

Thank you for choosing to participate in a Commerce City Parks and Recreation youth sports program. Please take a minute to read through this packet to get familiar with our philosophy and policies. We are looking forward to a fun and rewarding season!

Commerce City Parks and Recreation Philosophy of Youth Sports

Our youth sports programs build strong kids, strong families and a strong community by allowing each child to participate at their skill level in recreational competition. Skill development and healthy lifestyles are emphasized along with values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. In our youth sports programs we stress fun and skills over winning and competition, in a safe, supportive and healthy environment. Commerce City Parks and Recreation Youth Sports programs are a safe place to play, grow and have fun for all.

Character Development

Coaches and parents are strongly encouraged to work with the children in developing the four character values Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility, by providing an environment in which these values are fostered. PARENTS AND COACHES ARE ALL ROLE MODELS and their behavior should reflect these values.

Caring – Being sensitive to the well being of others involved in the sports program.

Honesty – To have integrity, making sure that one's actions match one's values through participation in sports.

Respect – To value the worth of every person, including oneself, one's teammates, opponents and officials.

Responsible – To be accountable for one's behavior and obligations.

Helping Your Child Enjoy Sports

You can help your child enjoy sports by doing the following:

Developing a Winning Perspective

Every decision parents make in guiding their children should be based first on what's best for the child and second on what may help the child win. Stated another way, this perspective places **Athletes First, Winning Second**. We're not saying winning is unimportant. Winning—or striving to win—is essential to enjoyable competition. Pursuing victory and achieving goals are sweet rewards of sport participation. But they can turn sour if, through losing, you or your children lose the proper perspective. Also, an obsession with winning often produces a fear of failure, resulting in below average performances and upset children.

Building Your Child's Self-Esteem

Building self-esteem in your child is one of your most important parenting duties. It's not easy—and it's made even more difficult in sport by the prevailing attitude of "winning is everything." Athletes who find their self-worth through winning will go through tough times when they lose. Building self-esteem in your child takes more than encouragement. You need to show your child unconditional approval and love.

Emphasizing Fun, Skill Development, and Striving to Win

The reason you should emphasize fun is quite simple: without it, your child may not want to keep playing. Kids don't have fun when they stand around in practice or sit out of competitions, when they feel pressure to win and don't improve or learn new skills. Conversely, they *do* have fun when practices are well organized, They get to compete in meets, they develop new skills, and the focus is on *striving* to win.

Helping Your Child Set Performance Goals

Performance goals—which emphasize individual skill improvement—are much better than the outcome goal of winning for two reasons:

1. Performance goals are in the athlete's control.
2. Performance goals help the athlete improve.

Performance goals should be specific, and they should be challenging but not too difficult to achieve. Help your child focus on performance goals before a meet (stick your cartwheel on beam); this focus will help sport be an enjoyable learning experience for your child.

Staff

All Commerce City Staff have background checks, drug screens, and reference checks. Gymnastics team coaches have many years of experience in the sport as well as CPR, First Aid, AED, and Blood Borne Pathogens training. All team level coaches go through CARA gymnastics safety awareness training. All team level coaches go through Heads Up, Concussion training. The CARA gymnastics league offers multiple trainings annually in spotting, drills, and routine training that is open to all CARA gymnastics coaches.

Strategies to Prevent Child Abuse

1. The Commerce City Parks and Recreation Department has in place a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure to screen out staff and volunteers not suited for working with children. All of our volunteer coaches go through a criminal background check.
2. The Commerce City Parks and Recreation Department will take any allegation or suspicion of child abuse seriously.
3. Staff and Volunteers understand their legal obligation to report suspected abuse.
4. Staff and Volunteers understand what practices may be considered abusive and the difference between what may be considered appropriate and inappropriate touch.
5. Staff and Volunteers protect themselves and the Commerce City Parks and Recreation Department by agreeing not to be alone with youth or program participants outside of Commerce City Parks and Recreation programs or facilities (i.e.: babysitting, take children on trips, etc.) Players may not go to coaches homes, unless their parents are with them.
6. Coaches should monitor the release of participants on their teams to ensure a child is never left alone or picked up by a stranger.
7. Profanity, inappropriate jokes and any other type of harassment by persons participating in or attending Commerce City Recreation programs is prohibited.

