



CSA Kids Official Competitive Gymnastics Team

# Team Handbook

## 2016-2017

## **Part I: Introduction to CSA Kids Gymnastics Program**

CSA Kids would like to welcome you to our Competitive Gymnastics Team! Through this handbook we will give you a better insight into how our program operates and answer any questions you may have. We are here to support your child in their gymnastics experience.

Many young gymnasts have hopes and dreams of doing their very best in this sport and we want to help guide them to achieving their dreams. To do our best, we need to have all gymnasts, parents and coaching staff function as a team. If after reading this handbook you still have questions, please bring them to our attention and we will try our best to answer them.

### **Competitive Team Purpose**

The CSA Gymnastics Team Program provides gymnastics training and opportunities to successfully compete in gymnastics on a local, state and national level. We use the tools of Personal Best, Team Spirit and Family Support for the gymnast to maximize their experience on the CSA Gymnastics Team.

In addition to our mission, our goal is for each child to achieve her goals in a professional and safe environment, while learning self-discipline, pride, the value of teamwork and many other life lessons along the way.

### **Competitive Gymnastics- What does it mean?**

The decision to enter completion is an important and exciting step in the life of your child! 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 selection for team gymnasts, we also take into consideration the commitment of the parents and the gymnast.

We are thrilled to be able to offer your daughter a spot on the gymnastics team! However, we encourage you to assess the consequences of such a commitment on the rest of your family and their lives as well.

### **Lifestyle Changes to Keep in Mind**

As your daughter progresses through the levels, your commitment as a parent of a competitive gymnast increases. The following are just some of the points to consider when joining the team.

- Training hours increase
- Your driving time increases with more practice days
- Several meets on weekends away can take away from other members of your family.
- Homework will have to be done more efficiently and study habits need to be refined.
  - It has been the experience with 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 your child's life (and yours). Your daughter will have less time to spend with her friends outside of gymnastics. Outside activities become increasingly difficult to participate in due to the number of hours required to be spent in the gym to progress.
- Financial commitment can be the toughest part of gymnastics for a family. As your daughter progresses, costs can increase based on but not limited to the following factors: Practice time increasing thus costing more, placement of meets can be further away, meet registration fees can increase, etc.
- Gymnastics is a constant challenge. There will never be a day that your daughter will achieve everything there is to achieve in this sport. Those that like a constant challenge will find the sport of gymnastics invigorating!

### **Selection for Team**

CSA Gymnastics Team coaching staff will determine initial placement on team. Wherever possible, objective measures of learning potential will be used. However, subjective predictors, such as courage, commitment, desire, "coachability" and integrity will all play a large role in placement. In all cases, a trial period of one or two months will be offered in order to assess the gymnasts' placement, readiness for training, parental support, and compatibility with the team. This may mean that your child will be returned to a more preparatory level if the coaches feel that this would be better for her progression as a gymnast. CSA Gymnastics Competitive Team includes the following levels.

- AAU Compulsory Levels 2-5 & Xcel
- USAG Compulsory Levels 3-5
- USAG Optional Levels 6-10

To be successful at these levels requires a greater commitment with increased demands on hours of practice and both demands of physical and mental preparation.

### **Moving from Level to Level**

There are many deciding factors that go into moving a gymnast from level to level. These include but are not limited to the following: Scores at meets, practice attendance, skill level, "coachability", family commitment, mental and physical abilities, attitude in the gym and many other factors. Although one criterion used to advance gymnasts from level to level is meet scores, gymnasts are NOT REQUIRED to move. The coach and gymnast together can determine this. The decision to move your daughter from one level to the next is the sole decision of the CSA Gymnastics Team Coaching Staff.

## **Part II: Competitive Program Policies**

### **Financial Responsibilities & Obligations**

Your child's involvement in competitive gymnastics will cost you time, effort and of course, money. See below for the different financial obligations that you will need to be aware of when deciding to be a part of the competitive program.

- **Payments made to CSA Kids:**

Monthly payments are due on the first of each month according to the level competing. This pricing is for automatic withdrawal from your bank account. Monthly fees cover the cost of the facility, coaches' wages, administrative costs etc. Please see CSA Calendar for billing schedules.

- **Payments made to the CSA Girl's Booster Club:**

The CSA Girl's Booster Club is a team parent organization that helps can help reduce competition fees through various opportunities. They also plan team gatherings, fundraisers and banquets. Please see Booster Club rules, regulations and bylaws page in competition packet for more information. Please see the Booster Club rules, regulations and bylaws page in competition packet.

