



**CAN-AM
GYMNASTICS
CLUB**

**Competitive
Parent/Guardian & Athlete
Handbook
2019-2020**

Parent/Guardian Information

Calendar

Program calendars are on the website located under the competitive tab.

Calendars are emailed to parents at the beginning of the season.

Program Information and Descriptions

Program information and descriptions are on the website located under the competitive tab.

Parent Information Sessions

Can-Am strives to inform parents about all the important aspects involved with supporting a competitive athlete. Be sure to attend the offered sessions to learn more about athlete development, sport psychology methods for parents, nutrition and more.

Information and registration will be distributed to parents by email.

Role of the Parent/Guardian

The parent can have the most difficult role in the gymnast's career. While everyone involved (parent, gymnast, coach) are equally important, the parent has the smallest role in controlling the performance of the athlete. At the same time, the parent has the greatest sense of emotional attachment to the performance. This high level of emotional investment and low level of control can cause stress on the parent. Parents' have been known to lose sight of the important role that they have to play which is to provide support to their child in all situations.

Supporting the athlete

Be your child's biggest supporter. Show your child unconditional love and encouragement. Children need to feel loved when they are victorious and even more so when they are defeated. Athletes need to be able to take chances, whatever the outcome. Athletes who know defeat or have performed poorly already feel bad. Let your child know you believe in them and show love no matter the outcome. The important thing is that they tried their best. As long as the athlete is dedicated and works hard, improvement is guaranteed to follow.

Best practices in supporting your child's training

Attendance

Make every attempt to have your athlete arrive at all scheduled practices, competitions and team events on time. Do your best to be prompt when picking up your child after practice. If you are going to be late picking up your child, please call us so that we are aware and can notify your child.

We understand that athletes are students first and they may miss practice due to a large school workload or school event. Please communicate with us if any such conflict arises by sending us an email.

Training Attire

Athletes wear a sleeveless leotard ONLY (females) and singlet/t-shirt & shorts (males).

NO full-length tights, unitard outfits or two piece outfits are permitted for the gymnast's safety.

Black, fitted athletic shorts will be permitted if necessary. However, one week prior to competitions athletes will be required to wear training suits without shorts.

No jewelry

Hair is tied back in a ponytail or bun (females) for optimal vision and safety. Clipping loose hair or bangs is encouraged, headbands are not allowed.

Depending on the level of your athlete training aids such as grips, grip bags, gymnastic slippers, hockey tape may be required. Your coach or Program Director will contact you to purchase necessary training supplies when required. Label your athletes supplies.

Nutrition

As parents you are responsible for the athlete's health and wellness. Ensure your child is well nourished, hydrated and well rested for every practice. Nutritious meals both before and after work outs are essential to your athletes training and recovery. Select foods based on the Canada Food Guide 2019 and send a water bottle to practice every day. Athletes training 3+ hours will have a scheduled snack break. Please avoid sending nut products and processed foods.

Rest & Recovery

Athletes are encouraged to limit screen time before bed and get approximately 10 hours of sleep every night.

Injury Prevention & Recovery

Injuries are part of sport. You can support your athlete by arranging prompt care for an injury including physiotherapy. Can-Am partners with Flaman Physio because their team has a good understanding of our sport. Athletes are encouraged to attend training while recovering from injury to keep up with their conditioning and any skills permitted.

Viewing

Competitive families are encouraged to follow the viewing guideline of 10-15 minutes at the beginning or end of their child's class but will never be refused viewing.

These viewing guidelines are due to the time, size and capacity of our viewing area. Can-Am hosts many recreational families that are often scheduled for short classes and need a place to sit and/or view their athletes while they wait.

Please review your competitive calendar for scheduled viewing weeks.

It is not in the best interest for your gymnast for you to sit through every lengthy practice. It adds unnecessary pressure to your athlete and can be detrimental to her progress.

Managing Expectations

Do not coach your child. Parents who make technical corrections create a conflict between the gymnast and coach. It is imperative that gymnasts do not question the coaches on technical aspects of the sport. Do not ask what your child can be doing at home to improve their performance. All gymnasts will progress at their own rate and it is our job as coaches to monitor and further help this progression in the gym. If we feel there is anything additional the gymnast should be doing outside of the gym, we will communicate that with you and/or the gymnast.