10 Perfect Reasons Why Every Child Should Take Gymnastics Classes:

1. Studies show that children learn cognitive skills more effectively in an environment that includes the body as well as the mind. Gymnastics and early childhood movement is directly attributed to developing neurological pathways in students and promoting reading readiness.
2. Researchers at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School found a relationship between physical activity and self esteem. The more time children ages 10-16 spent being active, the higher their self-esteem was reported to be.
3. European researchers found that physical fitness in children related to a lower risk of developing asthma during adolescence.
4. Physical activity is instrumental in preventing certain cancers; from colon cancer and breast cancer to prostate cancer. Increased exercise helped reduce the risk of developing diabetes by 58%.
5. In a study of school-aged youth, researchers found that the risk of substance abuse by adolescents is decreased by physical training that incorporates life skills. Better school attendance, lower anxiety and depression, and decreased use of alcohol and tobacco were all reported after a 12-week physical training program.
6. Statistics show that children actively engaged in organized “positive choice” activities such as youth sports are less likely to be involved in self destructive behavior and juvenile crime.
7. Physical activity has been proven to delay the development of high blood pressure and helps reduce blood pressure in adolescents with hypertension.
8. Many studies have shown the benefit of moderate impact activities such as gymnastics has on the development of bone density and prevention of osteoporosis. Plyometric exercises like tumbling and vaulting have been determined by the American College of Sports Medicine to be a safe, beneficial and fun activity for children.
9. Healthy activities like gymnastics keep our kids off the couch and engaged in a healthy lifestyle. Nurturing the enjoyment of movement and motor skill development at an early age will help to promote continued participation in physical activity. Long range, these healthy adults are more likely to be more productive at work, take less sick days and have fewer “on the job” accidents.
10. In addition to all of the above, gymnastics provides children with an opportunity to be with friends and have fun!

For gymnastics meets you will need to be aware of the following things so that you and your gymnast will have a fun meet season:

1. Gymnasts are to wear their team leotards to warm up at the meet.
2. Gymnasts receive deductions off of their routines if non/matching underwear hangs out of their leotard at any time during their routine. Always wear your briefs under your leotard or matching underpants.
3. Compulsory gymnasts may not wear finger/toe nail polish at the meets. They receive deductions for this as well.
4. Gymnasts need to have their hair tied back in matching rubber bands for gymnastics meets. If any hair hangs into their eyes or if they brush at it with their hands at any point during a routine they will receive a deduction. Hair needs to be done prior to arriving at a meet; staff will not do or re-do hair during the meet.
5. Gymnast may not wear glitter in their hair or on their body during a meet, as it is dangerous to others when it comes off and gets on the equipment surfaces (slippery).
6. Gymnasts receive deductions every time they pull on their leotard during a routine.
7. Gymnasts will compete bare foot unless they have gymnastics slippers.
8. Grips may be worn during competition however if wristbands are worn they need to be white.
9. Gymnasts need to wear sports bras that do not hang out of the boundaries of their leotards (deductions).
10. Flash photography is NEVER allowed inside the competition area at any gym at any time. The flash is distracting to other gymnasts who catch it out of the corner of their eye during their stunts. It has been known to cause injuries. You may take pictures without the flash device turned on or videotape.
11. Parents are not permitted to enter the competition floor at any time during a meet and may not call their child over to them.
12. If a parent disagrees with a score you may mention it to your coach the next time they leave the competition floor. The coach may then decide to protest to the meet ref. However it is very unlikely that the score will be changed.
13. Parents are never allowed to approach the meet director/host or judges at gymnastics meets. You need to speak to your coaches and they may approach the meet host/judges.
14. The conduct of the parents at gymnastics meets should always be respectful to everyone there. Fighting, cursing, booing, etc. will not be tolerated. Please demonstrate good sportsmanship to your children.
15. Gymnasts may bring a bag onto the competition floor with them. This may contain a bottle of water, a healthy snack, brush, paper, pencil, good luck charm, grips, etc.