### **Requirements for Team Eligibility Competitive Apparel**

Each year the coaches will evaluate our team apparel. As a member of the CSA Gymnastics Team, you must purchase any required apparel, including but not limited to the following: Team Leotard(s), warm-up jacket & pants, team duffel bag and possibly other apparel. You may fundraise with the Booster Club to pay for apparel. See below for a current breakdown of our team apparel requirements.

- Level 2 & Xcel will be required to purchase a short sleeved leotard, leggings and the team t-shirt.
- Levels 3-10 will be required to purchase the current short & long sleeved leotards, a warm-up jacket and pants suit, current team t-shirt, and the team duffel bag.

### **Apparel Continued....**

**PLEASE NOTE:** The leotards, pants and jackets are to be fitted by the coaches. Fit is extremely important in competition. Do not expect to have the leotard fit your gymnast for more than 1 or 2 seasons as with any other clothing you may purchase for your daughter. You are also responsible for the cost of the competitive leotards and warm-up suits even if your gymnast does not compete. Team apparel is custom ordered and is non-returnable.

**Make-Ups:** No make-ups for any classes and no tuition reimbursement for missed classes or meets.

**Medical Absences:** Medical absences must be explained by a doctor's note. The coach & office staff must receive a copy of the doctor's note. **Unless there are extreme circumstances, and altered practice time discussed with the Head Coach, your gymnasts will be expected to continue to attend practices with altered lesson plans. You are still responsible for tuition at this time, as we are still holding your place on the team.**

**Withdrawals:** A 30 day WRITTEN notification is required if you plan on withdrawing from the team. Otherwise, you will be billed for the time your gymnast's spot was held on the team. Please see CSA Kids registration forms, rules and policies for further explanation. If you decide that being a part of the team is no longer a fit for your gymnast and family, we respectfully ask that you set up a meeting to let the coaching staff know your intentions.

### **Team Guidelines**

The decision to join the CSA Gymnastics Team Program is a big one and reflects a commitment to the team for the ENTIRE year. Team members do not move on and off the team based on illness, injury, conflicts etc. You are either on the team or you are not. The following are guidelines that all team members are expected to follow.

1. Each Gymnast is required to attend all regularly scheduled workouts. Be on time to all workouts and stay for the entirety of the workout. That means, on the floor ready to workout when your workout begins. Not talking in the bathroom or hanging out in the pro shop area. If for some reason you will be late or absent you are required to call the front desk and leave a message for your coach prior to class.
2. Proper workout attire is a must. A properly fitted leotard is the only acceptable workout attire. No loose shorts or t-shirts are allowed. Hair should be appropriately tied so as not to interfere in any way during workout (this includes long bangs). No jewelry, other than stud earrings may be worn to a workout. Proper and appropriate hygiene is appreciated.
3. Work hard and try your best. This is all that we will ever ask of you and this is always what you should demand of yourself. You are in control of your progress through your attitude and your effort.
4. No food, drink, or candy is allowed in the gym. All snacks are to remain in the lobby area.
5. Gymnasts may not leave the gymnastics gym or competition floor without the expressed permission of their coach.
6. Treat your coaches and teammates with respect. Be kind to those in other levels and do not hold yourself out as better than other gymnasts. There is no place in the gym for belittling comments, displays of anger or disgust, or talking back to coaches.
7. Be honest. Cheating is the ugliest form of disrespect. It shows disrespect to your coaches, your parents, and most importantly, yourself. If you cannot or will not complete an assignment, be honest about it.
8. Maintain a positive attitude when facing fears and frustrations. Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult sport. All athletes 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.
9. The option to attend competitions, camps and move levels is the sole decision of the CSA Gymnastics Team Coaching Staff. The STUDENT-athlete is a very important concept in the sport of gymnastics. School comes first. That being said, the gymnast is required to let the coaching staff

know if her grades are slipping. If the gymnast is in jeopardy at school, they will not be welcome to practice at the gym until the academic problems are addressed and grades are brought up. We care about the education of our athletes as well as their athletics.

