe as possible. Our mission is to have an important and positive impact on your child's future. We are not only committed to helping each child become the best gymnast he or she can possibly be, but also to helping him or her become a happy, healthy and responsible person.

Competitive Gymnastics – What does it mean?

The decision to enter competitive gymnastics is an important and exciting step in the life of your child. 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 a team, they do not take the time to assess what the consequences will be on the rest of their lives. We believe that gymnastics is the greatest overall body conditioning activity in which your child could be involved. However, 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 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.

Life Changes to Keep In Mind

- ★ At the lower team levels the number of hours of practice per week is relatively few. As your child 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.
- ★ There will be competitions that take up a number of weekends during the year.
- ★ Homework will have to be done more efficiently and with better study habits due to shorter periods of time available. (It has been the experience of most coaches that 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 efficiently than their peers.)
- ★ Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life (and yours). Your gymnast will have less time at home and less time to spend with friends outside the sphere of gymnastics influence.

Gymnasts Expectations

Respect for yourself & others

Respect your physical self. All your efforts should go into building up your abilities: Fuel your body with nutritious food; rest your body with plenty of sleep; protect your body by being safe in the gym; listen to your body when it tells you to stop either because of illness or injury; heal your body when it tells you not to continue; and celebrate your body by making it strong, flexible and powerful enough to do the wonderful things expected of it in this sport.

Respect your non-physical self

Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult of all sports. You will suffer setbacks, frustration, fear, and defeat. Expect these things, learn from them, face them, and overcome them. Set high goals and achieve them step-by-step. Maintain a positive attitude when facing your fears and frustrations, because it is your attitude, which will help defeat them.

Respect your teammates.

They have their own goals and dreams, but they are also here to help support you. Cheer for them when they attempt new skills, make new skills that are difficult for them, or when they are competing. Accept compliments with a simple "thank you".

Respect for your coaches is expected

Treat them with courtesy and respect and they will return the favor.

Respect for Starz

You show your respect by the way in which you act. The following actions show respect and are expected of members on the Starz Team.

1. Attend all practices, local competitions, and special events.
2. Call the gym/Email to alert the coaches if you will be absent for ANY reason.
3. Arrive on time and stay until practice is over.
4. You are expected to work hard and try your best. This is all we will ever ask of you, and this is what you should always demand of yourself.
5. Arrive at the gym ready to participate with the proper attire; hair pulled back, jewelry off, gum in the trashcan, well rested, and ready to go.
6. Treat other gymnasts with respect, be kind to those gymnasts younger than you, and do not think to hold yourself out as better than other gymnasts. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses.
7. Always ask permission to leave the gym area, this applies to leaving practice early, going to the restroom, or calling home. Your coaches need to know where you are when you are at the gym.
8. Always act in a way that shows your respect for yourself and to the gym. We want the gym to be a fun, motivating and uplifting place to be. There is no place in our gym for rude comments or ANY inappropriate behaviors (tantrums, talking back, not doing your personal best, etc.).
9. Be honest. Cheating is the ugliest form of disrespect to your coaches, to your parents,

and most importantly, to yourself.

10. Provide your body with food and drink that will help you to do your best.
11. Show respect for the Starz facility by cleaning up after yourself.
12. Show respect for your safety and to the wishes of your coaches by staying off the equipment without the specific permission and supervision of a coach. THIS RULE APPLIES ESPECIALLY TO THE PIT AND THE TRAMPOLINES.
13. Always wait inside the building for your ride after practice.

Respect for 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 Starz Academy. The way you act at competitions, while at team functions, and while traveling to and from the competitions is a public statement about the way you feel about yourself, Starz, and the sport of gymnastics itself. Only the highest standard of behavior will be acceptable.

Participate in all scheduled performances and training sessions.

We are a developmental gymnastics team. In our performances, each gymnast plays an important role affecting all other team members. We measure our work and progress during testing sessions.

While winning is not so important, TRYING to win represents everything we strive for.

Trying to win means 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 is a part of everyday life.

Demonstrate the highest regard for your sport

Demonstrate the highest regard for your sport and your hard work: by arriving to all exhibitions and testing sessions on time, by conducting yourself with grace and courage during these activities, 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.

