



Top Notch Training Center Gymnastics Parent Handbook

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Introduction

All general rules contained within the Top Notch Training Center Rules & Policies which was attached to your child's enrollment package still apply to our USAG team members.

However, because the USAG program is much more complex than the recreational or preschool programs, the following manual was compiled to provide you the additional information needed to help ensure your child's continued success; and to set the expectations of what it means to be a competitive team member at our gym. We hope that you will share involvement in our team program, our view about gymnastics, and its benefits.

TNT USAG Junior Olympic (JO) Program Intro

TNT's USAG Junior Olympic Program is a highly/ultra-competitive program, and the athletes selected for this program are required to strive to perform to that level at all times.

Gymnastics is one of the greatest overall body conditioning activities your child could experience. Some physical attributes you will find developing in your young gymnast will be strength, flexibility, kinesthetic awareness, muscular control, muscular endurance, coordination, timing, agility, balance, and grace. Some of the mental attributes we hope to help them develop are self-motivation, tenacity, patience, goal setting, courage, and teamwork.

Governing Body

The TNT USAG program is governed by the general rules and policies of USA Gymnastics for the Junior Olympic Program, and additionally the International Gymnastics Federation for the Elite Program. Both of these programs require a significant amount of dedication and determination in order to be successful; not only from the athlete but from the family as well. There is an overwhelming commitment to long practice hours in order for these athletes to reach their full potential.

Who is this program for?

TNT's USAG Junior Olympic Team program is geared towards the athlete who:

- Wants to participate in the sport of gymnastics and progress towards one of two goals:
 - Potential college level gymnastics
 - International Competition
- Is dedicated solely to gymnastics as their sport of choice by the time they reach Level 6 of the JO program. Splitting time with another sport or activity is not available to these athletes simply due to the number of hours required to train at this level of gymnastics and be successful. This includes restrictions on participating in all high school sports, and also any after school activities which may impact the athletes training time.
- Is available to train year-round, without significant breaks in their training.
- Is driven, self-motivated, and determined enough to always compete and train at the highest levels they are capable of.

It is very important to note that although the goal of TNT's Junior Olympic program is for the enrolled athletes to be on a college bound gymnastics path there are no guarantees that the athlete will receive a college scholarship, or even a walk-on position, on a college team simply by participating. The competition is extremely tough for those limited college spots, and typically only the most highly qualified athletes will receive these honors.

TNT USAG JO Program Structure Overview

Developmental Levels

More often than not, the purely recreational athlete who is only coming 1-2 hrs. per week is not prepared for what awaits a team level gymnast. By design, recreational gymnastics programs are meant to be just that – recreational. While they are a great avenue to provide a good source of physical and mental benefits to the student, the curriculum is just not meant to produce competitive gymnasts. JO level 1 and Gym Stars are meant to close that gap and provide the student with the necessary fundamental training needed for competitive gymnastics and to better prepare the family for the road ahead.

Junior Olympic Program

Top Notch offers training for gymnasts to compete throughout the levels in the USAG Junior Olympic (JO) program. These athletes train year-round, and our JO team members train anywhere from 4 to 30+ hours per week depending on their level. Top Notch gymnasts have competed statewide, regionally, and nationally with continual success occurring at every level.



USAG & AAU Compulsory

Levels 1 - 5 are the "Compulsory" levels of competitive USAG gymnastics. Gymnasts assigned to these levels all have the same routines and requirements as every other gymnast at that level. The gymnast must be proficient in the skills necessary to perform the routines which are designed by USA Gymnastics.

These levels are progressive in nature, with each subsequent level building upon the skills required at the previous level; ultimately trying to prepare the athlete for entry into the Optional level program. Competitive opportunities are provided up to and including the Georgia State Championships. The Girl's compulsory competitive season is December through May.

USAG Optional

Xcel Silver, Gold, and Levels 6 through 10 are the "Optional" USAG gymnastics levels. Each event is individually choreographed by the gymnast and coach following USA Gymnastics difficulty requirements for the respective level. Levels 6 - 8 have competitive opportunities up to and including the Regional Championships; Level 9 at the Eastern National Championships; and Level 10 at the National Championships. Girl's Optional competition season is December through as late as the end of May.

International Elite Program

Training to be an International Elite...

