

Gymnastics Training Center of Ohio

To the Parents of 16 months—2 Year Olds:

Our program is designed to help your child physically, mentally, and socially. Plus, the added parent/child interaction with no interruptions from phones, doorbells, or other children is an added plus for your child! A toddler's coordination of manual skills is very difficult and frustrating at this age; therefore, the smallest achievements for your child should require praise from the parent. This will reinforce their self-esteem. We try to make our classes very cheerful and fun, more like play than work. As a parent, be positive about your child's successes and sympathetic about their failures.

Your role as the parent in our gymnastics class:

First and foremost, you must not compare your child to another child. Each child is an individual and will develop differently. Each child will also react differently to different situations in the class. Two very important things to remember would be the age of your child and how long your child has been in the program. A child who has been in the program would be able to react to situations much easier than a child who has just started. Also even just a couple of months difference in age will mean a lot in how each child compared to another reacts and meets the challenges in the class.

During the class, you need to give your child "situations". Don't just tell them what to do. Get into the situation with the child. If your child sees you, for example, walking on the balance beam, they might decide that looks like fun and will want to do it.

If your child is not participating in a group activity and is off somewhere else doing what they think is more interesting, don't yell at them but go share their curiosities with them. Ask them questions. Act interested in what they are doing. Pretty soon whatever they're doing won't seem so interesting and they'll come back and join the group. If they don't, that's O.K. too.

Your child needs positive reinforcement while at gymnastics which will develop self-confidence. One form of communication at this age is touch. If they accomplish something whether big or small, give them a hug or "high five". You need to talk to your child all the time during class. Also, at this age, repetition is very, very important. So, week after week, they need to accomplish some of the things we are doing many, many times.

At this age, your child is very self-directed, depending on maturity level, and will respond mostly to you before they will an instructor. Do not set a mood for your child as if they have to perform, but let them explore on their own. Do not be too quick to spot—you will be amazed at what they can do! In our classes, we set up equipment differently every week in order to give your child different situations and goals to meet, but, not so hard that they cannot accomplish them. Make this class a fun and learning experience for your child, and it will be a rewarding experience for you!

Thank you,

Beth Cox
Preschool Director

Gymnastics Training Center of Ohio

THREE YEAR OLDS

The three year old age group is one of the most challenging ones to work with. Most educators, psychologists, and sociologists feel that this is the time to introduce them to social situations outside the home. When your child becomes three years old, he works directly with our staff, as opposed to the 16 months to 2 year olds, who works through a parent.

During the first few weeks of our session, you should expect that your child may not want to participate right away because it is a new and different environment. We suggest that you do not tell your youngster that you will be just outside the door and that he may come and see you at any time. Nor should you tell him that you will sit inside the gym. Do tell your child that you will be in the lobby watching everything he/she accomplishes and that you will see him/her at the end of class. This will reassure the child and help him/her begin to relate to another adult/authority figure, with who he will eventually place his trust. Please feel free to speak with your child's instructor before or after class with any concerns you may have. The instructor will also speak with you if your child's adjustment becomes difficult.

Social Aspects

The three year old will begin to relate to other children and adults if given the proper environment and security. Primarily, he will be doing his physical activities, repetitively without striving for perfection. Depending upon the degree of exposure he has had with older children, aggressive behavior or submissiveness will affect how he performs his task. The three year old must work together with other children harmoniously. Most of the time, a three year old would be the center of attention at home. He's become accustomed to this attention, and then (in class, i.e.,) he is expected to cooperate and be one of a group. He must learn to understand that there are times for him to perform as an individual, and at times to perform as a group member.

Anatomical Aspects

The joint structure of an early three year old is comparative to that of a late two year old. That is, the muscle tone is not in a state of contractile readiness as it would be in an older three year old. This is primarily due to a lack of physical stimulation. This stimulation is necessary to encourage the positive reinforcement to increase their movement potential.

The muscle insertions are still cartilaginous and can be pulled or strained easily if exposed to too much weight lifting or repetitious support work. The knee structure, especially the insertion of the patellar ligament into the tibia tuberosity can be strained if jumping from heights onto a firm surface is done in excess without proper landing technique.

Many people are concerned with the neck and injuries to it. The vertebrae and connective tissues are still soft enough to absorb minor impacts without damage to that area. In the Three Year Old program, we will teach the child to relax the neck when falling or rolling.

Continued on Back Page...

Physical Expectations

After one year in the Three Year Old program, your child may have mastered the following:

- Landing on two feet without the assistance of their hands
- Climbing upon and walking the length of a balance beam (high) unassisted, and being able to dismount
- Able to effectively and efficiently weave around obstacles (cones) and understand directionality and laterality (left and right locomotor skills)
- Execute a forward roll and finish the roll in a rounded, tuck position (not necessary to be able to stand up)
- The first half of the seat drop position (bouncing, lifting the legs straight, and sitting)
- Bouncing and “freeze” (being able to stop bouncing on command)
- Remembering a basic sequential order

The children will also develop a respect for each other, cooperation with a group, and an awareness of their surroundings. They will be introduced to heights and basic ways of dealing with them. An exposure to various potential phobias (lost situations, maze work, fear fantasies, etc.) will be dealt with in a positive way.