During Performance

Gymnasts are to wear a tank leotard (no skirts or shorts) and hair should be tied back with nothing added that is likely to fall out.

Respect for Your Athlete and the Gym

Overview

Parents play a huge role in the development of a successful gymnast. Your role is every bit as important as the coaches. 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 his/her dreams:

On the physical side, it is your job to ensure 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, and has the proper clothing and equipment needed for workouts. By performing the following tasks, you can show your respect for your gymnast and the effort he/she is putting into the sport. Any more or less does a disservice to your child and will limit his/her opportunity for success.

Concerns

Please come to any of your child's coaches if you have problems or concerns. We are in business to serve you and your child, your thoughts are important to us. Together, we will work to find solutions to your problems. Complaining to other parents CANNOT solve your problems, 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 deal with communication problems appropriately. If there are times that a parent needs to contact a member of the coaching staff to ask some questions or voice some concerns, we would be happy to discuss these during a scheduled meeting time. ***Approaching coaches during a workout is not the time.*** Our attention and efforts are focused on the development of your gymnasts' skills and safety during workout. The best way to contact us is by leaving a message with the front office or by email – starzgb@starzgb.com.

Please let a coach know before practice if you think your child might have a problem due to illness, medication or injury. Please be aware that Starz will never administer medication to your child. If you wish to provide your child with a supply of Tylenol, aspirin, etc. you may do so.

Roles

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 other things to think about, and it interferes with the development of the coach/athlete relationship which is critical for long-term success.

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 them to "keep their legs straight", or to "smile" or to "run faster", they are directing the child's attention away from what the 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 what choice they make, somebody is going to be upset and they will not progress in the way that they should. Coaching your child puts them in a no-win situation. It is unfair to

them and 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 the coach, rely on the coach to direct the training, and to receive important emotional support from their praise. Parents interfere with all that when the child is confused as to which way to turn for direction and support. If we are not working to improve appearance it is because we are working on something more important at this point in the training. Perfect execution often comes late in the mastery of key skills.

Guidelines for Parents Feeling Stress

Here are some danger signs to watch for. If you recognize yourself in these descriptions, you probably need to reevaluate your actions, your role, or your attitudes.

- ★ Observing every single 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 his/her progress to others in the group, on the team, or in competition.
- ★ Verbally abusing the gym, the coaches, and the program while still placing your child under our supervision.
- ★ Videotaping each competition and requiring your child to review it at home with you (videotaping can be a positive thing if used appropriately).
- ★ Listen to the comments you make to your gymnast regarding his/her workouts or competitions. How would your gymnast interpret those comments? Other things to say that would sound better:
 - "Work hard and you'll do better next time" instead of, "that judge always scores you low".
 - "Do your best and have fun!" instead of "I can't believe they moved Sally up and not you!".
 - "How was practice today?" instead of "how many flip-flops did you make today?".

Rules & Policies

**GYMNASTS ARE EXPECTED AND REQUIRED TO ATTEND ALL PRACTICES DURING
THE WEEK PRIOR TO A COMPETITION.**

1. Communication

All parents must be in communication with coaches to make aware of missed practices, injuries, questions, etc.

2. Commitment to the gymnastics training program

We expect team members to make a year-round commitment.

3. Attendance

Each gymnast should try to make it to as many scheduled practices as possible. In addition, gymnasts are expected to arrive 5 - 10 minutes early so that they will be prepared when practice starts. Further, we want our athletes to stay for the entire practice.

CHECK YOUR MAILBOXES: All Starz Team and Booster Club information will be in your mailbox. Emailed information you missed or did not check will be in the mailboxes provided for you.

4. Team Payment

It is essential that you understand that your tuition pays for the benefits of a program, and not just a specified number of classes or days. We understand that some people are not able to adopt this kind of thinking. These people should not get involved in our competitive program because any "per hour" or "per week" mentality will ultimately lead to misunderstandings and your dissatisfaction. Payment for team programs is monthly, regardless of vacations, camps, sickness, injuries, etc. (Please discuss prolonged absences with your coach).