10. Being on the CSA Gymnastics Team is a privilege. Do not abuse it. We reserve the right to remove anyone from our team due to behavior problems of either the gymnast or the gymnast's parents.
11. Practicing at another gym for any reason other than camps or clinics approved by the CSA Gymnastics Team Coaching Staff is unacceptable. If there is a perceived need to look for another gym, please speak to CSA Gymnastics Team Coaching Staff before doing so.
12. Cell phone use in the gym during practice hours is not permitted. This includes direct phone calls, texting, etc. Please leave your cell phone in your gym bag either on silent mode or completely off for the entire practice. If parents need to contact their daughters during practices, they may call the gym and ask to speak with their child. If the cell phone becomes a problem during practice, the coach reserves the right to remove the phone from the child's possession for the remainder of practice.
13. Last but not least, if a coach suspects any gymnast is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol she will be removed from the gym and possibly removed from the team. We work very hard to be the best we can be, the use of drugs and alcohol reduces the benefit of your hard work, resulting in an unsafe situation for the gymnast herself, coaches and teammates.

### **Parent Commitment**

1. Make sure your gymnast attends all regularly scheduled workouts, meets and special functions. If your child must miss a workout for any reason, please leave us a note or call the front desk and leave a message for the coach.
2. Communicate with the coaches regarding any problems. Your thoughts are important to us. Complaining to other parents won't get your problems solved nor can we solve them if we do not know about them.
3. Check the bulletin boards, team mailboxes, the team web-site and your email regularly to stay current with team activities. A valid email address needs to be given to CSA kids upon registration.
4. Whenever CSA Kids hosts a meet, the Booster Club has an opportunity to fundraise. This is a wonderful opportunity to raise money for your gymnast and the club. For your time and efforts, CSA will make a donation to the booster club for their help with the meet.
5. Be sure that your child gets plenty of sleep, proper nutrition, to and from the gym on time and has proper clothing and equipment.
6. Provide unconditional love and support for your athlete. Please do not compare your child with other athletes. Each athlete is different with differing strengths and weaknesses. Look for the progress your child has made and celebrate it!
7. Please do not coach your child. Your comments detract from what the coach is doing. Giving the gymnast another thing to focus on interferes with the development of the coach/athlete relationship, which is critical for future progression. This also includes coaching your child at home. We do not encourage the practice of gymnastics at home, as it could create an unsafe situation for the gymnast.
8. Please let a coach know before practice if you think your child may have a problem due to illness, injury, or medication.
9. Lastly, please do not approach the coaches or gymnasts IN the gym. If you need to speak with the coach, please wait until the completion of practice or set up a meeting outside of practice times. Contact through a phone call or email is also acceptable.

If you are unable to make the commitment required to be part of this program, please let us know. We will place your daughter into a class that better suits your needs.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

The rules and policies that govern the gymnasts and parents have been outlined here in the CSA Gymnastics Team Competitive Handbook. In the event that there is an ongoing disruption or there are

major rule infractions, it may become necessary to impose some disciplinary action in an attempt to improve the situation.

The list of procedures noted below is 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 action based on each unique set of circumstances. The following may occur in any instance:

1. The gymnast may not be permitted to rotate with her group at the designated time. She will have to stay and finish or repeat an assignment on a particular piece of equipment.
2. 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.
3. The gymnast may be asked to leave the gym and go home early.
4. The coach may request a meeting with the parent.
5. The gymnast may be suspended from the team for one or two days or may be scratched from a competition. Please note that if the gymnast is suspended from a practice or a competition due to poor attendance and/or behavior, the tuition at CSA and the meet fees are non-refundable.
6. The gymnast may be asked to leave the program if we cannot get her to conform her behavior to the expectations of the team, the coaches or the gym.

The first three items on the above list are fairly common; we do not generally communicate all disciplinary actions with the parents. We believe the development of a coach/gymnast relationship is an integral step to an open line of communication and the mutual respect needed to progress through all levels.

As part of the team, parents also play a key role. CSA Kids recognizes this role can create conflicts between the program, coaches, and/or other parents and families. Parent negativity can adversely affect both the gymnastics program and others enjoyment of their participation in it. To avoid problems, CSA Kids asks that if you have concerns with the program, please do not share them with others without trying to resolve them with our staff first. We try our best to make this program an enjoyable program for all involved. Ultimately, if for some reason we are unable to resolve a conflict, we reserve the right to ask the family to leave the program. If this occurs, you will be fully responsible for remaining balance on accounts, tuition, and any other meet expenses that are outstanding.

### **Emergency Procedures**

In the unlikely event of a medical emergency involving your child, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Emergency first aid will be administered, including requesting emergency medical technicians and an ambulance if needed.
2. You will be contacted using the emergency contact information you provided in the annual team registration packet. Your instructions will be followed from that point on.
3. In the event we are unable to make contact with a parent, we will attempt to contact the medical staff and hospital you indicated as a preference in your annual team registration packet.