Thank you,

Beth Cox
Preschool Director

Gymnastics Training Center of Ohio

FOUR YEAR OLDS

The four year olds, from a gross motor skill viewpoint, are probably the most unpredictable. They seem to be in a state of limbo. One instant they will perform a task almost perfectly, then, if asked to repeat it, they may; or they might look at you with an odd expression on their face being unable to do it as well as they had the first time. They tend to be assertive and expansive, wanting to perform everything but not quite sure of the “whys” and “hows”. They talk about being five, often to the point where they will use it to avoid something (i.e., “I can do that when I’m five.”). They may seem to appear lively and aloof, but emotionally and intellectually they are attached to home base for the most part.

Social Aspects

They appear to adjust their activities to themselves. They are aware of other children in the same environment, but will tend to ignore them in an effort to “do their own thing.” This behavior should be dealt with by making them aware of the others and being sensitive to their feelings.

Anatomical and Physiological Aspects

The four year old will tend to complain of pain in the legs or arms (growing pains). This usually alleviates itself in time. If the child has been relatively inactive, the tendency for loose joints will be evident—to be more specific, the elbows, shoulders, and hip joints. The elbow will tend to subluxate or separate so a ligament gets caught under the upper portion of the radial bone. Snapping joints occur when ligament or tendons pass over a rise in the bone of a joint producing an audible “snapping” sound. Both of these phenomena should not cause a need for concern since they will correct themselves through developing good muscle tone. The hips and knees can be susceptible to injury because of improper landing techniques and a constant desire to fall down as most four year olds love to do. Falling is a natural occurrence if the child knows how to and can control it. Problems, such as muscle spasm of the hip joints and swelling of the knee due to trauma from repetitive falling can result. One other area is the susceptibility for tight heel cords that can cause frequent muscle spasms in the calf area. Through stretching, by having the child stand on a step and lower their heels or extensive climbing with the feet flexing upward during the climbing phase will help alleviate tight heel cords.

After one year in the Four Year Old program, your child may have mastered the following:

- Running, walking, skipping, jump, and controlling their momentum safely
- Weaving in and out of cones in a smooth fashion
- A forward roll in a tuck position
- The placement of the hands and position for a backward roll
- Body awareness in relation to a handstand position
- Walking, climbing and dismounting a balance beam
- A stork stand (standing on one foot)
- Dismounting laterally
- Catching a single bar twenty inches in front of outstretched hand by jumping to it
- Jumping to a front support on the bar—resting on the hips and hands with straight arms
- A forward roll to a hang keeping an overhand grip during the roll
- Casting the legs back and forth, momentarily supporting the weight on the hands
- A seat drop and recovery to feet

Continued on the back page

- Controlled bouncing in the middle of the trampoline
- The handstand position (not balance, but to understand what a tight controlled body is)
- Remember a sequential order

As mentioned earlier, four year olds have an abundance of energies that they want to use simultaneously. We hope to help them control and harness these energies more positively.

Thank you,

Beth Cox
Preschool Director

Gymnastics Training Center of Ohio

FIVE YEAR OLDS

The five year old age group is considered by most physical educators and coaches to be the best time to study and direct a child toward a specific sport because most characteristics and abilities will tend to be demonstrated at this age. The child begins to realize that his body is able to perform skills more easily because of a more developed nervous system. He is able to intellectualize gross motor skills more accurately, and, if given the opportunity, he will perform them with more accuracy and perfection.

At this age, the child usually begins Kindergarten, and is expected to know more academically and physically than you or I had to at the same age. The program is that most schools today will continue to develop a child academically, but tend not to pursue their physical and motor needs adequately. A five year old must continue to develop gross motor skills at least until the age of seven or older. Once your child is five our program intends to pursue this development so that your child will have a chance to survive in today's highly competitive and technological society.

Social Aspects

The five year old will develop short lived friendships, perhaps keeping a longer relationship with one or two friends. They want recognition, not just for attention, but for performance. Physically, they are beginning to look for degrees of perfection of a skill and the recognition to please the teacher through performance.

Anatomical and Physiological Aspects

The five year old usually has good muscle tone and joint structure. They do tend to "slouch" into an interior tilt position with the pelvis. Body mechanic problems will be more noticeable at this age because of more coordinated movements and pronounced body structure. The most important aspect of the five year old is potential for developing stronger abdominal strength since the insertions of the muscles are much stronger. The energy level and lung capacities are better than a four year old but they still tend to work in short bursts of energy, fatiguing easily but having a much quicker recovery rate.

After one year in the Five Year Old program, your child may have mastered the following:

- Pulling themselves, with an overhand grip on the bar, up to a position with their chin over it
- Supporting their weight on their hands and hips and being able to "cast"
- Able to jump to and catch a bar suspended 12 inches above their head height and 18 inches beyond the reach of outstretched arms
- A forward roll around a bar at various heights
- Jumping to a bar and landing in a front support position (resting on the hips and hands)
- Running, skipping, jumping, hopping lateral movement and combinations of these locomotor skills
- A forward roll and able to stand up without the assistance of their hands
- The beginning of a back roll
- Combinations of turning and twisting with rolling skills
- Walking forward and backwards on a high balance beam with ease
- A seat drop, a half and full turn and controlled bouncing on the trampoline.