Monthly payments are to be taken out automatically by ACH on the 1st of each month and by credit card on the 15th of each month. All team members are required to choose which automatic payment method for monthly tuition. It is your individual choice whether you prefer to have the monthly fee taken out of your credit card, checking or savings account. There is a \$25.00 service for all insufficient fund notices. AT THE DISCRETION OF MANAGEMENT, IF YOU BECOME SEVERELY BEHIND IN TUITION YOUR GYMNAST MAY NOT BE ALLOWED TO PRACTICE UNTIL THE BALANCE DUE IS PAID IN FULL.

5. Competition Fees

The Booster Club organizes all competitive fees except coach's wages.

Coach Payment: Coach wages will be \$75 per session for up to 8 athletes. If there are more than 8 athletes there should be another coach present to assist/divide the duties. In this case, the payment per coach will be \$50.

If there are more than 8 athletes and another coach cannot be present at the competition then the wage of \$100 will be payable to the coach that was present.

All the sessions/wages will be added up and divided by total number of athletes in our competitive

program. This includes Compulsory AND Optional athletes.

6. Competition

We expect our gymnasts to compete in all the meets on our schedule. We understand if there are vacation, family events, illness or injury your gymnast may be unable to compete. The meet schedule is decided upon in June for compulsory competitions and August for optional competitions. There will be an attendance form that will need to be handed in to the Booster club for commitment to all competitions and fees.

7. Competition Uniforms

All Competitive Team gymnasts must have a team uniform consisting of:

Competition Jacket

Competition Leotard

Competition Leggings

Competition Backpack

All apparel invoices must be paid in order to compete.

8. Booster Club

All team members are required to participate in the Booster Club. This includes:

ATTEND ALL MONTHLY BOOSTER CLUB MEETINGS

PARTICIPATE IN ALL IN-HOUSE FUNDRAISERS

ATTEND AT LEAST 3 OFF-SITE FUNDRAISERS*

All team fundraisers are divided equally to all team members, therefore to participate in all competitions, parents must attend all meetings to be updated on upcoming information for the booster club and Starz as a whole. If you choose to not participate in any fundraisers it is *strongly encouraged* to offer a donation to the booster club as replacement for the financial efforts, dedication and time volunteered by the other parents for the booster club program, which supports all the athletes who are a part of Starz Gymnastics Academy.

*unless the fundraisers offered are less

9. Make-Up Practices

Although the hourly rate of our team programs are low, we still offer the opportunity to make-up missed practices at no additional cost. Please contact your coaches to set up a good time for your child to do a make-up practice.

10. Injury Protocol

Injuries that happen in the gym will be documented and the parents will be made aware immediately. Injuries that occur outside of practice must be reported to coaches as soon as possible. A doctor's note must be presented for any injury preventing an athlete from attending the entire practice. All athletes are expected to maintain a modified practice curriculum for any injuries. Any athletes who miss weeks of practice due to an injury can lose track of their progress and potentially not achieve the goals necessary for the expectations of their upcoming competition season.

11. Annual Fees

USAG Membership fees are due annually before competition season. This fee varies every year.

Workout observation

As with many other sports, Starz does not recommend viewing training sessions. Parents, friends and relatives are encouraged to restrict their viewing of the gymnast's workouts to ensure:

- ★ A quiet atmosphere of serious training in the gym (no coming and going, distracting noises, cries of siblings, etc.);
- ★ Complete focus of the gymnast on the instructions of the coach (parents' presence may be disruptive for gymnasts);
- ★ Reinforce the feeling that gym time is the gymnast's very own time and responsibility;
- ★ The feeling that gymnasts belong to a team.

However, Starz would never prevent you from viewing your child at any time and if you choose to do so, please observe workouts in the area provided. The gymnasts' attention on the coaches, routines, or skills, etc. is very important to their safety and performance. If you need to contact your child during practice, tell the *office* that you need to talk with him/her briefly, and they will notify a member of the coaching staff.

Please remember to clean up after yourselves and your children if you do spend time in the viewing room. We appreciate your help in maintaining the cleanliness of the facility.