Managing Athlete Disappointment

Athletes will inevitably face fear, frustration and disappointment. Dealing with disappointment is a process and can be overcome with the support of a parent. Try these 5 steps developed by Lauren Penny former International Hockey Player to help your athlete overcome disappointment:

Step 1 Accept what has happened

Experience and try to understand the emotions that you are feeling. For example, why do I feel so frustrated and mad that I didn't qualify for Provincial Championships?

Step 2 Don't dwell on the past

Once you've dealt with the emotion and let it out then try to move on as soon as possible. Don't dwell on things in the past for too long because remember you can't change the past.

Step 3 Use setbacks as opportunities

Setbacks and disappointment are inevitable in anything worthwhile achieving so expect them. Instead we can use them as ways to learn, improve and better yourself as a result.

Often setbacks can give us extra motivation and drive to work harder and come back even stronger.

Step 4 Change your perspective

There are always at least two ways to view things so try to take the positive out of every situation no matter how bad it is. There is always a positive perspective in everything, sometimes you just have to look for it.

For example, Lauren Penny used her injury setback as a way to focus more on helping others and that is how she discovered her passion for coaching, which she enjoys more than playing now.

Step 5 Set future objectives

Remember that just because you've experienced a setback now, it doesn't mean you won't be successful in the future so don't ever give up at the first hurdle.

It is those who keep getting up over and over again that succeed. To make this easier you can set yourself new objectives and things to work towards that can drive you forward.

Supporting the club and its coaches

Team families are expected to be advocates of Can-Am and its coaches. We expect every parent to set a good example for their child. There is never a positive outcome from gossiping and it can only cause harm to everyone involved. Avoid comparing your child to another gymnast. Every gymnast and situation is different. Do not make assumptions. Do not take things personally. Unacceptable actions or behavior made by either the gymnast OR the parent can jeopardize your child's current and future membership with Can-Am.

Communications

The Communication Policy is on the Can-Am website.

If you have a concern please set up a meeting with your child's coach and/or Program Director via email. Do not try to discuss any concerns with coaches directly prior to, during, or after practice without advanced notice. This takes away from the coach's ability to do their job on the floor and takes their attention away from the athletes. Remember to share your positive feedback to the coaches, they get inspired when you and your child are enjoying the training they provide.

Policies

All fee, withdrawal and workshare policies are on your receipt that is emailed at the time of registration.

Athlete & Parent/Guardian Information

Role of the Athlete

Character

- Athletes respect all coaches and athletes
- Athletes are positive and encourage other athletes
- Athletes are motivated to accomplish their training plans
- Athletes support fellow athletes accomplishments

Performance

- Athletes are prepared for training and stand or sit in tuck, pike or straddle while waiting for coach instruction
- Athletes try their hardest every day
- Athletes share feelings of fear, frustration, stress or sadness with their coach
- Athletes learn how to manage their feelings by using the strategies provided to them from their coach or the club director/manager

Emotions are normal reactions to both successes and challenges. The athlete's goal is to reset their emotions to be helpful to their training. If emotions do occur during training athletes will be asked to follow the steps below:

STEP 1

- walk away from the event/activity
- grab a drink of water
- take 3 deep breaths (breathe in for 4 counts, hold 4 counts, breathe out for 4 counts)
- visualize 3 successful turns of what you are doing (older athletes only)

Can do Step 1 twice if needed. When ready proceed to Step 2

STEP 2

- tell your coach 1 thing you are good at or like (gymnastics or otherwise)
- discuss a plan with your coach to complete task while remaining positive

STEP 3

- Try your hardest to put your plan into action, continue to talk to your coach if changes need to be made

If a skill or routine has got you worked up regularly, it is time to meet with your coach and a parent! They will work together with you to help you work through the issue and thrive at the sport you love.

Additional Strategies Coaches will try with Athletes if needed:

- Positive self-talk
- Journal (Write your thoughts down)
- Create a motivational mantra
- Challenge your thoughts (Is this true?)
- Count to 10 (bwd or fwd or skip numbers)
- Imagine the situation is resolved (Describe what it looks and feels like)
- Recognize the situation is temporary (Things will get better)
- Shift your attention (Do something different and come back... either today or even tomorrow)

These techniques can be encouraged and used at home too!