### **Incllement Weather**

CSA Kids will make every effort to hold team classes. There are no make-ups for workouts cancelled due to weather. To find out if class is cancelled, please check the team website, WCLO radio, or call the gym.

### **Schedule of Classes**

Workout schedules will be updated/ changed accordingly to gym needs and staffing. These changes typically occur around May/June 1<sup>st</sup> , and September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Workout time changes may also occur if your gymnast changes competition levels.

### Private Lessons

Private lessons may be scheduled with any of our team coaches. Private lessons may be shared by one other student with a maximum of two others. See front desk for rates and further information.

## Part III: Competition Season Information

### Basic Competition Information

It is expected that once your gymnast is able to compete on all events, that she will attend all scheduled competitions. Missed competitions can mean missed chances to qualify to State, Regionals or Nationals. This also presents less opportunity for gymnasts to gain competitive confidence in front of a judge. Being a part of the team, means being present for all competitions as well as practices. Travel meets are also great team building opportunities for both gymnast and parents. The average meet takes as little as 2 ½ hours to as long as 6 hours. We suggest that you bring reading material or some other project with you to help pass the time while at one of your child's competitions. Make sure you have entertainment planned for the siblings of your gymnast as well if you must bring them. They will bore quickly with the competition. You need to be responsible for the behavior of your other children as they may offer a distraction to the competition

### Competition Scheduling

Our competitive team schedule is predetermined by the Head Coach & Team Program Director. The competitions are generally local, as close as an hour drive, or as far as a 3 hour drive. Typically, the compulsory gymnasts (levels 2-5) will stay in the state for competition and the optional gymnasts (6-10) will travel further. As a team, we have competed as close as Milwaukee and as far as Florida. The optional gymnasts will have one travel meet per season (not including Regional and National Championships). This destination is chosen by the Head Coach and it is expected that all gymnasts will attend. This is a great team building opportunity, as well as a chance to compete nationally against other teams in preparation for bigger meets such as Regional and National Championships in levels 8-10.

### Requirements for Competition

*Confidence and competence are the two requirements to be eligible to compete at a meet. To ensure the gymnasts meet these two requirements, we make our decision based on the following criteria.*

1. **Preparedness:** Athletes must be physically, emotionally, and mentally prepared for the competition. The coaching staff will determine when each athlete is competition ready and relay this information to the parent.
2. **Attendance:** Missed practices can mean missed competitive opportunities. Gymnasts missing an excessive number of practices may not be allowed to compete.  
*\*Arriving late and/or leaving early may seem insignificant at first glance, yet, gymnast arriving late miss warm-up and conditioning. Leaving early means you miss a rotation, which may mean the gymnast won't practice an event for a whole week. This lack of preparation will make itself known come competition season.*
3. **Performance:** The gymnast must perform all skills on her own, on EVERY event, to compete in the competition. Mastery of skills is based on what is performed in practices as well as attendance, attitude and effort during these workouts.  
*\*The concept of "it's not what you do, rather how you do it" is the overriding principle in making a determination of whether a gymnast will compete. No coach will willingly send a gymnast into a competition knowing the gymnast is not prepared to do her best. The child would have an unsuccessful experience, which could shatter her self-confidence and ruin the competitive experience.*
4. **Attitude:** A positive attitude and showing respect to coaches and teammates is important. Gymnasts must be emotionally ready for the competitive arena. You must be willing to accept a

score given to you without expressing negative feelings towards others or yourself. This includes crying over a score or a less-than-perfect performance.

**Attitude Continued...***\*Crying creates a distraction for the team (ex. Teammate tries to comfort crying gymnast and is not fully focusing on her own upcoming routines). If a gymnast begins to cry, she will be removed from the competition floor until she can regain her composure.*

### **Meet Hygiene for Gymnasts**

- Gymnasts hair should be pulled back tightly preferably in a bun with no wispy's or bangs. Hair should not hang below the neck.
- Light makeup may be applied and worn for competitions.
- Only one pair of stud earrings may be worn. Girls may not have any other jewelry.
- No nail polish may be worn to competitions.
- Gymnasts should have a competition and/or grip bag and keep all their belongings in the bag during the meet.

