

Welcome To Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center!



2018 – 2019 Team Handbook

Thank you for joining our program.
Torey, Sharon, TJ & Forever Jacquie Hirsch

The Hirsch Family of Companies:





Welcome!
**We are excited to have you as a
member of our program!**

This year our facility celebrates its 26th anniversary. The Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center, LLC is one of the most comprehensive health, physical fitness, and child care development centers in all of New York State. Our 4-acre campus is home to:

- **The Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center.**
- **TJ Hirsch Enterprises, Inc.**
 - Auto Storage, Detailing, Vehicle Appraisals & Sales.
- **The Jacquie Hirsch For A.L.L. Foundation**
 - Cancer & Leukemia Awareness, Research, Fundraising Events & Patient Support
- **Four Seasons Child Care & Pre–School**
- **Spezio’s Dance Dynamics**

The Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center provides state-of-the-art training, teaching, coaching, mentoring, and character development for children of all ages. Each of our programs are designed to meet and exceed specific physical & emotional conditioning expectations for the diversity of our participants. The results of our work can be measured and seen by increased confidence, interpersonal skills, motor skills, and focus while preparing children for a bright, happy, and successful future.

In summary: We will help our students to accept individual differences in skill levels and success rates as they progress. Our promise is that we will do everything in our power to provide priceless child growth and development opportunities second to none.

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This content is subject to change without notice. Yet, when updated, it will be posted directly to our website for you to review @ www.greaterbuffalogymnastics.com.

"Introduction"

Welcome

Our philosophy at Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center, LLC focuses on the education of children - our most vital resource for the future. We believe that young people can learn to develop coordination, motor skills, and body control, as well as the more important mental qualities: self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-awareness through physical activity. Motivation, problem solving, and patience are qualities that are emphasized at our center. Most importantly, young people will learn to develop respect for themselves and others. Our coaching staff reflects this philosophy of teaching and uses a positive approach to place the emphasis on the individual.

Here at Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center, LLC proper staff selection and development is the key to ensuring that a high-quality activity, such as gymnastics, creates a positive learning experience.

- Our trained staff will use the sport of gymnastics as an avenue to develop positive personal qualities.
- These qualities, nurtured at an early age, will be utilized in all areas of the individual's future.
- Whether a recreational or a competitive gymnast, we are confident that our staff will be able to help each child reach their potential, have **FUN** while doing so, and enjoy all aspects of our program.

Mission

The Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center, LLC strives to be a positive educational force in the community. Our goal is to allow every child to have the opportunity to feel like a champion. We strive to introduce life skills that will enrich children and produce success.

Competitive Gymnastics...What Does It Mean?

The decision to be a competitive athlete is an important and exciting step in the life of you and your child! Congratulations to both of you for selecting the world's greatest sport! We now suggest that you read over the following information and carefully consider the material that pertains to our boys & girls competitive gymnastics teams. We believe gymnastics greatly enhances body conditioning, self-confidence, and positive self-esteem. Competitive gymnastics is also a unique sport that requires the backing and support of the entire family for any gymnast to be successful.

Competitive Team Philosophy

The Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Centers' Competitive Teams consist of USA Gymnastics (USAG) Levels 1-10.

- a. Our goal for competitive athletes is to help them go as far in gymnastics as their ability and desire will take them.
- b. Our team coaches will place gymnasts at the most appropriate level where they can be happy, safe, competitive, and confident.
- c. This means every gymnast must be able to perform the skills and routines required at a given level, comfortably. The skills should not be at the edge of or beyond his/her ability level.
- d. We will never ask or expect our athletes to perform skills or routines in a competition which he/she cannot perform consistently and safely in practice.

Selection For Team

Again, Congratulations! You are one of the select few invited to train with us as we move through the rankings of the elite gymnastics world and represent the Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center locally, regionally, nationally, and at times, internationally!

- a. The initial placement and subsequent advancement from one team level to the next or from a recreational class to our team is determined by our trained and qualified coaching staff. Where possible, objective measures of learning potential

will be used, however, subjective predictors such as courage, commitment, desire, "coachability", and integrity are also considered.

- b. A trial period will be offered in order to assess the gymnasts' placement, readiness for training, parental support, and compatibility with the team.
- c. **Keep in mind that team participation is by invitation only.** Remaining on the team is a privilege. So, work hard, have fun, and believe in yourself!

Moving From Level To Level

Moving up from one level to the next is decided by the coaches based upon attendance at workouts, skill level, attitude, and (if applicable) any score achievement requirements set forth by USA Gymnastics. This decision will be made in the best interest of the athlete, not on parent recommendations or a friend's mobility.

