



USA GYMNASTICS Member News

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The Benefits of Sport Activities for Children with Special Needs

Sports, especially fundamental and movement education based sports like gymnastics, provide tremendous benefits for children with special needs. Physical education programs can considerably improve the lifestyle of a disabled child and are highly recommended. These programs may help control obesity, promote activeness, increase a child's self-image and social skills, and increase motivation. **The physical activity along with support, rewards, and interaction can, among other benefits, be helpful to these children and their families.**

Physical Improvements - Children suffering from cognitive disabilities are most likely going to suffer from physical impairments as well. These children have substantial problems with motor skills in areas such as hopping, skipping, and jumping. Involvement in gymnastics can help these individuals develop fundamental motor and physical fitness skills.

Self-Esteem - Developing a sense of self-esteem and confidence is an extremely important part of special education. These children need to be involved in environments where they feel that they are contributing successfully to a group. Their abilities in all other skill areas will improve as a result of a positive self-image and confidence.

Cognitive Benefits - The hands-on aspect of sports leads to cognitive skill improvement in children with disabilities and allows them to discover and access strengths that cannot be challenged in the traditional classroom setting. The inherent structure of sport, with its organization and rules, can be used as a learning tool for introducing and practicing self-regulation and decision making skills. Additionally, children can learn verbal communication and

EDUCATION EVENTS*

click course title to register

Safety Certification

Nov 13 - Lincoln, NE

Nov 15 - Lincoln, RI

Nov 15 - Shelby Twsp, MI

Nov 29 - Stroudsburg, PA

Dec 11 - Sterling, VA

Dec 13 - Portsmouth, NH

Dec 14 - Hilldale, NJ

Jan 17 - Lubbock, TX

Preschool Fundamentals Pt. 2: Hands on Training

Nov 15 - Napa, CA

*please check the schedule online to verify course dates and times

interaction with peers through involvement in sport.

[Click here to continue reading this article, and for additional resources.](#)

Women's Rules & Policies Book Request

Attention Women's Professional Members

USA Gymnastics recently experienced difficulties regarding the request for the Women's Rules and Policy book online. The problem has now been resolved.

If you have placed a request for the Women's Rules and Policy book in the last couple of months please place another request. The link is provided below. Please allow 2-4 weeks for delivery.

Request for Women's Rules and Policy [click HERE](#).

We apologize for the inconvenience and thank you for your patience.



Education: Positive Ways to Change Behaviors

*By Linda Thorberg and Brant Lutska
National Preschool Fundamentals Instructors*

When a child's behavior is not safe or appropriate for class, teachers must use actions to guide him/her in changing the behavior. This is called discipline. Proper and appropriate discipline will help create a safer, more productive, and more enjoyable class. It will also help children develop skills they will need for success throughout life. Through positive communication and discipline, teachers can obtain better results and maintain class management.



Here are some examples of positive ways to change behavior.

- Keep the students so busy with activity and learning they will not have time to get into trouble.
- Substitute the inappropriate action by showing them when and how to perform it correctly.
- Distract or interrupt the inappropriate behavior and redirect them to something positive.
- Change the environment by adding or limiting equipment or space as well as adding or limiting choices. Controlling the environment helps to eliminate the opportunity for misbehavior.
- Use positive communication techniques such as the "If/Then" approach. An example may be, "If

we finish bars, then we can go to trampoline."

- Catch them being good and sincerely praise them for it!
- Teach good listening skills.
- Build in extra time in your lesson plan for distractions (this may allow you to avoid frustrations).
- Clearly establish the class rules and expectations and consistently enforce them.
- Speak at the child's level, so they will understand the rules, directions, and expectations.
- Use respectful language.
- Choose to ignore some behaviors (unless they are unsafe), many times they will just disappear.
- Smile and show you care! Expect the best from your students.

For more information on positive communication, healthy discipline, and effective class management take the [Preschool Fundamentals: Theory course](#) offered online through USA Gymnastics University. Follow the link to see the course description and registration directions.

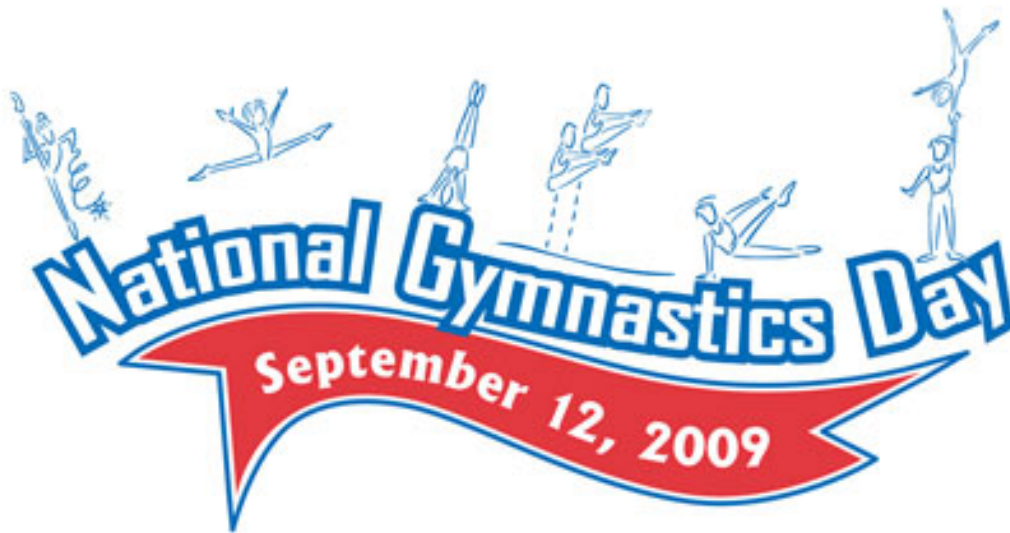
National Gymnastics Day: celebrating 2008, planning 2009

National Gymnastics Day was a big success this year for clubs across the country. [Click HERE](#) to read about how clubs across the country participated in National Gymnastics Day 2008. You might find some new ideas that can help you plan for next year's big day! It's not too late to submit your 2008 photos and stories. Please [email us](#) and tell us how your gym celebrated National Gymnastics Day.

The 2008 National Gymnastics Day survey is available now. Please take moment to complete the survey to help us learn how we can make our national event more successful in the future. [Click here to take the survey](#). **For your club to be eligible for the Tyson Fitness Challenge fundraising prizes, you must take the survey.**

The deadline to be eligible to win the Tyson Fitness Challenge prizes is November 10th. All monies must be received by November 10th. Donations should be made directly to the Children's Miracle Network and must be sent in with the [official form](#). Remember, you must fill out the survey to be eligible for the prizes.

Based on the reports we have been receiving from clubs, collectively we have raised close to a million dollars . When we have reached our goal, we will send out a press release that you can share with your local community highlighting your club's participation in this charitable achievement!



Mark your calendars for next year's National Gymnastics Day!
Saturday, September 12, 2009!



USA Gymnastics is a non-for-profit organization which is the sole national governing body (NGB) for the sport of gymnastics in the United States. Our mission is to increase public awareness of, and encourage participation in, all aspects of gymnastics, and to support athletes in their pursuit of competitive excellence.

Tell us what you think! We'd like to hear from you about what information you'd like to see in Member News. Contact us by [clicking here](#).

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