While we would all like to believe that our child is the next up and coming future Olympian, it is very important to understand that becoming an elite level gymnast is not for everyone. The Elite gymnast is a very unique type of athlete and is one that is not only very self-driven to be the best at whatever task they take on; but has the mental and physical ability to push beyond normal athlete limits. Before TNT will accept an athlete into the elite training group, a process is followed to discuss the goals, the full scope of the responsibilities, the time & financial requirements, and the sacrifices by both the athlete and the family that will ultimately be made.

We are very selective in this process as progress in this type of training can only be achieved by those who are totally committed and dedicated to this task.

Hopes Division

TNT's Hopes training teams are an upper level basics development program which focuses on athletes who have shown all of the physical & mental capabilities required to train at an accelerated and rigorous pace towards upper level/Elite gymnastics. In gyms across the country, students that are involved in a similar program benefit from specialized training, close monitoring of individual development, and a stronger base of development for future success. Generally, only about 0-2% of TNT athletes working towards the competitive path will be selected for this program.

The Hopes division is meant to provide competitive experience for the potential elite bound athlete in an Elite style competitive environment. These levels also begin to separate the true Elite potential athlete and are used as a talent opportunity and identification program by most gyms training athletes in the Elite bound program. ***IMPORTANT NOTE:*** HOPES athletes are NOT classified as Elite gymnasts, and in order to achieve that title they must qualify as either a Jr. Elite or Sr. Elite level gymnast.

These athletes will compete at various meets based on their progress towards fast-track development requirements at the USAG Head Coach & Program Director's discretion and will be required to "test out" of certain Junior Olympic levels to display proficiency and training determination.

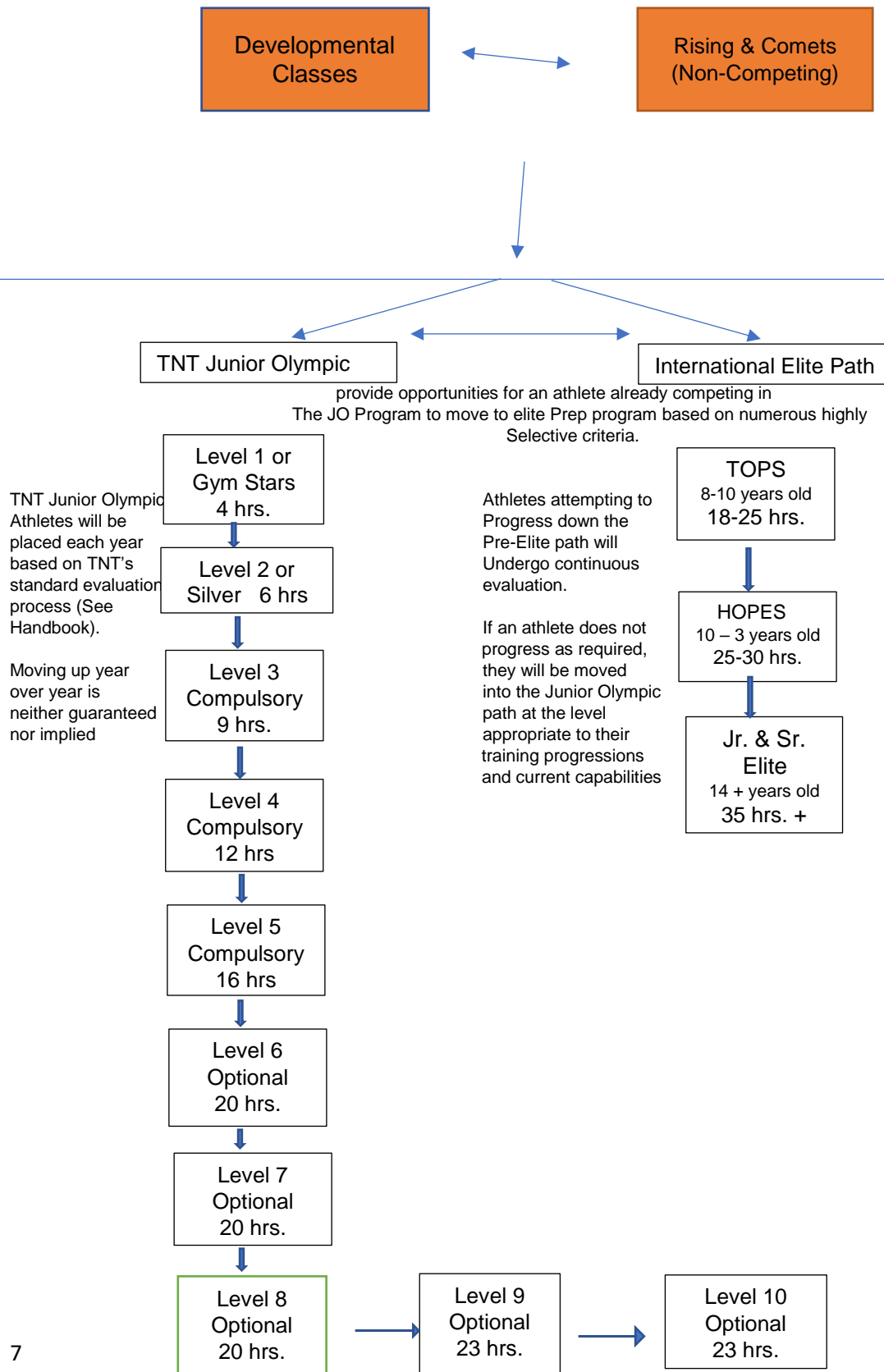
In addition, these athletes will undergo quarterly testing in order to remain on this track.

