

# PETITE ELITE

## HANDBOOK



## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the Girl's Petite Elite Program of the Ottawa Gymnastic Centre.

It is hoped that this handbook will be useful to you and help you ease into gymnastics life at the O.G.C. The information provided here may not answer all your questions so please feel free to speak to your daughter's coach, the Program Coordinator and Assistant Head Coach, Lynne Ethier, or to the Women's Head Coach and Program Director, Tobie Gorman. Questions pertaining to yearly fees, parent volunteer hours or fundraising should be directed to the front office.

If you have any concerns you do not wish to discuss with your child's coach, the Program Supervisor or Program Director should be contacted.

## **HISTORY OF THE O.G.C**

The club is a nonprofit corporation that was founded in 1960 by Dr. Seth Heiberg. The direction of the Centre is given by a Board of Directors formed by parents of athletes within our program and other individual with an interest in the wellbeing of the Centre and its participants.

We are the oldest gymnastic club in Eastern Ontario, one of the largest in the province of Ontario and Canada and a founding member of Gymnastics Ontario.

On March 28, 1992 through much parental and staff effort, capital funds from the club and grants from the City and Province, the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre was born. A total of \$1.14 million dollars was utilized in renovating the Lions Arena (owned by the city of Ottawa) into one of the best facilities in Canada.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

"We teach children not skills"

## **VISION**

To be recognized and respected for leadership and innovation in sport as Canada's premiere gymnastics organization.

## **MISSION**

To inspire enthusiasm for and lifelong involvement in gymnastics by providing positive and diverse programming.

## **VALUES:**

- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Safety Integrity
- ❖ Accountability
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Excellence

## WHY GYMNASTICS FOR YOUR CHILD?

Gymnastics training develops the physical and mental attributes that are essential for all day to day activities such as strength, flexibility, balance, coordination, concentration, body awareness and control, agility and quickness. Gymnastics provides a solid mental and physical foundation to build upon regardless of what sport activities your child decides to participate in. Our job is to instill a life-long love of fitness and sports, help children learn to balance sports in their lives and provide them with the confidence and skills to respond to the day-to-day challenges they may face.

## THE PETITE ELITE PROGRAM

The Petite Elite Program is offered twice a week (2x3 hrs. sessions) starting in mid August and running through to the end of May. Classes may run one week night and one day on the weekend.

This program is aimed at girls primarily 6 years of age that are showing above average physical potential, desire to learn, and have lots of energy to spare. The athletes are selected from various programs within the club and must participate in a trial period before being accepted into the program. This trial period runs for 2 weeks in June, and gives both the coach and you the parent, a chance to see if your daughter can be challenged and successful.

“FUN” continues to be a main aspect of the program with emphasis on the joy of gymnastics as well as a real “keenness to be part of the sport.” It is at this point that basic fundamental skills are introduced and incorporated in the program on all apparatus. We also continue to emphasize the concept of fitness through developing the child’s strength, power, flexibility and endurance. This prepares the gymnast’s body in order to learn and acquire the basic fundamental skills. At the same time we start to develop some of the psychological aspect of gymnastics, positive self-image and a good level of self-confidence of each child.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### ***THREE HOURS IS A LONG TIME TO TRAIN? I AM WORRIED THAT THIS PROGRAM WILL BE TOO DEMANDING.***

Our past experience tells us that all children adapt to this period of training. They tend to be a bit tired until Christmas, but then experience no difficulties in handling school and gym.

Gymnasts are usually given a short break. We suggest that the girls bring a light snack. The most important item to bring is liquid to replace those fluids lost during training. Water or a mixture of juice and water is a good choice. It is not comfortable for the athletes to train on a full stomach, so a small snack may be brought for consumption. One of the following items is plenty: **a small piece of fruit or a small muffin or a handful of crackers or a half sandwich or some veggies**. Any more than this will be wasted. It is strongly recommended that the girls do not bring items such as candy, cookies, or pop for snack. We appreciate your cooperation regarding this matter.

**PLEASE BE AWARE WE ARE A PEANUT FREE FACILITY.** So please no nuts or nut products.

### **WHAT SHOULD MY DAUGHTER WEAR?**

Girls need to be properly dressed for training. It is mandatory to wear a gymnastic leotard and bare feet. Long hair must be tied back to stay off the face during training. Jewelry must not be worn (watches, necklaces, hoop earrings etc.). Valuables should not be brought to the gym, left in bags or in the change rooms, as we cannot be responsible for items taken or misplaced.

Grips and wrist bands are also worn by the children, in order to protect the hands during the uneven bar work. The grips can be purchased for a nominal fee at the gym and the coach will inform you when she has sized the girls. The wristbands can be purchased at any sporting store.

### **WHAT WILL THEY DO IN THE CLASS?**

Like the Tiny Tumbler program, the Petite Elite's will continue to progress on all the apparatus in the gym. Emphasis is placed on fun, safety and overall age appropriate body conditioning with the continuation of mastering progressions and body alignment in the first half of the year. This is followed by basic skill acquisition in the second part of the year.

### **HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD?**

Encourage them, whatever activities they are in, let them take the lead in defining their own sports commitments, help them to set healthy limits and reasonable expectations. Most importantly, be positive about the child's activities. Consistent attendance and punctuality are key.

Ensure that the club and your daughter's coach are aware of any allergies and medical conditions.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD IS SICK OR IN THE EVENT OF GYM CLOSURES?**

If your child is sick or for any reason cannot make it please make sure you call the gym or leave a message at 722-8692.