16. Gymnasts are under the direction of their coaches at all times during a gymnastics meet (until after the awards ceremony); they may not leave the competition floor without the coaches' permission.
17. Gymnasts must attend gymnastics for two full weeks prior to gymnastics meets. If a gymnast should miss practice before a meet she may not be prepared and at risk for injury or confusion. We would never want to willingly put your child into either situation and it is up to the discretion of the coaches to make the determination if your child is ready to compete. If the coaches say that your child is not ready to compete, that decision is final. No refund is given due to missed meets.
18. Every effort is made to provide you with meet schedules, and information the minute that we receive it. We send out parent group emails and post them on the Commerce City Teamsideline website. Continuously asking staff if we have received information does not make it arrive any sooner.
19. Gymnasts will not be allowed onto an awards stand to accept an award if they are not wearing their team Leotard.
20. All gymnasts will be charged \$24 (included in your league fees/uniform fee) per meet. \$25 for the state meet. Total of \$121 for league fees.
21. Gate fees will be charged at all meets. Ages 2 and over are \$8 at all regular season meets, \$14 for all day/weekend regular season attendance, and \$12 for regional/state meets, \$18 for all day/weekend attendance. This is due to the fact that it is quite costly for the meet host to run the meet and those fees go towards off setting costs incurred from hosting a meet. There is very limited seating at some of the meets so they may have to wait for one session to exit prior to admitting the next session. If there are spectator limits, those limits need to be upheld due to facility fire codes. To meet limitations childcare for other siblings may be something you would need to work out. Parents are encouraged to sit together at meets and cheer on the kids on our team. Please show team spirit, cheering for the girls does make a difference in their performance. Please encourage your gymnast to have team spirit and cheer for her teammates as well.
22. Do not coach your child. Be there for them emotionally but leave the coaching to us.

Parent Guidelines for Meets

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- Be sure to have your gymnast to the meet site on time...arriving after warm ups have begun puts unnecessary stress on the gymnast.
- Be sure that your gymnast is prepared for the day and has all necessities with HER. It is stated in the CARA Gymnastics Code of Ethics that:

“The team must remain together throughout the entire meet and award Ceremony.”

Your gymnast will not be permitted to come to you for water, snack, hair accessories, etc.

Parent/ Spectator Code of Ethics as stated in the CARA Rulebook

- Encourage your gymnast to do their best.
- Address any questions or concerns about the meet to your coach, not a judge or the meet host.
- Parents/spectators ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE COMPETITION AREA AT ANY TIME FOR ANY REASON (Make sure your gymnast has what she needs for the entire meet)
- Parents/spectators are encouraged to take pictures during the meet and at awards, but flash devices are prohibited.
- Proper behavior toward meet host and judges and other teams is an expectation of our program. Anyone who does not abide may be prevented from continued participation in the CARA gymnastics league and the program that they belong to.

Be a positive role model.

A main objective of CARA Gymnastics is to “develop a strong sense of sportsmanship and fair play in each player.”

State Qualifying Scores

	Vault	Beam	Bars	Floor	All-Around
Level 2	7.0	8.3	8.5	8.3	32.0
Level 3	7.0	6.6	7.2	7.2	28.0
Level 4	7.0	6.6	6.3	7.1	27.0
Optional 1	7.0	6.5	6.5	7.0	27.0
Optional 2	7.5	7.0	7.0	7.5	29.0
Optional 3	8.0	7.5	7.5	8.0	31.0
Optional 4	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.5	33.0
Optional 5	8.8	8.45	8.45	8.8	34.5

Mandate Procedures

Compulsory Gymnasts

- A level 3 compulsory gymnast who scored 34.00 all around twice during the regular season may not compete in level 3 the following season.
- A level 4 compulsory gymnasts who scored 33.00 all around twice during the regular season may not compete in level 4 the following season.

Mandate Procedures Continued

Optional Gymnasts

In order to be mandated to a higher competitive level, a gymnast must fall into at least one of the following categories. Each team is responsible for monitoring and moving their gymnasts throughout the regular season in accordance with the mandate procedure. Any gymnast that has not been moved during the regular season, will be mandated to her appropriate level at the State meet by the league.

***Situation One: Mandate by Event** – In the event that a gymnast, in any assigned optional level, scores equal to or greater than a higher competitive levels qualifying score in 3 events, twice during the regular season, that competitor will be assigned to the higher skill level. This mandate situation does not have to occur in the same meet or congruent meets. If mandated to upper level in at least three events and had qualified all around in lower level they may compete all around in new level.

***Situation Two: Mandate by All Around** – In the event that a gymnast, in an assigned optional level, scores equal to or greater than a higher competitive levels all around regional qualifying score, twice during the regular qualifying season, that competitor will be assigned to the higher skill level.

***Situation Three: Mandate by Level Jump** – If an optional gymnast scores the all around score of two levels above their current level once, they are moved up one level for their next competition. (example: An optional 1 scores the optional 3 all-around score she is automatically advanced to the optional 2 level for her next competition)

***Situation Four: Mandate to Open Division 5** – If an optional gymnast scores the all around score of 34.0 twice in the regular season, they are moved up to optional 5 for the state competition. The three event rule is also applicable to mandating to optional 5. Scores received at the state meet will be combined with scores received through out the season and may mandate an optional gymnast to compete as an O5 for state the following year.