Jr. and Sr. Elite

The Elite Program is designed to provide competitive experiences for athletes aspiring to the United States National Team. The National Teams (Senior and Junior) are selected from the USA Championships each year, and those athletes represent the United States in international competitions. The Elite competition season is January through as late as September.

Please note that once an athlete qualifies as a Jr or Sr Elite and competes at one of the related national championships, they may no longer compete on the Junior Olympic track.

USAG Junior Olympic & International Elite Gymnast Program Overview



General Rules & Info for the TNT Junior Olympic Team Family

Coach/Gymnast/Parent Triangle

TNT believes that in order for an athlete to be successful, the “triangle” of the coach, the gymnast, and the parent, must operate in harmony. If one of these roles isn’t being fulfilled, the gymnast’s opportunity for success decreases dramatically

Each piece of this partnership triangle has its own responsibility to the success of the athlete:

- **Athlete:** The athlete’s role is relatively simple: Attend practice, follow the coach’s instructions, don’t get distracted, always put forth your best effort, and keep up your grades.
- **Parent:** The parent is the athlete’s support system. Be encouraging, don’t try to be their coach. Reinforce the commitment the athlete has made towards reaching a goal. There will be days they don’t want to come to practice; don’t let them fall into the habit of giving up or avoiding taking responsibility for their actions or commitments. Make sure they are keeping up on all of their responsibilities at home and school – leave the gym corrections to us.
- **Coach/Gym:** Instruct and guide the athlete in their gymnastics career to the best of our ability. Place the athlete in the best position to be successful; not only for the short term but for the long term. Provide a proper plan for the athletes training which is equivalent to their learning curve and physical/mental ability. Hold ourselves, and our athletes, to the highest training standard possible.

The parent has one of the most difficult jobs on the coach/gymnast/parent team because they have the smallest role in actually controlling performance. The combination of a high emotional stake in a child's performance with so little direct control can be extremely stressful!

The most common areas where we see parents “breaking the triangle” is when a parent attempts to “coach” their child. This is the parent that begins to try to make technical corrections on the way a skill is being done or attempts to make decisions on what skills should be in a routine, or feels they know which group their child should be in or gives corrections to their child at a competition or practice. This can cause stress for everyone involved and significantly reduces the effectiveness of this three-part team.

Become the essential link in the training triangle of coach/gymnast/parents.

Your trust in the coaching staff is paramount. Gymnasts need more encouragement at “plateaus” in their skill development. At times when no progress is being made, or at least it seems that way, showing support is the best thing you can do for your child. While encouragement is essential, please refrain from pressuring the child to “outperform” anyone else or to attempt skills which may be beyond their present physical ability and therefore dangerous. Truly believe that we have your daughter's best interest in mind, and we ask you to support the coaching staff during both the good, and the rough, times.

Find out about your gymnast's progress periodically. For a full discussion of your gymnast's progress, make an appointment with the child's coach. If you cannot schedule an appointment, please email the coach for a brief progress report. Advise coaches on adverse situations or stresses the gymnast may be undergoing outside the gym. Should problems arise,

communicate with the coaching staff. We would much rather bring the problems to the surface rather than hear about your discontent through the ever present "gossip grapevine".

Don't be the "Fanatically over-involved parent/family member"

Although these types of families are rare, they do exist and are worth discussing in our opinion as we VERY rarely if ever see an athlete become successful in this sport with this type of influence.