INJURY PROTOCOL

When an athlete is injured, regardless of location of the injury on the body, we expect that the athlete continue to participate and engage in all normal practices/events that Starz Academy holds. What most doctors will tell you is to steer clear from any training. You may even have a medical note stating this however the doctor's main concern is to cover their own basis. Most doctors don't understand the sport of gymnastics and how many strength, conditioning and drill exercises that can be performed without the use of the injured body part. Gymnastics is a very unique sport that requires significant amounts of strength, flexibility, and repetition to succeed. The longer a person is entirely away from the sport, the harder it is to get back into the swing of things mentally and physically. We would like to keep your child in the best possible shape while at the same time avoiding stress to the injured body part so when your child is ready to return to practices, meets, etc. they will have an easier time adjusting. We do understand that as a parent you have the ultimate say in how much your child participates during this time so please keep us informed with attendance/time as you would any other time. Please also understand that because you are part of a team and tuition is on a yearly basis regardless of vacation time, sick time, injuries, etc. (and that depending on the injury) your tuition will remain the same during this time. Please also send a copy of your hospital form so we can place it in your child's gym file.

Clinics and extracurricular activities

Participation not required; all costs additional

Private Lessons

Private lessons may be scheduled with any of your team coaches. At all times the normally

scheduled classes and events in the gym take priority over any private lesson. All team members taking private lessons must be current on their tuition.

Season

The gymnastics competitive season is 3-4 months long, depending on your level. The remaining months of the year we are training new skills or teaching new routines. It is imperative that your gymnast attend as many practices as possible during his/her years in our competitive program for his/her safety as well as his/her knowledge of his/her ability to do the various skills required at the level he/she wishes to participate.

Water Bottles

Each competitive/developmental gymnast may bring a non-breakable plastic water bottle with a cap to practice. The water bottle should be labeled with the athlete's name. Please bring only water, as sports drinks tend to make a sticky mess in the gym.

Nutrition Break

In order to help control blood sugar levels, a nutrition break will be provided during practices that last longer than 4 hours. The types of food that should be consumed at that time include fruit, crackers, juice, pretzels or other nutritious snacks. Never bring candy, soda or other sugared foods. All gymnasts are required to clean up after themselves! Place trash in proper receptacles, bring home food containers each day, and maintain the cleanliness of their locker room.

Moving from level to level

It is increasingly clear that gymnastics is a very technical and perfection oriented sport. Advancement in the sport depends solely on how well the basics are mastered. Similar to a pyramid, the larger the bases of support (basics), and the higher the pyramid will stand (ultimate skill level). With this in mind, it is ridiculous to assume that gymnasts should merely achieve their mobility score to move to the next level, or that all gymnasts in the group will achieve level advancement simultaneously. Please remember that being in a higher level does not make you a better gymnast, executing skills precisely makes you a better gymnast.

The specific mission of Starz is to teach kids the skills to compete in life as well as develop happy, healthy and confident children. One way in which we can meet this demanding goal is to place the gymnasts at the level where they can be happy, safe, and confident. What this means is that the 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 his/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. Many gymnasts may excel at a particular level but have not quite achieved all of the skills required for advancement. We do not wish to advance any student that is not completely ready, both physically and mentally.

To be eligible to compete at the next level, the gymnast must have practiced all routine skills and routines to a competent, confident, consistent, and safe level and quantity as determined by coach. The gymnast must have trained at a level of intensity and proficiency consistent

with that level, based on Starz & USA Gymnastics standards. A gymnast must consistently attend scheduled practices, have shown the ability to work confidently & safely at the next level and display the proper attitude and behavior as outlined in the Starz Competitive Team Manual. The coach has the final decision on determining a gymnast's readiness to compete at any level.

General Competition Information

SEE "ADDITIONAL Q&A" AT THE END OF THIS PACKET FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Summary

At Starz believe that competitive gymnastics can be one of the most beneficial activities that a child can experience during their formative years. We recognize the tremendous efforts that our team kids and parents put forth to be a part of our program. We hope that our gymnasts and parents also realize what a tremendous effort your coaches and the gym staff put forth on your behalf. We very definitely must recognize each other's worth, or this will be no fun for any of us.

This packet is not meant to sound punitive or harsh in any way. It is meant only to inform you about competitive gymnastics at Starz. We hope that we have covered at least a few of the many questions that you will have about our exciting team program. If you still have questions, please feel free to speak with one of our directors or the head coach.

Gymnast Code of Ethics

Success in gymnastics requires long hours of training, repetitive practice, and hard work. In addition to learning gymnastics skills, we at Starz Academy try to discover many other qualities through training and competition. This list of team policies has been established to help you reach your goals, as well as to provide guidance on procedures.