Description of USAG Junior Olympic Levels

Our competitive gymnastics program is divided into these major segments:

- a. The **Developmental Levels** 1 through 3 may be used as a non-competitive and achievement-oriented program for use within a gym's pre-team program, or they may be used as an introductory/recreational competitive program. States may also offer state specific Championships for these levels.
- b. The second part consists of **Compulsory Levels** 4 and 5. Both of these levels are progressive in nature, building upon the skills required at the previous level. Competitive opportunities are provided up to and including the USA Gymnastics State Championships.
- c. The third segment is **Optional Levels** 6 – 10. Levels 6, 7, and 8 have difficulty restrictions, while level 9 and 10 have no restrictions in the skill choice. Competitive opportunities may include local, state, regional, and national championships. Optional gymnasts are required to have their floor routines designed by a choreographer outside of normal practice hours. The fee for these sessions is based on the athletes' level, number of skill elements included, and time to teach the routine. The fees will be noted for you in advance.
- d. Lastly, the women's **Xcel Program** is designed to offer a broad-based, affordable competitive experience outside the traditional Jr. Olympic program to attract and retain a diverse group of girls. It allows the athletes more flexibility to balance school, gymnastics, and other activities while still progressing through the sport.

"Need To Knows" 😊

RULES & POLICIES DESIGNED TO:

- A) **Keep you and your child(ren) safe.**
- B) **Keep the flow of children between classes efficient and safe.**

Communication

Check out the Team boards in the lobby, sign up for newsletters, read your emails, watch for updates and visit www.greaterbuffalogymnastics.com. We look forward to keeping you up-to-date and well informed.

Meeting with a Team Coach: If you are interested in meeting with your child's coach(es) please call the office to setup an appointment. Our staff is happy to discuss your child's progress with you and would like to make sure time is set aside to do so versus between classes, during team workouts, and other times when they are required to be on the floor.

Time Management

Our Team Program workouts are very prompt:

- a. Please arrive 5 minutes prior to your child's workout time.
- b. Pick up your child right when workout is dismissed.
- c. It is very important that you come into the building and that your child waits for you inside.
- d. Traffic jam, running late at work, car broke down? Things happen. No Problem. If you will be late picking up your child just call us.

Homework and study time will become much more efficient and better habits will develop due to shorter periods of time being available. It has been the experience of most coaches that students who are involved in our Team Program tend to have good grades and are better at studying because they have learned to budget their time more effectively than their peers.

Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life (and yours).

Each gymnast is required to attend all regularly scheduled workouts. **Be on time to all workouts.** If you are early then you are on time. If you are on time, then you are late.

If for some reason your child will be late or absent, have him/her call the office before the start of workout. Being responsible can never start too soon or last too long.

- a. All team members must attend the dates and times designated for his/her level.
- b. At the lower team levels, the number of hours of practice per week is relatively small. As your child progresses up the competitive ladder, the hours and days of workout will continue to grow since he/she will be progressing.
- c. Team members may not switch days and times or come for less than the required amount of days or hours per week. This is due to staff scheduling, the number of team members already in the gym at that time, and the skill levels of our athletes.

Practice Attire

WHAT DOES MY GIRL WEAR?

- a. Girls should wear a properly fitting leotard and leo shorts. No shirts and no bare midriffs are allowed.
- b. Hair should be appropriately tied back, in a bun or braids, secured for the duration of the workout and for the courtesy of all coaches and other athletes, proper hygiene is a must.
- c. You will be notified when your gymnast requires extra equipment such as grips.
- d. Leotards must be pulled up before entering the gym from the locker room and may not be taken down until reentering the locker room.
- e. Hoodies, sweatshirts, outdoor apparel may not be worn after entering the gym but should be left in the locker room.

WHAT DOES MY BOY WEAR?

- a. Boys should wear athletic shorts finishing above the knee with a drawstring and a t-shirt that can be tucked in with cotton socks.
- b. Hair not below the collar.
- c. You will be notified when your gymnast requires extra equipment such as grips.

Tuition

The Junior Olympic Team Program is year-round and team members are expected to pay the monthly tuition and meet summer requirements. Parents are expected to pay summer tuition regardless of attendance.

WHEN DO I PAY?

Tuition is due the (1st) of the month regardless of the day the (1st) falls on.

HOW DO I PAY?

Payments are accepted in CASH, CHECK, MASTER CARD, VISA, or INDEPENDENT HEALTH FLEX FIT FAMILY CARD.

- a. A drop box is located in the front lobby to the right of the office door. It is provided in the event the office is closed. Checks may also be mailed to the center. Please be sure your child's first and last name, and level are clearly marked on the front of your check.
- b. Credit/Debit card payments are only taken in person, during our office hours.
- c. You can also setup automatic billing on a credit card. Tuition will be charged to your credit card on or around the first of each month for your tuition amount. An email receipt will be sent to you.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY PAYMENT IS LATE?

That's okay. Tuition is just an additional \$5 per child if payment is not received by the (10th) of each month. We suggest putting a credit card on file with us, your tuition will always be on time!