Fanatical sports parents typically have unrealistic expectations and regularly overestimate their children's abilities in the sport regardless of what they might be told from a coaching staff or from their own child. They expect their child to get everything right on the first try, win at every competition, or progress faster than any other child; and ultimately fail to listen to their children's apprehensions and fears.

Part of being a parent obviously involves being interested and concerned in all aspects of a child's life. We know it can be difficult sometimes and go against the grain of parental instincts; but especially in this sport, parents need to allow their children a modicum of independence in order for them to thrive.

Some Danger signs of the over-involved family member:

- Intently observing practice and trying to find fault with how your child is performing
- Learning about gymnastics technique and deductions specifically in an attempt to correct your child
- Constantly comparing your child and their performance to other gymnasts on the team or other teams
- Being worried more about equipment rotation schedules or coach assignments than if your child is progressing and doing what is expected of her at her assigned level.
- Recording every meet or practice and requiring your child to review it at home
- Scouring the internet for scores from other meets to compare it to your child's scores
- Verbally abusing the gym, its coaches, its facilities, yet remaining in the program.

Coaching Staff Decisions

TNT's Coaching Staff has final jurisdiction over any training or competition related decisions. Decisions will be based on the positive growth of the gymnast as well as consideration of any effect on other team members or the gym program.

If you have concerns over a coach decision, any discussion concerning that decision should first be directed to your coach for resolution, and then to the Program Director if you still feel it is unresolved. If you feel it is still unresolved after speaking with the Program Director, please feel free to bring your concerns to a TNT Owner.

Communications & Conflict resolution

We have an open communications policy on our team with gymnasts, parents and coaches, and TNT typically holds a minimum of one to two formal conferences with each gymnast and her parents per year depending on level assigned. Situational or other meetings can be arranged upon request. For specific conflict resolution items:

- Athlete to athlete conflict:
 - Please bring any athlete to athlete conflict to the attention of your child's coach for resolution.
- Athlete to coach conflict:

- o If your child has a coaching issue, the child must talk to the coach that is directly involved. The parent may be present, but the child should discuss the issue with the coach.

If you have already talked to the coach and feel you still need to talk to an owner regarding the situation, you may set up a meeting by contacting an owner or the TNT Front Office directly. However, please note that an owner will typically not discuss issues with parents unless the parents and athlete have already attempted to resolve the situation with the coach directly.

TNT Team Selection and Move-up Process

Memberships on TNT's competitive teams are by TNT selection only, and placement of an athlete into a specific TNT competitive team is at our sole discretion. **How are athletes selected and evaluated?**

1. For gymnasts moving up from our recreational or developmental programs or joining us from another gym: A formal tryout process is required to determine selection, and a subsequent probationary period applies.
2. For gymnasts currently enrolled in one of our teams: The athletes will be constantly evaluated over the entire course of the practice and competition seasons in their current level with regard to possible placement for the following season. Gym management, at their sole discretion, will then select and place athletes into the appropriate levels for the following season based on numerous criteria such as:
 - Skill, ability & potential
 - Self-discipline & personal work habits
 - Self-confidence
 - Peer & Senior Relationship skills
 - Attendance & Commitment
 - Meet Performance
 - Our professional opinion of what is in the athlete's best interest

This list is not all inclusive but is a good indicator of the types of items gym management will always be reviewing on each and every team gymnast in our program. We will make every effort possible to ensure the gymnasts are provided the opportunity to succeed and continue their movement through the competitive levels; however, many criteria are completely dependent on the athletes themselves to work hard, follow direction, and continue to refine their physical and mental abilities.

Important Notes Regarding Team Placement & Progression

- Earning a position on an TNT team does not guarantee a position will continue to be offered the following season; even at the same level.
- Gymnastics is not a sport that gets easier over time; the requirements and commitment only continue to get more and more intense as the gymnast progresses.
- Even though we teach gymnastics in a progressive manner, success at one level may not always directly translate to success at the next for each and every athlete. As such, moving up year over year is not guaranteed, nor implied.
- The athletes will be fully aware of what is expected of them during practice. As a team parent, you will not receive a point by point list of "move up requirements" outlining every

single skill or habit we are looking at. These are instructions the athletes get in practice every day from the coaches, and the athletes know what their assignments/requirements are.