DO YOUR BEST TO PREPARE FOR COMPETITION

- ★ Attend practices consistently
- ★ Attend practices on time
- ★ Come to practice physically prepared for learning
- ★ Come to practice with a positive attitude towards learning
- ★ Be responsible for appropriate gymnastics attire and personal gymnastics equipment (grips, braces, etc.)

PRACTICE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

- ★ Act graciously, whether you succeed or fail
- ★ Appreciate the effort of others, as well as your own
- ★ Help others

APPRECIATE GYMNASTICS, ITS RISKS, CHALLENGES, AND POSITIVE QUALITIES

- ★ Have fun!
- ★ Recognize the difficulty of learning and mastering gymnastics skills

- ★ Learn to work with others, to work towards a goal, to make commitments

RESPECT STARZ COACHES, PARENTS, AND GYMNASTS WITH THE SAME TREATMENT YOU DESERVE

- ★ Act respectfully, politely, and courteously
- ★ Speak respectfully, politely and courteously
- ★ Be proud to be a part of Starz Academy
- ★ Participation with other gymnastics clubs is not permitted without permission

RESPECT THE STARZ ORGANIZATION, FACILITIES, AND PROPERTY

- ★ Treat all gymnastics equipment with care
- ★ Use gymnastics equipment for its intended purpose only, and only under appropriate supervision
- ★ Move gymnastics equipment as necessary, for personal and team use and safety
- ★ Move A Mat Rule: help to put equipment and mats away daily, to keep gym in order

FAQ's

If team gymnasts fees cover 48 weeks of coaching, and the additional four weeks are either time out of the gym or an additional cost for team athletes - how do team gymnasts make up for practice missed for times the gym is closed for holidays, meets, camp, etc.? (Example: Thanksgiving, July 4th, meets at Starz, meets away from Starz.)

The Make-up Policy states "Competitive team members are allowed to make-up Sunday-Thursday on any day they are not normally scheduled to practice". Unlike the rec. program, there are no limitations as to the number of make-ups or the time in which they must be made. All we ask is that you notify the office as soon as you are aware of the impending absence and let us know when your child intends to make-up.

Which coaches are assigned to coach team gymnasts and what criteria do you use? Do these coaches have to have certain qualifications or certifications?

The primary Starz Competitive Coaching staff has been safety certified through USA Gymnastics and each coach maintains current USA Gymnastics memberships authorizing them to coach at the Junior Olympic Level. All of our team coaches have previous coaching and/or competitive experience and continue to stay current on updates and changes made regarding Levels 3 - 10.

There are a few recreational coaches that supplement the regular team coaching staff as the need arises. These individuals have shown the ability to work well with competitive gymnasts, attend monthly staff meetings & training clinics in the gym and continue to be educated by the team coaches. These coaches never work with a level of gymnast that they are not sufficiently qualified to do so.

What is your philosophy on coaching and discipline?

Conduct - Both in practice and at competitions, gymnasts are expected to try their best at all times. They should refrain from using profanity, and displays of un-sportsmanlike conduct. In addition, they are expected to report any problems with other teammates, etc. immediately to

the coaching staff. Breaches in conduct will be handled with the following guidelines: [Display of un-sportsmanlike conduct (lieu profanity, violence, failure to respect others, etc.) at a competition/practice discipline depends on the circumstance].

The list and procedures noted below are not intended to be all-inclusive. They are presented as an expression of our beliefs as to what disciplinary actions are necessary and appropriate. We will treat all of our gymnasts and gym parents as individuals and will seek to impose the most effective disciplinary actions based on each unique set of circumstances.

- ★ The gymnast may not be permitted to rotate with his/her group at the designated time. He/she will have to stay and finish or repeat an assignment on a particular piece of equipment.
- ★ The gymnast may be asked to sit and watch. Or the gymnast may be given appropriate conditioning to perform which will help focus their attention and build strength to accomplish the task at hand.
- ★ The gymnast may be asked to leave the gym and go home early.
- ★ The coach may request a meeting with a parent.
- ★ The gymnast may be suspended from the team for one or more days or may be scratched from a competition. Please note that if the gymnast is suspended from a competition due to poor attendance, a poor work ethic or a negative attitude, etc. the entry fee is nonrefundable.
- ★ The gymnast may be asked to leave the program if he/she cannot conform the behavior to the expectations of the team, the coach, or the gym.