DO YOU OFFER FAMILY DISCOUNTS?

Of Course! Discounts are given, if all the children (from 1 family) are registered prior to October 15, 2018. Siblings who enroll on time and remain enrolled throughout the entire season will receive the following discounts:

- a. All members on Team already receive a discounted, per-hour tuition rate.
- b. Family discounts will not apply if you have one (1) sibling in our recreational classes, however:
- c. If the Team family has two (2) or more children enrolled in recreational classes, the discounts apply to the recreational students. Please see the current Class Parent Handbook.
- d. We also offer a military discount through the Erie County Thank-A-Vet and Honoring the Fallen Programs. Simply present your Thank-A-Vet or Honoring the Fallen card at the front desk and receive 10% off all services offered at the facility.

UNPAID TUITION IMPLICATIONS:

- a. If tuition is not paid for one full month, your child will not be permitted to practice until your financial obligations are met. This happens very infrequently and we would prefer your child practicing over having to sit out.

- b. All tuition money paid will first be applied to outstanding balances (meet fees, late fees, etc.) before being applied to tuition.
- c. Gymnasts must be current on all Greater Buffalo financial obligations in order to compete in meets.

* Please Note, there is a \$25.00 fee for returned checks. If a problem with payment arises, please call the office BEFORE payment is due in order to discuss other payment arrangements. We will help you any way that we can.

Withdrawal From Team

This is a 12-month program. We plan on you and your child being with us for the full duration. Please provide an email or stop into our office if you plan to withdraw from your team. If you wish to avoid being billed for the month you leave, give our office notice one (1) week BEFORE that month starts.

Absences

Missed practices can mean missed competitive opportunities. We keep on top of our "attendance game." Please notify the gym office in advance if your child will be absent.

- a. General Absences: Just like tuition at an academic institution, Team Tuition is due regardless of attendance. The reason we cannot prorate is simple: all team expenses - wages, insurances, utilities, facilities, equipment, and others continue, unabated, no matter if your athlete is at practice or not.

There are no makeups for missed scheduled workouts. Each day's lesson plans and staffing schedule is based on a particular number of specific athletes being in the gym. It is impossible for us to properly train each athlete in the way they deserve if extra people are in the gym on nights they are not regularly scheduled to be.

- b. Changes/Cancellations to Workouts: As a member of our competitive team you know or will learn quickly that most meets take place Friday-Sunday. Because we run workouts on Friday and Saturday sometimes a competition may take place the same day as a scheduled workout. Please refer to the following general guidelines as to whether or not a workout will be held.

If your child's level competes on the same day they normally have workout, workout for that day will be cancelled. We do not want our athletes overextending themselves by practicing and then going to a meet tired or coming to workout tired from a competition.

If your child's level has workout the day before or the day after their scheduled competition, his/her practice workout will still be held. For example, if you compete on Friday and normally workout on Saturday, there will still be workout. If you normally workout on Saturday and compete Sunday, there will still be workout.

Safety/Injuries/Illnesses

AT THE GYM

The sport of gymnastics is one of the most demanding on the human body, and injuries do require time to heal. They are extremely rare here and in the event of an injury, first aid procedures will be performed and an injury report will be filled out and kept on file.

You can take confidence knowing that our staff is properly trained in skill progression, safety, matting, spotting and skill development to help ensure the safety of your child. Additionally, all of our coaches go through USAG safety training plus a background check. We do carry insurance to operate our business, however, each student must be covered by his/her own health insurance.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation. Our goal is to offer an environment for your child to reach his/her gymnastics goals and dreams while safeguarding their health and wellness for all future endeavors.

GYMNASTS – PLEASE NOTE: Alert your coach when your body is telling you to slow down or stop. If you are sick, on medication, or are injured please inform your coach. Pain is the body's way of telling you to stop. In addition, alert your coach if you have engaged in any strenuous activity prior to the start of practice.

PARENTS – PLEASE NOTE: The United States Gymnastics Federation, (our governing body) recommends that the following paragraph be presented to all parents of gymnasts enrolled in any gymnastics program:

"By the very nature of the activity, gymnastics carries a risk of physical injury. No matter how careful the gymnast and coach are, no matter how many spotters are used, no matter what height is used or what landing surface exists, the risk cannot be eliminated. Risk can be reduced, but never eliminated. The risk of injury includes minor injuries such as bruises and more serious injuries such as broken bones, dislocations and muscle pulls. The risk also includes catastrophic injuries such as permanent paralysis or even death from landings or falls on the back, neck or head."