### **Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts**

1. Athletes should arrive at the competition site **30 minutes prior to open stretch**. Athletes should be in uniform & well-groomed and report to their coach at the beginning of the scheduled open stretch.
2. Athletes should remain in the designated competition area throughout the course of warm-ups and competition and obey all warm-up regulations and procedures. Athletes will be expected to stay on the floor until the last gymnast from the meet is done competing.
3. Each athlete should accept her place in the line-up and scores she receives with dignity gymnastics meets. There is no place for crying and uncontrolled emotions during gymnastics meets. Athletes cannot control the scores they get nor can they control the performances of any other gymnast. Athletes can only control their own performance.
4. Be courteous, respectful and polite to all meet officials, hosts, competitors, and coaches. The only time you should approach a meet official is to thank them for hosting or judging a meet.
5. Gymnasts are required to stay with their team until the completion of the competition and the coaches releases them. Once a gymnast has entered the competition area there should be no contact between the gymnast and her parents unless there is an emergency.
6. Athletes should stay for awards, dressed in their CSA Gymnastics designated warm-up suit. Most meets have a formal system for presenting awards. As a participating athlete you have an obligation to be dressed appropriately and accept your awards with grace and gratitude. Remember, you are not just representing yourself, you are representing the CSA Kids Gymnastics Team as well.
7. If you are staying to watch another teammate compete, or have arrived early for warm-ups, stay seated in the bleachers and do not wander onto the competition floor. Each gymnast deserves to have the opportunity to concentrate on her performances. Friends can be a distraction and young girls don't always have the nerve to ask you to leave them alone. Be respectful and stay off the competition area when you are not competing.
8. Lastly, please remember that competing at an event is a PRIVILEGE, not a right. CSA coaching staff reserves the right to remove any gymnast from the competition arena at any time for exhibiting behavior unbecoming of a CSA Athlete. These actions may include but not be limited to disrespectful behavior, unsportsmanlike conduct, poor attitude, or mental instability. Consequences for those actions may result in the following forms: removal from the competition, removal from following competitions.

### **Meet Etiquette for Parents**

1. Team spirit is a big help, please wear our team colors to show support!

2. Please show 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 circumstances should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, scorekeepers, etc). If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you must contact your child's coach. That being said, under no circumstances should you enter the competition floor for any reason whatsoever. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast, but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules. You could also be dismissed from the competition by the head judge or meet officials. Entering the competition floor without being directed by the coach could also result in immediate dismissal from the team.
3. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You never know who is sitting next to you.
4. Once a gymnast has walked onto the competition area for stretching they ARE NOT ALLOWED to talk to or have contact with their parents until the completion 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 coaches' 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 her down. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps her up and motivates her to do her best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to become over-confident. A terrible beam routine may actually provide an educational moment. At these times the gymnast needs to focus on her coach's advice, not distractions from off the competitive floor.
5. In case of perceived injury, please do not approach the floor until flagged down by your coach.
6. Do not coach your child. Coaches should coach, everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the gymnast's focus away from the coach's technique.
7. NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY is permitted at a meet.
8. On the day of competition your child should have a well-balanced meal. This energy will carry them through the entire competition. If necessary a gymnast may wish to bring healthy snacks with them to a competition.
9. Do not contact other gyms for schedules, rosters, scratches, etc. This is done between the clubs staff contact person and is frowned upon when parents make the contacts. Please contact your coach with any concerns or questions about a meet or any outside events.
10. "Misery loves company" and in our sport this could not be more true. Please consider removing yourself from earshot of "negative-talkers" both at the gym and at meets so your experience in this sport remains as positive as possible. Soon they will have no one to hear their complaints and thus will either remain miserable by themselves or stop talking about it.

CSA Kids Team Handbook  
*Statement of Understanding*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, and my daughter(s)

\_\_\_\_\_

have carefully read and fully understand the contents of this Team Handbook for CSA Kids Gymnastics Team. We understand the commitment it will take to be a part of the competitive team and agree to comply with all the rules and regulations set by the CSA Kids Staff. I recognize that the decisions CSA Kids Staff will make about my gymnast's schedule, camps, practices and competitions are in the best interests of my gymnast and the rest of the team students. I am aware that I will be responsible for financial obligations required by CSA Kids in order for my daughter to participate in practice, competitions, camps, etc. I understand that if we no longer wish to be a part of CSA Kids, we are required to submit a 30 day notice of departure. I agree by signing the Team Registration to follow the guidelines set forth in the handbook for the good of the Athletes and the CSA Kids Gymnastics Team Program. I am aware that if I or my gymnast fails to comply with set rules, it may affect our position with CSA Kids indefinitely.

Signature of Parent(s):

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Gymnast(s):

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_