The first three items on the above list are fairly common, and we will not generally communicate these disciplinary actions to the parent of the gymnast. The development of the coach/gymnast relationship is paramount. We cannot and will not run to the parents every time we have a problem. We will attempt to build our own relationship time shared, belief in the same dreams and values, work performed together, and the emotional ups and downs that are part of all important ventures.

The fourth item on the list, requesting a conference, signifies a need to work outside the coach/athlete relationship. In this instance we need your help to overcome a challenge that is too much for us to accomplish on our own.

The final two items on the list are reserved for the most serious violations of our rules and policies. They are seldom used. They are reserved primarily for times when there is an ongoing problem with disruption and disrespect within the gym that has proven resistant to improvement. We will not let the bad attitude of one gymnast bring down the spirit and work ethic of another gymnast.

Additional Examples are as follows:

- ★ Disrespectful attitude/ words/ behavior - a gymnast is generally given 1 or 2 warnings and if the behavior is not adjusted, the gymnast will either be given a strength exercise (leg lifts/running/ etc.) or will be asked to sit down in their splits until they are ready to participate with the appropriate behavior. Discussion with the coach will follow.

- ★ Continued disrespect displayed to coaches or teammates will result in a conference with the gymnast & parents to discuss expectations and future with the program.
- ★ If a problem persists and the behavior is affecting others in the gym, the gymnast may be asked to either take a break from the program or will be asked to leave permanently.
- ★ Violence to other gymnasts & coaches - Will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion.
- ★ If a gymnast refuses to work required skills for their level the coach will attempt to work through the problem. However, if the coach is confident that the gymnast can work the skill safely and has done so in the past, it will be expected that the gymnast continue to do so. If several attempts have consistently been made to assist the gymnast with no success, the coach may have that gymnast sit out of that rotation or rotate to the next event if the behavior is interfering with the other gymnasts on that event. In the event that the gymnast is unwilling or unable to overcome this problem, he/she may need to re-evaluate his/her reasons for participating in competitive gymnastics.

As with any circumstance, Starz staff will attempt to work through discipline problems with the athlete through gymnast/coach discussion. If there is a serious problem that can't be rectified we will contact the parents as soon as possible.

Again the specific mission of Starz is to develop happy, healthy and confident children. As parents you are the vital link in the triangle. We recognize that you have graciously put your child into our hands for training. We do not take that responsibility lightly. The only way for the entire program to work is with communication. Each part of the triangle: gymnast - parent - coach must communicate their concerns when they come up. Oftentimes private conferences are necessary. The coaching staff is always available to speak with you about your concerns and we will be honest with you if we have any serious concerns about your athlete.

What is your policy on outside activities for gymnasts?

Competitive gymnastics is a year round commitment and because of this, personal sacrifices will sometimes be made but the results are worth the sacrifice to the gymnasts. This does not mean that gymnastics must consume your life. Our staff realizes that family and academics must be priorities. Ultimately, we hope that our athletes will learn to budget their time when other activities arise.

Your progress & safety is directly related to your attendance. While we cannot prevent a gymnast from participating in other activities, sports/activities that conflict with practice and/or meet times must be kept at a minimum. Success in gymnastics requires long hours of training, repetitive practice, and hard work. You have made a commitment to gymnastics and as the gymnast advances & learns more difficult skills, it is imperative to maintain regular attendance, get enough rest, and be completely prepared for practice. We will always suggest you try and schedule other activities around practice/competition times.

We do not allow our Level 9 or 10 team gymnasts to compete with any high school teams. They may move to the recreational program and compete in high school. Because of the high level of skill difficulty and that competitive team gymnasts are required to keep a rigorous schedule, it does not allow for the added burden of additional practices for high school competition. If your gymnast is interested in competing with his/her high school team he/she

should speak with us. As a group with parents coach and gymnast, we will come to a decision on what program is in his/her best interest to continue in.

What is your message to parents and gymnasts on parents watching practice?