USA Gymnastics Safety Handbook (1998) USA Gymnastics Publications Indianapolis, IN

At Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center, safety is our most fundamental coaching concept. We hold safety in the highest regard and have taken steps to ensure the safest and most enjoyable atmosphere possible. Gymnastics is an inherently dangerous sport. This fact combined with the high difficulty level many gymnasts at

Greater Buffalo will achieve only adds to the potential for injury. All parents must be fully aware of the risks involved in the sport of gymnastics. Speed, motion, height, flipping and the difficulty of the skill put our athletes in potentially life-threatening situations on a daily basis. Our staff is continuously learning new and improved spotting and coaching techniques to help guarantee the safety of your child. We believe in spotting whenever there is a doubt as to the consistency of a skill. We believe in padding, matting and using any training devices designed to make learning as safe as possible. - Torey Hirsch Sr.

OUTSIDE OF THE GYM

Please notify the gym as soon as possible if your child is injured outside of the gym or is diagnosed with any communicable diseases (i.e. chicken pox, mumps, conjunctivitis, fifth's disease, etc.) and will be missing an extended number of practices.

- a. If your athlete is struck by an illness or injury that requires them to miss school, please do not send them to the gym that day. If they are not well enough to go to school, we consider them not healthy enough to be at practice. The athlete must be fever free for 24 hours. This is not only for their safety; an unwell athlete is more likely to injure themselves or a coach trying to spot. We want to make sure illnesses do not spread through the team/gym.
- b. Medical releases are **REQUIRED** before returning to practice for any child who has been seen by a doctor or under medical care for any injury or illness excluding "annual check-ups." **NO child will be allowed to participate in workouts until the gym receives the medical release stating the full start and end dates.**
- c. Any injury that occurs outside the gym has the potential to affect the workout here. We cannot safely train our athletes if we are not kept informed of changes in their health status.

INJURY PROTOCOL

Team gymnasts pay a very low per-hour tuition rate. Therefore, there are no makeups factored for team members. If a gymnast becomes injured and needs to take time to heal, the following shall apply:

- a. Injured athletes are expected to continue participating in workouts to the extent possible. In most cases it is possible to work around injuries and turn a weakness into a strength by increased attention on strength, flexibility or specific skills. Because athletes will still be utilizing the gym, no discounts or credits are given.
- b. Should an injury require total absence from the gym for a **doctor determined amount of time** with no medical ability to participate, our office and coaching staff will make a determination about a reduction in/credit to your tuition.
- c. If an injury requires more than two practices off and a visit to a doctor, then a physician's note must be obtained and brought to the office for our records. This note must contain the diagnosis of injury, an expected duration of absence for healing, and

a list of all areas of the body that may still be trained for strength and flexibility (for example: A broken wrist will still permit splits, shoulder stretches, and strength training for abs and legs.) The gymnast is expected to return to the gym after diagnosis so that he/she may maintain as much of their strength and flexibility as possible.

- d. No child will be asked to perform activities that put the injured area in danger of further injury.

USA GYMNASTICS SAFE SPORT POLICY

Our first commitment and top priority at Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center is the safety and wellbeing of our athletes and our staff. With that always at the forefront of our minds, each of our coaches have been required to become a member of USAG, requiring them to pass a criminal background check and take a course related to the new Safe Sport Policy.

The following is a note from USA Gymnastics regarding the Safe Sport Policy, the full text of which can be found at www.usagym.org/pages/education/safesport/.

"USA Gymnastics is committed to fostering a safe, fun, and healthy environment for all members. Since 1990 - prior to almost all other National Governing Bodies - USA Gymnastics has provided awareness, prevention and reporting information regarding sexual misconduct to professional members, member clubs, athlete members and their families.

In June 2017, USA Gymnastics leadership approved and adopted a new Safe Sport Policy, which significantly strengthened the organization's approach to athlete safety. The Safe Sport Policy, which is mandatory for all members to comply with:

- Increases the number of individuals who fall under USA Gymnastics jurisdiction; essentially increasing the number of people in our sport who are accountable for their behavior;
- Increases the categories of misconduct from two (sexual and physical misconduct) to six (verbal/emotional misconduct, bullying, hazing and harassment were added);
- Addresses and prohibits boundary violations and grooming behaviors;
- Requires covered individuals to report a suspicion of abuse to law enforcement, even if they are not a mandated reporter according to their state law;
- Requires covered individuals to notify USA Gymnastics or the U.S. Center for SafeSport for any misconduct; and
- Requires covered individuals to take a designated safe sport course every two years.

The information in these pages provides policies, education and training, and tools intended to assist our member clubs, professional members, athlete members and their families in ensuring the safety of our gymnasts to the best of our ability."

Emergency Procedures

In the unlikely event of a medical emergency involving your child, we follow the steps below:

- a. Greater Buffalo staff will assess the situation and emergency first aid will be administered, including requesting of emergency medical technicians and an ambulance if needed.
- b. You will be contacted using the emergency contact information you provided to us in the registration packet.
- c. In the event we are unable to make contact with a parent or guardian, we will attempt to contact the nearest professional medical staff and/or hospital.