- You will be informed if we have significant concerns over your child's progression, wellbeing, or behavior. However, not receiving one of these discussions should not be construed as proof positive that your child will move up the following year.
- A Program Director, at their sole professional opinion, may choose to move up a limited number of athletes who do not have 100% requirements based on the athlete's overall strengths and potential compared to their weaknesses. This kind of move up will typically be conducted under a probationary contract. Failure to meet the terms of the probationary contract may result in moving the athlete back to their previous level.
- TNT's formal policy is to not allow a parent to influence our decision-making process when reviewing an athlete's level placement. Please bring us your concerns if you have them and we will gladly discuss the matter with you.
- Should progress stall for an unacceptable period of time the athlete may be placed on a different team which better matches their progression level and ability. However, that will not occur without a process having taken place first to attempt to help the athlete through their struggles, and discussions having taken place with the parents.

Key “non-skill related” factors which can impair a gymnast’s progress

Beyond the “skill progression” related items which may prevent an athlete from moving up, there are also a number of typical factors which can impact the athlete from progressing:

Common High Impact Items

1. *Lack of attendance.*
2. *Fear & Mental Blocks*
3. *Strength & Flexibility Issues*

Less Common High Impact Items

1. *“Know it all” approach/stubbornness from the athlete.*
2. *The “fanatically over-involved” family member*
3. *Coach/Athlete conflicts*

Athlete Nutrition

TNT does not promote that a gymnast should “diet” or have a specific “body shape” to be a gymnast. We do not subscribe to the “perfect” gymnast physique philosophy; however, we do highly encourage the athletes to maintain proper nutrition in order to allow their body to perform and recover properly.

Athletes such as gymnasts require optimal nutrition to fuel physical training for athletic performance gains. No one specific nutrition plan or set of foods will be appropriate for all gymnasts, as dietary needs depend on age, height, weight, gender, physical activity levels and existing medical conditions. However, in general, a healthy, well-balanced diet is ideal to maximize energy and recovery needs.

The one steadfast rule that we do have is that TNT athletes should avoid fast foods, soda, and sweets in excess, as there is next to no nutritional value and those “foods” do nothing to fuel their bodies. In addition, TNT highly recommends each individual athlete's family consult with a physician or health professional to determine their athlete's individual health needs. If you need assistance in providing information to the nutritionist about their physical activities in the gym, please see your child's lead coach or an TNT Owner for assistance.

Attendance & Participation Policy

TNT's "official stance" on these topics is relatively simple; if the gymnasts' goals are to be successful in the sport, they need to be at every practice. However, we strongly believe that every case has its own nuances and we request that you come speak with your child's coach, or an TNT owner, if you find yourselves trying to make decisions about this topic.

Attendance Policy

1. Attendance Requirement

a. *Compulsory and Optional Levels:*

i. Pre-Season (June - Nov):

1. Minimum of 80% attendance required

ii. Competition Season (Dec-May):

1. 100% attendance expected
2. 100% for the one week prior to any competition required

b. *Elite Program:*

i. Pre-Season (June-Oct):

1. Minimum of 90% attendance required

ii. Competition Season (Nov-May):

1. 100% attendance expected
2. 100% for the two weeks prior to any competition required

2. Amount of Vacation Time Allowed: All Programs

- a. During times where the athlete is allowed to miss practice (pre-season), the following amount of time off restrictions apply:

i. Pre-Team & Compulsory:

1. No more than two concurrent weeks

ii. Optional & Elite Teams:

1. No more than one week at any given time.

3. Attendance after a travel competition

- a. It is expected that the athlete will set their travel plans such that they will be in attendance at the next scheduled practice, including Monday practices, unless otherwise cleared in advance by the athletes Head Coach.

"In-Season" attendance requirement

This part of the policy applies such that it is our expectation that the athlete is taking a zero-vacation time approach during the stated competitive season timelines; with the exception of the days the gym is closed for holidays or practice is cancelled.

Should your athlete be in a position to not meet these expectations for whatever reason, please discuss this with your team's head coach prior to booking any travel. Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and as long as it doesn't conflict with any other parts of the attendance policy will generally be approved.

Missing practice due to illness

We understand that illness may occur which would affect the athlete's attendance rate (and we don't want them in here if they are contagious/sick!); however, the athlete needs to take care of their bodies to ensure a return to practice as soon as possible.

If your child has constant illness absences, we ask that you do take that into account if attempting to schedule additional time off, as this will just continue to put your child further behind in their training and limit their ability to reach the goals they have set.

If your child will be absent from practice due to illness:

1. Please call the TNT Front Office to notify them of the absence and the reason. It is important that TNT be notified of the reason so that we may track potential illness trends or be aware of any contagious illnesses which could be spread to other athletes.
2. Contagious illnesses will require 24 hours of being fever free before returning to practice.
 - a. For non-contagious illnesses, please consult your child's head coach to determine if returning to practice is ok.