As with many other sports, Starz does not recommend viewing training sessions on a regular basis. Parents, friends and relatives are encouraged to restrict their viewing of the gymnast's workouts to ensure:

- ★ A quiet atmosphere of serious training in the gym (no coming and going, distracting noises, cries of siblings, etc.);
- ★ Complete focus of the gymnast on the instructions of the coach (parents' presence may be disruptive for gymnasts);
- ★ Reinforce the feeling that gym time is the gymnast's very own time and responsibility;
- ★ The feeling that gymnasts belong to a team.

What happens if a gymnast complains about their coach?

We must remember that a coach is also a human being and we do make mistakes. However, we must also remember that there are many sides to an event. Asking questions such as "What was the role you played in this situation and is there anything you could have done differently" will help parents to keep open the lines of communication with their children while getting to know both sides of the story. Sometimes coaches may say something that is not intended to be negative but the gymnast feels it is. We don't always know when something is taken in a hurtful way and the only way to make a change is to know when there is a problem.

Coaches and gymnasts will not always see eye to eye on all situations. One philosophy we emphasize in the gym is "Life is 20% what happens to you and 80% how you react to it." In other words life isn't always fair and though we want the gym environment to be positive and peaceful on a regular basis that is not always the case. A valuable lesson for the athletes to learn is that in life and in the gym people will not always treat you as you expect to be treated. You have a choice as to how you will deal with the situation. You can either resolve the situation - talk to your parents, coach, etc. or you can dissolve (let go of the situation) if you are not willing to take the necessary steps to fix it. In many cases reflecting on a situation before reacting to it is beneficial to all parties involved. The old saying, "Sleep on it" really does apply. It is amazing how different a person can feel given the time to really think about it.

If at any time your child expresses a serious problem with a coach or any other person at the gym please bring it to our attention at once.

Once again as parents you are the vital link in the triangle. We recognize that you have graciously put your child into our hands for training. We do not take that responsibility lightly. The only way for the entire program to work is with communication. Each part of the triangle: gymnast - parent - coach must communicate their concerns when they come up. Oftentimes private conferences are necessary. The coaching staff is always available to speak with you about your concerns and we will be honest with you if we have any serious concerns about your athlete.

How do you choose which meets the teams will compete in?

Each year we receive numerous invitations to competitions around the United States. The coaching staff meets yearly to discuss and choose which meets would be best for the advancement of the gymnast.

How is the state meet location determined?

Any gym can place a bid interested in hosting the State meet and the state chooses which gym should be awarded that honor.

Description of USAG Junior Olympic Levels

Level 3: This is an entry-level competitive level. Compulsory routines are competed on all four events. Compulsory means that all gymnasts at this level compete the same exact routines. The gymnast must have reached his/her 5th birthday in order to participate at level 3. At Starz gymnasts at this level works out approx. 6.5 hours per week.

Level 4: This is an entry-level competitive level. Compulsory routines are competed on all four events. Compulsory means that all gymnasts at this level compete the same exact routines. The gymnast must have reached his/her 6th birthday in order to participate at level 4. At Starz gymnasts at this level works out approx. 10 hours per week.

Level 5: This is also a beginning compulsory level. These routines are designed to help gymnasts develop required skills and technique. The gymnast must have reached his/her 7th birthday to participate. At Starz this level works out approx. 13 hours per week.

Level 6: This is a compulsory level very similar to level 5 but with slightly more difficult skills. The gymnast must have reached his/her 7th birthday to participate. This level works out approx. 13.5 hours per week.

Level 7: This is a compulsory/optional level. The gymnasts create their own routines but must include certain compulsory elements. The gymnast must have reached his/her 7th birthday to participate. Starz Level 7 athletes workout 16-20 hours per week.

Level 8: This is a beginning optional level, which means the gymnasts make up their own routines meeting specific difficulty requirements. Competition is at the local, state and regional levels. The gymnast must have reached his/her 8th birthday to participate. Starz Level 8 athletes workout 16-20 hours per week.

Level 9: This is an intermediate optional level. Gymnasts are allowed to do more difficult skills with some restrictions. These gymnasts spend 17 or more hours per week at Starz.

Level 10: This is the highest level in the USAG Junior Olympic age group program. It is an advanced optional level. Gymnasts are allowed to compete any skills with no restrictions. These gymnasts workout at Starz 20 or more hours per week.