Progression & Feedback

If you would like to talk to your gymnast's coach or inquire about your child's progress, please stop in to the office and fill out a call sheet. This is the only way we know about your request. Conferences may be scheduled with a team member and his/her parents at any time to discuss the gymnast's progress, evaluation, and goals. The gym will also schedule interim conferences if problems/situations arise that affect the gymnast.

Gym Protocol & Housekeeping

- a. There is **NO** food, gum, or drinks allowed in the gym area, except water
- b. Please encourage your child(ren) to respect our locker rooms and furniture.
- c. For safety, please park in the designated areas to ensure proper traffic flow and escort children through the parking lot. Be respectful of spaces that are reserved. Thank you.
- d. The center will not be responsible for lost items or articles of clothing. Please do not allow your child to bring valuable jewelry, clothing, cell phones, iPods, or other items to the gym. Label clothing so it may be returned if it is misplaced. There is a lost and found bin in the Parent's Waiting Room, please check there for lost items.
- e. **PARENTS OR UNREGISTERED CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER THE GYM AREA.** If you need assistance, please come to the office first.
- f. Help us to reinforce honesty. Gymnasts - cutting corners or not completing all assignments shows disrespect to your coaches, your parents, and most importantly, to yourself. If you cannot or will not complete an assignment of practice skills be honest about it. We're here to help you.
- g. Maintain a positive attitude when facing fears and frustrations. Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult of all sports. Many athletes suffer setbacks,

frustrations, fears, and defeat. Expect these things to happen from time to time, learn from them, face them, and overcome them. **Together**, we will set goals and achieve them step by step.

How Do I Watch My Child?

Parent viewing is always available upstairs.

- a. Please note, as per USA Gymnastics, no flash pictures are permitted in the gym to ensure the safety of all gymnasts.
- b. All children and siblings must be supervised by a parent, guardian or mature teen throughout the facility.

Gym Closings

HOLIDAYS/SCHEDULED CLOSINGS

Please follow the Team calendar on the last page of this handbook for closings. We do not adhere to any particular school district's schedule but make our own so please follow this calendar for gymnastics. If a day is not marked, please assume we are open.

WEATHER/EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Should the gym close due to weather or emergency related conditions, it will be announced on WGRZ Channel 2, WIVB Channel 4, WKBW Channel 7, and our home page at www.greaterbuffalogymnastics.com. **Please note there are no make-up classes for any weather related or emergency closings.**

- a. If team practice is cancelled, the notification will say the gym "is closed".
- b. If it states that "classes are cancelled", then team practice is still on.

Those will be updated if weather becomes more of an issue. If there is no indication of a closing on the local news outlets or on our homepage, please assume we are open.

Parent Commitment

Make sure your gymnast attends all regularly scheduled workouts, meets, and special functions. If your child will miss, or be late, or have to leave a workout early, for any reason, please notify the gym office.

We feel that the support of our team parents is important for team morale and unity. If you have any questions or concerns let us know because we've learned that positive questions and constructive comments = positive outcomes. If you enjoy being a part of this team, then tell everyone you know! And if not, then please tell us first.

- a. Check the bulletin board and your **e-mail** regularly to stay current with team activities. **E-mail will be our first means of communication. Please give us as many e-mail addresses as you like!** Be sure to notify us if your email address changes.
- b. Ensure that your child gets enough sleep, gets proper nutrition, gets to and from the gym on time, and has proper clothing and equipment.
- c. Provide unconditional love, encouragement, and support to your young athlete. Please do not compare your child with other athletes. Each athlete is unique with differing strengths and weaknesses. It is unfair to you and your child to compare him/her to anyone else. Rather, try to look for the progress your child is making in gymnastics and celebrate it!
- d. **PLEASE DO NOT COACH YOUR CHILD.** Your comments might detract from what the coach is doing by giving the gymnast another thing to think about; it interferes with the development of the coach/athlete relationship which is critical for long-term success, progression, and safety.
- e. Please stay in the waiting area and out of the gym while waiting for your child.
- f. Please let a coach know before practice if you think your child might have a problem due to illness, medication or injury.
- g. Please attend team parent meetings which will be held two to three times per year. The meetings are an opportunity for coaches and parent board officers to communicate detailed information with plenty of time for questions and answers.

Team Guidelines

The decision to join the Greater Buffalo Gymnastics Team Program reflects effort and commitment. Each year our gymnasts will build on their talents, improve their skills and experience milestone accomplishments. Team members do not move on and off the team based on things like illness, injuries or vacation plans. Being committed to the team builds comradery, trust, and self-confidence.