Super 3 & Super 4:

- A level 3 compulsory gymnast who scored 34.00 all around twice during the regular season may not compete in level 3 the following season.
- A level 4 compulsory gymnasts who scored 33.00 all around twice during the regular season may not compete in level 4 the following season.
- Every Girl in the Super Level will automatically qualify for the State meet.
- Any Gymnast that qualifies to the Super Category will not be eligible to compete that level the following season.
- Any Gymnast from the general population that scores a 33 twice INCLUDING State, will not be eligible to compete that level the following season.
- Petition exclusions for extenuating circumstances could always be considered by the League Officers.

There is an \$8 spectator fee for regular season meets for ages 2 and older, \$14 for all day/weekend regular season spectators, and \$12 fee for state competitions, \$18 for all day attendance.

Age Groups/Competitive Fields

The CARA gymnastics league does not have defined age groups at this time. Competitive fields will be created by meet directors at each of the league events. Those fields will have a maximum of 20 competitors in them. At one meet your child may compete as an 8 year old. At the next meet they may compete in the 8-10 year old category or a 7-8 year old category depending on what teams attend that meet and how many athletes that they have at each age.

Commerce City Cougars Gymnastics Team Gym Rules

1. Gymnast arriving early to class may not be on equipment or floor mats unless under the DIRECT supervision of a Commerce City Coach.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – write up.
2. Gymnasts who are waiting in line (during warm up tumbling or on apparatus) may NOT be on any other equipment or perform any tumbling/skills unless directed to by a Commerce City Coach.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and /or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – write up.
3. Gymnast must be ready before class starts. (i.e. hair tied back, bathroom break, and dressed in the appropriate apparel.)
4. Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or call to home
Maximum penalty – write up
5. Gymnast MUST stay with their group at all times (unless otherwise directed by a Commerce City Coach).
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – write up.
6. Gymnast may not have gum, candy or food in the gym and especially while in class.
Minimum penalty – throw it away and/or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – gymnast may be asked to sit out a turn.
7. No gymnast at any time shall lay a hand upon, shove, strike or threaten another gymnast, coach, official, or spectator.
Minimum penalty – gymnast will have parent/guardian pick them up from practice immediately (police may be contacted) and may not return to practice until parent has a meeting with the Recreation Coordinator in charge of the gymnastics program.
Maximum – the gymnast will be removed from the team.
8. No gymnast shall be guilty of obscene language or gestures.
Minimum penalty – parent/guardian will be called.
Maximum penalty – gymnast will be suspended from practice.

9. Gymnasts are expected to be respectful and courteous of other participants, coaches, Commerce City staff and parents.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – write up.
10. No gymnast shall appear on the practice or competition area under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
Minimum penalty – gymnast will have parent/guardian pick them up from practice immediately or police shall be called.
Maximum penalty – the gymnast will be removed from the team.
11. Gymnasts are to have good sportsmanship.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – write up.
12. Gymnast participating in team practice must start and finish practice, unless a Commerce City coach is notified that a gymnast must leave early by a parent/guardian.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or parents will be notified.
Maximum penalty – write up and/or gymnast may be suspended from practice.
13. Gymnast MUST turn cell phones off form the duration of practice or a meet.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning.
Maximum penalty – write up and/or Commerce City coach will confiscate it until the end of practice.
14. Gymnasts are expected to arrive to practice on time and to be picked up promptly after practice.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning.
Maximum penalty – write up.
15. Participants are expected to be registered before the first day of the start of the new session.
Minimum penalty – charged a late registration fee.
Maximum penalty – will not be allowed to participate until registered.
16. Gymnasts having issues outside of the gym MUST leave those issues outside and not bring them to the gym.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning.
Maximum penalty – a meeting with the Recreation Coordinator.
17. Gymnasts are not allowed beyond the front counter area.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning and/or conditioning may be assigned.
Maximum penalty – write up.
18. Gymnasts are to display role model behavior for other participants.
Minimum penalty – verbal warning.
Maximum penalty – write up.

Please note – continued infractions may result in a meeting with the parent/guardian, gymnast, coach and the recreation coordinator to determine further actions. Three of the same infractions may result in the gymnast leaving the team.

Please look on
Commerce City Teamsideline for posted meet schedules, meet results, links to video and music.

Vacations – We understand that people are planning family vacations during the summer months. We think that you and your family should enjoy those times together. It is alright with us if your child does not compete in all four qualifying events. Please take your family vacations anyway. I would avoid the last two weekends in July in case they qualify for state and will be upset not to be able to compete in that meet, but do not let any of the other meets stand in your way of a vacation.