Conduct

- Athletes learn how to cope with performance disappointment and officials opinions/biases with respect
- Athletes respect social media and use this form of communication to post positive and inspiring thoughts
- Athletes show pride in their gym by keeping it clean and organized

Team Building

- Athletes encourage fellow athletes (give someone a high five!)
- Athletes compliment fellow athletes
- Athletes help other athletes move equipment, even if it isn't part of their station or group
- Athletes demonstrate drills and skills to other athletes with less experience

Change Room Etiquette

Athletes' store their belongings neatly in the change room cubbies and keep the space clean.

No parents are allowed in the athlete change rooms. (If you need to assist your child with changing, use the public washrooms.)

NO cell phones in change rooms or washrooms at ANY time. (If an athlete requires to use their phone they must bring the phone out into the gym and use it under the supervision of their coach and then promptly return it back to their bag.)

NEVER take a photo or post a photo or video in any of Can-Am's change rooms or wash rooms.

Cell Phones and Social Media Sites

All social media comments and posts regarding Can-Am athletes, coaches, families or club must be positive and supportive. All inappropriate posts should be brought to the Can-Am staff's attention. Athletes or parents will be held accountable to Can-Am's Code of Conduct policies and procedures.

Competitions

JO 1 & 2 athletes are encouraged to attend all Fun Meet opportunities offered.

JO 3 + athletes must attend a minimum of 3 in Province competitions and meet a minimum score to qualify for Provincial Championships.

On occasion, athletes moving up a level may not qualify for Provincial Championships. Don't let this discourage you, not every athlete learns at the same rate and sometimes repeating a level is in the athletes' best interest. It is important to never lose sight of the benefits of gymnastics just because you didn't achieve score one year. Stay positive and motivated to try again!

Competition Attire

Athletes are required to have the most up to date club uniform for their level and program.

All competitive athletes are required to wear the Can-Am club gym suit and a club shirt, jacket or track suit specific to the athletes program and white socks.

- Club gym suits range \$75-\$250 depending on the level of competition.
- Club shirts, jacket or track suit range \$75-\$200 depending on the level of competition.

Fitting dates and uniform payment details will be emailed to you. Full payment is required prior to suit distribution.

Woman's Artistic Gymnastics Choreography JO 6+ athletes

Floor music or routine choreography for JO 6+ athletes is NOT included in the training fees.

Floor music is \$75.00.

Choreography rates are dependent on level of competition:

- JO 6 & 7 - \$150.00
- JO 8 (Western Level) - \$250.00
- JO 9 & 10 (Western & National Level) - \$300.00
- High Performance (Novice, Junior, Senior) - \$350.00

Competition Day

Arrive 30 minutes prior to your scheduled warm up dressed in Can-Am competition attire.

Competition hair is tied back in a high, neat ponytail. Long hair that touches the ground when in a handstand must be tied into a bun for optimal vision, safety and to avoid deduction. No french braids, hair accessories or bright elastics or clips are permitted.

Bring a water bottle and healthy snack.

No good luck charms, stuffed animals or electronics on the competition floor.

Summer Camps

Summer Camps are a great time to advance your skill development.

Attending 2 full week summer camps is the minimum requirement to hold your athletes spot for the upcoming season.

Removal from the Competitive Program

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to ask that an athlete withdraw from the competitive program. At the discretion of the Head Coach, an athlete can be suspended from the competitive program at any time during the season, temporarily or permanently, under any of the following conditions:

- The athlete's temperament, development or skill level prevents him/her from meeting the requirements of the competitive program.
- The athlete is repeatedly absent, frequently late or leaving early without reasonable excuse.
- The athlete's fees are unpaid.
- The conduct of the athlete or his/her parent(s) is disruptive and unsupportive of the staff or the organization.
- The parent repeatedly fails to follow the club communication policy. (see website)
- The athlete or parent(s) fail to uphold the Can-Am Code of Conduct. (see website)
- The athlete or parent take action to discredit the staff or the organization.

Closing

We are honored that you have chosen Can-Am as the gymnastics club to educate your child. Please know that this is a responsibility that we do not take lightly. We take pride in the development of your child, the athlete, but also your child, the person. If you respect us enough to play this large role in your child's life, please respect that we have each individual child's best interest at heart.