Also in the event of an emergency closure (for example the weather), every effort will be made to get in touch with you, to let you know that the class is cancelled. Please phone the gym before setting off in inclement weather. The O.G.C. reserves the right to cancel classes.

On the following holidays the gym will be closed: **Labor Day, Thanksgiving Sunday, Christmas, Family Day, Easter Sunday and Victoria Day (Sunday & Monday)**. Notification of these gym closures is always sent home in a note with your child. Classes will not be held on the weekends that the OGC hosts Provincial Qualify meets. This usually occurs 2-3 times a year.

Please ensure that the club is provided with a **current home number, work numbers, cell number and e-mail addresses**. Therefore please ensure you completely fill out the Personal Information Form, given in your package at the start of the year and hand it in to the office with your payment.

### ***WHEN DO I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO MY CHILD'S COACH?***

You may speak to the coach at any time briefly before or after training, but for matters that are important and may require some time, arrange to call or get together at your mutual convenience. As well, we hold a "parents day" twice a year. This will give you the opportunity to speak to the coach and see how your child is progressing. Parents and other guests are invited to watch, but we ask them not to participate in the training. Siblings may not participate in the class. At all other times, we must ask you to remain in the waiting area during training. You are most welcomed to leave the facility for the 2 hours. We sometimes find the presence of parents can divert the gymnast's attention and concentration.

The coach is a very important person in your child's life. It is important for your daughter's coach to know if your child has any special medical problems or any other problems and concerns. Do let us know if there are problems in school or at home, as these are sure to affect the child's behavior in the gym. Do not hesitate to let the coach know if your child is having anxieties about training. Please do not forget to comment on positive things as well. Good communication between parents and coaches is essential.

If you have any concern you do not wish to discuss with your child's coach the Program Coordinator should be contacted at the gym at 722-8698.

### ***WILL I BE INFORMED OF MY CHILD'S PROGRESS?***

The children receive 2 progress reports, one in January and one in May. These progress reports will evaluate, assess and communicate their progress on each of the apparatus, attendance, overall work habits (listening skills, social interaction, and eagerness) and physical attributes. The Progress report provides the coach the opportunity to tell you how your child is progressing since she began the program. Every child shows progression throughout the course of the year. **Please note that a positive progress report does not mean they automatically enter into the Pre Competitive Program.** An interview can be scheduled if deemed necessary, at any time throughout the year with your child's coach or Program Coordinator.

### ***WHAT IS THE REGISTRATION PROCESS?***

Fees and payment schedule are sent out in the mail in mid July. The fees are based on a full year program, from mid September to late May. All cheques are to be made out to ***the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre*** and should be dropped off at the office to the Club Administrator prior to the start of the class.

### ***WILL I BE EXPECTED TO DO PARENT VOLUNTEER HOURS?***

Parents whose children are registered in the Petite Elite Program are required to ***help in our fundraising events and fulfill their mandatory parent volunteer hours***. Information about Parent Volunteer hours and fundraising is mailed out in your package in July.

***Fundraising*** is an important aspect for the O.G.C in order to raise money for the Centre. All members are asked to help, support and actively participate in the various forms of fundraising throughout the year. Each family in the Petite Elite Program will have a required commitment which will be outlined in the registration package.

### **Parent Volunteer Hours**

The Club depends on parent volunteers to do a great variety of work. Some task involves special expertise or requires long experience in the Club, but most do not. Some projects have to be done at the Club, while others can be done from home or elsewhere. Some jobs are year long commitments, and others require short bursts of effort. In other words no matter what limitations there may be, there is surely something you can do and the Club depends on you! Each family in the Petite Elite Program will have a required commitment which will be outlined in the registration package.

### **WHAT PROGRAM IS AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE YEAR?**

After a year's participation in the Petite Elite program there are many different avenues open to the girls. Your child's physical ability (power, strength, flexibility in both upper and lower body) and their mental abilities (attitude, enthusiasm, work habits, independence, maturity, ability to take direction, group dynamic) will determine her placement in one of our many programs available to her at the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre for the upcoming year. Athletes will be recommended to continue in the ***Recreational Program, or may be asked to try out for the Kips Program (6 hrs/wk), or the Pre-competitive Program (12 hrs/wk).***

As our new season starts June1, those girls selected for tryouts will participate in a 2 or 3 week tryout period to see if they are suited for this type of program. ***It is important that you the parents prepare your daughter for entrance into any of the above programs, well in advance of the final progress report.***

If Petite Elite's are accepted into the Pre-competitive Program, they will need to train 7 out of 8 summer weeks. The gym is shut down the first two weeks of July. The coach and Women's Head Coach/Program Director will make the decision on what program best suits the needs of each individual child. Careful consideration and assessment of each child will be taken. Your daughter will be placed in a program that will best suit her individual needs, one she will enjoy, can physically and mentally handle as well as grow and benefit from!

### **ABOUT OUR COACHES**

All our coaches have been selected to work in this program because of their technical expertise, work experience and their love and enthusiasm to teach children at this age. Each coach is certified Level 2 or more and has many years' experience behind them. They have a real understanding of the physical and psychological needs of each child as they develop at their own pace over the year. The coaches make every effort to set positive and attainable goals allowing the girls to remain interested and motivated.

We hope this handbook has been useful to you in answering many of your questions concerning the program your daughter has enrolled in. Do not hesitate to contact the gym with any other questions you may. Once again welcome to the Petite Elite program at the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre.

**"We teach children not skills"**

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