Elite: This is the top level in gymnastics. Perhaps 1% of all gymnasts compete at this level. Gymnasts compete up to the National and International level and hope to represent the USA in International competitions including the Olympics.

TOPs: The TOPs program is a separate branch of Starz team program. TOPs stands for Talent Opportunity Program and is part of USA Gymnastics' Elite level program. This is an extremely challenging program in which the athletes participate in a series of physical abilities and skills tests at the regional and national level. Selection for the TOP program is based on the athlete's age, ability and goals in gymnastics.

Do's and Don'ts for Sport Parents

Amy Wheeler, Ph.D. (Cand.)

Do for Yourself:

- ★ Get vicarious pleasure from your children's participation, but do not become overly ego-involved.
- ★ Try to enjoy yourself at competitions. Your unhappiness can cause your child to feel guilty.
- ★ Look relaxed, calm, positive and energized when watching your child compete. Your attitude influences how your child feels and performs.
- ★ Have a life of your own outside of your child's sports participation.

Do with Other Parents:

- ★ Make friends with other parents at events. Socializing can make the event more fun for you.
- ★ Volunteer as much as you can. Youth sports depend upon the time and energy of involved parents.
- ★ Police your own ranks: Work with other parents to ensure that all parents behave appropriately at practices and competitions.

Do with Coaches:

- ★ Leave the coaching to the coaches.
- ★ Give them any support they need to help them do their jobs better.
- ★ Communicate with them about your child. You can learn about your child from each other.
- ★ Inform them of relevant issues at home that might affect your child at practice.
- ★ Inquire about the progress of your children. You have a right to know.
- ★ Make the coaches your allies.

Do for the Children:

- ★ Provide guidance for your children, but do not force or pressure them.
- ★ Assist them in setting realistic goals for participation.
- ★ Emphasize fun, skill development and other benefits of sports participation, e.g., cooperation, competition, self-discipline, commitment.
- ★ Show interest in their participation: help them get to practice, attend competitions, and ask questions.
- ★ Provide a healthy perspective to help children understand success and failure.
- ★ Emphasize and reward effort rather than results.
- ★ Intervene if your child's behavior is unacceptable during practice or competitions.
- ★ Understand that your child may need a break from sports occasionally.
- ★ Give your child some space when needed. Part of sports participation involves them figuring things out for themselves.
- ★ Keep a sense of humor. If you are having fun and laughing, so will your child.
- ★ Provide regular encouragement.
- ★ Be a healthy role model for your child by being positive and relaxed at competitions and by having balance in your life.
- ★ Give them unconditional love: Show them you love them whether they win or lose!

Don't for Yourself:

- ★ Base your self-esteem and ego on the success of your child's sports participation.
- ★ Care too much about how your child performs.
- ★ Lose perspective about the importance of your child's sports participation.

Don't with Other Parents:

- ★ Make enemies of other parents.
- ★ Talk about others in the sports community--instead talk to them. It is more constructive.

Don't with Coaches:

- ★ Interfere with their coaching during practice or competitions.
- ★ Work at cross-purposes with them. Make sure you agree philosophically and practically on why your child is playing sports and what they may get out of sports.

Don't with Your Children:

- ★ Expect your children to get anything more from their sport than a good time, physical fitness, mastery and love of a lifetime sport, and transferable life skills.
- ★ Ignore your child's bad behavior in practice or competitions.
- ★ Ask the child to talk with you immediately after a competition.
- ★ Show negative emotions while watching them perform.
- ★ Make your child feel guilty for the time, energy and money you are spending and the sacrifices you are making.
- ★ Think of your child's sports participation as an investment for which you expect a return.
- ★ Live out your own dreams through your child's sports participation.
- ★ Compare your child's progress with that of other children.
- ★ Badger, harass, use sarcasm, threaten or use fear to motivate your child. It only demeans them and causes them to resent you.
- ★ Expect anything from your child except their best effort.
- ★ Ever do anything that will cause them to think less of themselves or of you!

I have fully read and understand the rules/policies/updates included in this packet.
By signing below, I agree to adhere to these rules/policies/updates to the best of my ability.

Gymnast Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Starz Management: _____

Date: _____

Please sign and return Thank You!