The basic skills mentioned above and a learning to judge their own capabilities regarding heights will be evident on a progressive basis throughout the year.

Thank you, Beth Cox,/Preschool Director

Gymnastics Training Center of Ohio

Informational Preschool Packet

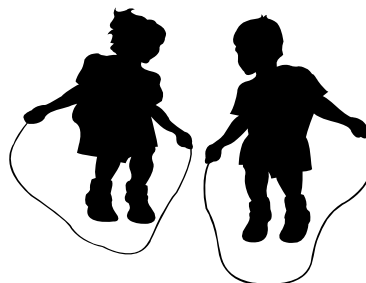
PRESCHOOL MISSION: Building a child's confidence and self-esteem through a fitness geared program. Realizing that this may be a child's first exposure to "school", we make a consistent attempt to have it be a positive experience! By keeping our student/teacher ratio low, effective instruction and care for each child is ensured. Our program includes lessons on all gymnastic apparatus modified to the special needs of the preschooler. We have two primary goals: 1) to raise each child's confidence level and, 2) to develop awareness, fitness, and coordination. Great care will be taken that the two primary goals have been accomplished before the secondary goal of skill refinement is undertaken.

OBJECTIVES: Gross-motor coordination is developed through the use of balance beams, mini-tramps, bars, rings, tunnels, padded vault, and tumbling mats to name a few items. Cooperative group activities are included in our curriculum (parachute, games, etc.). Eye-to-hand coordination is developed by attempting bean bag tosses, hoops, balls, etc. One of the highlights of our program is the use of musical activities during warm-ups and during class. Using music within our lesson plan aids the children in improving their rhythm and listening skills.

One of our most challenging objectives is to have the child behave in a controlled atmosphere (following directions, waiting their turn, paying attention, etc.). We have created structured, progressive, and unique lesson plans for the child to grow through appropriate developmental stages. Safety consciousness is a top priority of every staff member and is re-enforced with our students on a daily basis. Children will learn the basics of exercise (warm-up, stretching, skipping, jump roping), and the importance of exercise through gymnastics. The variety in our activities maintains children's enthusiasm while building strong minds and bodies.

When guided properly during childhood years, children develop their optimum fundamental movement skills. These are critical learning periods in a child's life. In order to maximize these times, our curriculum coordinates skills and activities with the appropriate developmental stage of your child's life.

Thanks for being a part of the GTCO Family!



Gymnastics Training Center of Ohio

Informational Preschool Packet

- **PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:** Our primary objective is to develop confidence, strength, and agility in a SAFE environment. Our program is primarily Movement Education. Children learn to climb up mountains, swing on bars and ropes, and crawl through tunnels which increase their vocabulary of movement.
- **PEERS:** We divide our classes into 16-30 month, 2 years, 3 years, 4/5 year olds. We know it is necessary to have children in their own age groups. We have learned they develop much better in this environment. Each child needs (for their own self-esteem) to be “at the top of their class” at one point in their life.
- **STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO:** We try to keep our student/teacher ratio at 7-1 for the 16-30 months/2 year olds, 6-1 for the three year olds and 7-1 for the 4/5 year olds. We know this is the most effective way to teach young children. Another instructor will be added if there are larger numbers of children in the class.
Please refer to our make-up policy.
- **PARENTS IN THE GYM:** Parents of the 16-30 months and the 2 year olds will accompany their child in the gym and participate in the class. We prefer one (no more than 2 adults) per child—no siblings will be allowed to participate with the younger child. We would like that parents are not in the gym for the 3, 4, and 5 year old students. This is certainly better for the child as they are totally different when the parent is in the gym. This is their time for independence. We do understand, however, there are exceptions. Especially for the three year old or a child that is new to the gym. Please talk with your child’s instructor before or after class, so you both can decide on the best course of action. Eventually the child feels comfortable in their new surroundings and all is well!!
- **MAKE-UPS:** We have an accommodating make-up policy. You are allowed three make-ups within the eight week session. To keep our student/teacher ratios at a minimum, please call the gym to schedule your make-up (937) 746-2213. When you arrive at the gym for your make-up, please initial the make-up/trial form at the front desk. There may not be room for your child on a particular day if no call has been made in advance.
- **CLOTHING/HAIR:** We ask that children wear comfortable clothing (shorts, sweatpants, leotards). We prefer the children not to wear shoes nor socks as it is difficult (and can be a safety concern) when climbing the rope or walking on the balance beam. No jewelry of any kind should be worn. For safety reason, children with long hair should have it pulled back in a “low” ponytail. No candy or gum is permitted in the gym. Please make sure your child visits the restroom before class begins!
- **VIDEO AND PICTURE WEEK:** Every session, Week 7, we allow the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., to take pictures or video your child in action! This event also allows the parents to ask the instructors any questions! If you are unable to make it Week 7, feel free to talk to your child’s instructor and they can arrange another time!