The following are guidelines which all team members are expected to follow:

- a. We recommend a pre-participation physical examination for all team members.
- b. 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. Do not compare yourself with other gymnasts. You are all different and will advance at different rates. Only concern yourself with things that YOU can control which are YOUR ATTITUDE, YOUR EFFORT, AND YOUR GYMNASTICS SKILLS!
- c. Gymnasts should remain on the workout floor until practice is finished and on the competition floor until a meet is over - this includes awards.

- d. Treat your coaches and teammates with respect. We are all on the same "Team", we are all one family. Be kind to those gymnasts younger than you. They look up to you and appreciate you being a role model.
- e. We encourage all our athletes and coaches to consistently catch each other doing things exceptionally well. Bring your "A" game here. Positive feedback = positive results.
- f. The annual banquet is held in June and will be open to all team members, family, and friends. Information will be given to your child when available.
- g. We may have the opportunity for our team members to perform exhibitions and demonstrations throughout the year. If these become available, we will hand out information as soon as we have it. This is an excellent time for our gymnasts to "show off" and perform in a non-competitive setting. Please give your child the chance to participate whenever possible and demonstrate what they have worked so hard to achieve.

Team Family Requirements

- a. **Home Meets** - Each Greater Buffalo Gymnastics Team (Girls and Boys) hosts one large meet a year, The Jacquie Hirsch Memorial Buffalo Challenge and The Boys Buffalo Challenge, respectively. Further information will be forthcoming regarding these events. Please note, once the dates are released you are expected to set aside the weekend; these are the team's largest fundraiser of the year.
- b. **Team Banquet** - (End of June) A parent is needed to organize the end-of-season banquet and awards ceremony.
- c. **Halloween Sleepover** - Gymnasts are invited to bring a friend for a spooky sleepover in the gym. Costumes are required and no parental help is needed.
- d. **Team Holiday Party** - Usually held the weekend before winter break. Gymnasts bring a donation for charity. No parental help is needed.
- e. We ask that Parent Liaisons write meet/competition articles to submit to the local newspapers.
- f. Throughout the season, there will be other fundraisers that you may be responsible for; these fundraisers are chosen by the Booster Club, not by the gym office.

Requirements For Competitive Eligibility

Athletes must be physically, emotionally, and mentally prepared for competition. The coaching staff will determine when each athlete is competition-ready and relay this information to the parent.

USA Gymnastics Athlete Membership for 2018-2019 Season

- a. Annual membership is \$59 for boys & girls Level 1-10, and Xcel levels Gold, Platinum, and Diamond.
- b. Annual membership is \$27 for Xcel levels Silver and Bronze
- c. The USAG (level 1 and up) athlete should be prepared to show his/her membership card at all sanctioned meets. The athlete number and card are to be obtained each year prior to the competitive season. (Parents are asked to purchase a luggage tag for their child's USAG card to place on their gym bags.)

Competition/Meet Scheduling

At the beginning of each season, a preliminary schedule of meet locations and dates will be handed out to the gymnasts. Meets may be added, changed, or canceled. Please check the team board and your email regularly for updates.

- a. Gymnasts in all levels are expected to attend all scheduled meets. **Attendance is critical for team support** and the more experience you obtain, the better you will become.
- b. Host clubs will set a deadline for meet entries. After this date the host club will set the final meet schedule depending on the number of entrants.
- c. It is not uncommon for host clubs to send out final meet information late or make last minute changes. Information in many instances is not received until a few days before a competition. It is a good idea to clear the whole weekend of a meet on the chance that there will be last minute changes that could conflict with your previous plans.
- d. Please check your email and the parent board for information regarding meets; we will release the information to you as soon as our office receives it.
- e. Meet fees are paid for by each individual team member by the due date. We will give meet fee deadlines, which must be adhered to. Meet fees received any time after the deadline will incur a late fee charge of \$10.00. Unless we receive a written note to the office **BY THE DEADLINE** that your son/daughter will not participate in a meet, your child's entry fee will be submitted and paid for by the gym and you are then responsible for that meet fee. Each gymnast is responsible for coordinating his/her own transportation to competitions, hotels (*if needed*), and meals. Admission is typically charged to spectators at most meets.

- f. If you choose not to attend a competition, there is no practice that day, as coaches will be at the competition.

Competition Attire

Girls Competition - The competition dress code is set by USA Gymnastics and failure to comply can result in deductions from the gymnast's scores, the inability to receive awards or disqualification by the judges.

Warm-ups

Levels 3 - 10 and Xcel - A Greater Buffalo warm up suit, competition leotard, and gym bag.

Level 2 – Competition Leotard

Competition

All Levels - Greater Buffalo competition leotard. The gym's warm-up suit should be worn after competing on an event when applicable.

Awards

Greater Buffalo warm-up suit must be worn in order to receive awards, when applicable

Jewelry

There is NO JEWELRY allowed during competition.

Boys Competition- The competition dress code is set by USA Gymnastics and failure to comply can result in deductions from the gymnast's scores, the inability to receive awards or disqualification by the judges.

Warm-ups

A Greater Buffalo or gymnastics related t-shirt, competition shorts, competition pants and a clean, intact pair of socks. The Greater Buffalo bodysuit must be worn underneath all other clothing during warm-ups. Manufactured braces or supports may be worn on any event when needed throughout warm-ups and competition.

Competition

Greater Buffalo bodysuit, competition shorts, competition pants, and a clean, intact pair of black socks. A Greater Buffalo The gym's warm-up suit should be worn after competing on an event. Socks and/or gymnastics shoes, along with competition pants must be worn on Pommel Horse/ Mushroom, Still Rings, Parallel Bars, and Horizontal Bar. The gymnast may perform on Floor Exercise and Vault wearing only shorts, socks, gymnastics shoes (slippers), or bare feet.

Awards

Greater Buffalo warm-up suit must be worn in order to receive awards. There are no shoes or boots of any kind allowed during the award ceremony. Look sharp!

Jewelry

There is NO JEWELRY allowed during competition.

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

- a. Athletes should arrive at the competition site 15 minutes **before** open stretch is scheduled to begin or a time designated by your coach.
- b. No food or drink is permitted in the gym area.
- c. Gymnasts must present themselves in proper attire. Gymnasts should be well groomed. No nail polish should be worn. Long hair should be pulled back and sprayed ("glued") in place, only snap clips or barrettes, no bobby pins.
- d. Athletes should stay with the team until competition is over and the coach releases them. Once a gymnast has entered the competition area there should be no contact between the gymnast and his/her parents. Distractions like waving or texting might result in an injury, so please take care.
- e. Athletes must remain in the designated competition area throughout the course of warm-ups and competition and obey all warm-up regulations and procedures. You may not visit with family or friends until your coach has dismissed you.
- f. We expect all team members to act responsibly and politely at meets or other places we attend as a team. We expect that all property at other gyms will be treated as if it were ours. Team members and their families are to follow all rules established by the host gym. In the rare event of inappropriate behavior, it will not be tolerated and will be reason to be excused from the remainder of the competition.
- g. Each athlete should accept their place in the line-up and the scores they receive with dignity and without criticism. Encourage your child to accept wins or losses as positively as possible and we will support your athlete no matter how they score. Athletes cannot control the scores or the performances of any other gymnast. They can only control their own performance.
- h. NOTE TO ATHLETES: If you make mistakes and are disappointed in your performance, that is part of the learning curve. We've got your back. You will persevere and succeed. Stay calm, stay in control of yourself and be ready to perform on other events and cheer on your teammates.
- i. 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.

- j. Gymnasts should have the mandatory competition bag and keep all of their belongings in the bag during the meet. We will offer a once per year ordering of "team backpacks" that have our current logo and your child's name.
- k. Athletes must stay for awards dressed in their team warm-up. Most meets have a formal system for presenting awards. As a participating athlete, you have an obligation to stay for all the awards, whether you are receiving one or not, and to accept any award presented to you with courtesy and gratitude. It is customary to accept awards with a firm handshake and a warm smile. Congratulate and shake hands with the other athletes as well. Remember that you are not just representing yourself; you are acting as a representative of Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center as well.
- l. If you are staying to watch another teammate compete or you have arrived early for warm-ups, stay seated in the bleachers, please do not wander out onto the competition floor.
- m. Keep in mind that each meet is a learning experience. Have fun, be positive and realize that if you are unhappy with your performance, *you* can prepare even better for the next meet.

Meet Etiquette for Parents

- a. Team Spirit is a big help... Wear our team colors or one of our Greater Buffalo t-shirts.
- b. Please show proper 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 circumstance should you attempt to contact any coach or official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, score keepers, etc.)** If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you are to address it with your child's coach following the session. Even the coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet, but must submit an inquiry through the Meet Director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow USAG guidelines.
- c. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You **NEVER KNOW** who is sitting near you.
- d. Once a gymnast has walked into the competition area for warm-up, he/she will not be permitted to have contact with parents, family, friends, etc. until competition is completed for **ALL** team members, unless given permission by the head coach. This has less to do with control than it does with FOCUS.

The coach's job at the meet is to monitor the gymnast's condition and body language and teach him/her to respond appropriately. The gymnast needs to focus

on his/her coach's advice. As coaches, we know that you mean well with your comments, however, they may not be appropriate for the current time or situation. If you have any questions about what happens at a meet, schedule a time to talk with your coach that works for both of you.

- e. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives of the gymnast **ARE NOT ALLOWED** onto the competitive floor. **YOU MUST** remain in the spectator's area along with all other relatives and friends. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet if a parent is in the competitor's area.
- f. In case of injury during warm-up or competition at a USAG sanctioned event, **YOU MUST** stay in the spectator area unless your coach flags you onto the floor.
- g. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY** is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera in advance. If you cannot manually disable your flash, please do not take pictures during the competition.
- h. On the day of competition your child should eat a well-balanced meal about two hours prior to the actual competition. This energy will carry them through the entire competition. If necessary, a gymnast may carry fruit juices and pieces of fruit in their gym bag to curb hunger.

Problems occur when a parent expects too much from an athlete. It takes a number of years of quality competition for a gymnast to develop the poise and grace to continuously take top honors in a gymnastics competition. Some parents seem to have developed their own system of evaluating the scores their children earn during a gymnastics competition.

The key is to recognize when your child is working up to his/her potential. If he/she completes all her skills for the first time, without a fall, that is a winning routine regardless of what score he/she receives. Comments from you should be congratulatory and positive. No mention should be made at that time of what he/she can do better, that would lessen the effect of this "victory" for him/her. The week after the meet your son/daughter's coach will go over those elements that need work and congratulate him/her on the elements competed correctly.

Any score he/she receives during a competition is no reflection on you as parent. There is no reason for you to feel embarrassed if your child is having a bad meet. Everyone has good days and bad days and it is how he/she learns to react to them that illustrate his/her development as a competitor. Remember that a score given to your child in a gymnastics competition is an evaluation of one single performance, not an evaluation of the child.

Some Guidelines For Parents Feeling Stress (as suggested by USA Gymnastics)

We know that you are excited about your child’s participation in gymnastics and want him/her to be successful, but as a parent you actually have the least amount of control over your gymnast’s performance. To support your child in the best way possible, be a really good listener, ask questions, and let us know how we can help. If you recognize yourself in any of the following situations, you probably need to reevaluate your actions, your role, and your attitude towards your child’s sports participation. Talk with us. We can work through it with you.

- a. Wanting to observe every practice intently.
- b. Praising or punishing your child for what you see during observations of workout.
- c. Finding your sense of worth and happiness dependent on the success of your gymnast.
- d. Constantly comparing your child and their progress to others in the group, on the team or in competition.
- e. Verbally abusing the gym, the coaches, and the program while still placing your child under their care.

Inappropriate Comments	Appropriate Comments
<i>"You finally beat Sally"</i>	<i>"You scored your highest yet!"</i>
<i>"How many (current difficult skill) did you make today?"</i>	<i>"How was practice?"</i>
<i>"I'll give you \$20 if you win today"</i>	<i>"Do your best and have fun"</i>
<i>"That judge always scores you low"</i>	<i>"Work hard and next time you'll do better."</i>
<i>"I cannot believe they moved Sally up and not you!"</i>	<i>"As long as you are happy, safe, and progressing, I'm happy."</i>

Disciplinary Actions

The rules and policies which govern the gymnasts and their parents have been outlined here in the Boys’/Girls’ Team Handbook. In the rare event that there is an ongoing pattern of disruption or there are major rule infractions, it may become necessary to act to make this a positive learning experience for the future.

We will treat all of our gymnasts and gym parents as individuals and will seek the most effective positive outcomes in every circumstance. Please take a minute to review the follow guidelines we consider based on our experience and the recommendations of other industry leaders.

- a. Sometimes the gymnast may not be permitted to rotate with his/her group at the designated time and will remain on an event to finish or repeat an assignment.
- b. 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.

- c. The coach may request a meeting with a parent.
- d. The gymnast may be excused from the team for one or more practices or may be scratched from a competition. Please note that if the gymnast is asked to leave practice or is suspended from a competition due to poor attendance, poor work ethic or a negative attitude, fees are nonrefundable.
- e. In severe and rare cases, the gymnast may be asked to leave the program.

The development of the coach/gymnast relationship is paramount to safety and success. We will attempt to build a very positive one-on-one relationships with our athletes. Thank you for supporting us in that from your side. Those relationships are built on time shared, belief in the same dreams and values, work performed together, and the emotional ups and downs of competitive sport, all of which are an important part of development. We want to work with you to create the most positive culture possible.

Our mission here is to build the self-esteem and the positive happiness factor of every person who passes through our doors. Thank you for helping us make that happen.

Greater Buffalo Gymnastics & Fitness Center

2018-2019 Team Calendar

September 2018						
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January 2019						
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February 2019						
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March 2019						
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April 2019						
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July 2019						
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August 2019						
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	Gym is CLOSED - If a date is not marked, please assume we have workout.
	Class Show Week - Keep in mind an alternative workout schedule will be released for these dates as we get closer to the end of the season.
	The Jacquie Hirsch Memorial Girls Buffalo Challenge - Reminder that the facility is closed for all other activities to accommodate the meet.
	The Boys Buffalo Challenge - Reminder that the facility is closed for all other activities to accommodate the meet.