Missing Practice Due to Injury

Despite our best efforts, injuries can happen anytime we involve motion, speed and power. Simply put, everything in gymnastics....

If your child is injured:

- If your gymnast becomes injured, we need you to provide us sufficient information to make decisions regarding your child's continued training.
- Please bring a doctor's note provided by a licensed medical physician. If we still have questions, we may request you to obtain the addition info, or if you so desire, the ability for an TNT owner to talk directly with the physician regarding the injury. While this would be uncommon, it would most likely occur when the athlete is in physical rehabilitation, so we are on the same page as the PT as to what the athlete can, and cannot, do safely if the information provided is vague.

During Rehab:

- Unless the athlete is injured to a point where the physician completely removes them from all physical activity, the athlete is required to discuss a modified practice schedule with their coach to continue performing whatever limited actions are approved by their physician.
- Normally, this modified schedule will be heavy on the flexibility, strength, and visualization efforts. Not stopping "cold turkey" will allow the gymnast to return to event training in a progressive manner immediately after the injury is healed, minimizing the gymnast's training recovery period. If they don't come to practice simply because their wrist is in a cast, the rest of their body will QUICKLY loose gymnastics conditioning and it will be that much harder to come back overall.
- Your best option for us to help your child during the rehab process is to always take a new Return-To-Play form with you to each PT appointment (assuming they are not back to back days), so that we can always have the most up to date info on how to work with your child.

Return to full practice

- Returning to full practice requires an TNT Return-to-Play form completed by an MD removing all limitations.
- Please note that once we receive clearance, depending on the amount of time missed, your child will generally NOT just jump back into doing what they were doing previously, and we will take a gradual approach to their progress. This process will be discussed with you should your child be in this situation.

Missing practice due to Academics

School/Grades must be a priority for the TNT athlete; however so must be attendance and progression at practice. Therefore, if the athlete is to progress down the path of being a college level student-athlete, they must learn to manage their time effectively.

We understand and support that there may be times when pressing school assignments or tests might mean a shortened practice for your child. If your gymnast needs to miss practice, or a portion of practice, to ensure their homework is completed, please let us know as early as possible. If it is a partial practice miss, please coordinate that absence with your child's coach to determine which part of practice is the best for them to miss (i.e. come in early/leave early or come in late/leave on time).

Please note that continuous conflicts between practice and school workload may result in the athlete being removed from the team to manage their school workload as a priority as it is more important overall.

Pre-Approved absences due to academics:

- ACT/SAT Test
- Mandatory academic requirement attendance at an event scheduled outside normal school hours (i.e. if they don't attend, they get a failing grade on coursework).

Missing practice due to family/individual vacation

We understand that "family time" is important. However, we do request that you take into account the commitment your child has made and do ask that you attempt to schedule any family vacations at times of the year which may have the least impact on their training or progression. Should you have any questions over what times may be best, please do not hesitate to speak directly with their Head Coach, or an TNT Owner.

Missing practice due to Spring/Fall/Winter Breaks

If your child's competition season has a typical school vacation time (i.e. Fall Break, Spring Break, Christmas Holiday, etc.), the Junior Olympic Athlete is EXPECTED to be at practice.

If your child wishes to take one of these breaks off, it typically requires some pre-planning on the part of the family, as the time off will typically not be approved for the athlete if they are close or at their attendance percentage requirements or falling behind in their training.

Make-ups due to absences

In general, if a family decision is made to miss scheduled practices:

- Teams do not have scheduled "make-up" days.
- Private lessons are not an acceptable alternative to regular practice.
- Coming in on a day off and joining another level's practice with your coach is generally not an acceptable alternative

- A day missed is a day missed, and the athlete must continue to work forward at their next scheduled practice.

Attendance Policy Infractions

TNT is extremely strict regarding attendance for the team athlete and if an athlete does not meet the attendance requirements, that athlete may be:

- Removed from their assigned level and placed at a level more conducive to their current ability and training level.
- Removed from their next scheduled competition with no refund to the parent for meet entry fees if already paid by TNT.
- Removed from the team entirely due to habitual infractions.
 - Note: Removal from the team for attendance issues does NOT absolve the family of their financial commitment. Please see the financial obligations section contained in this handbook for further details.

Why is our attendance policy so strict?

TNT has this strong attendance policy for three specific reasons: Athlete Safety, Athlete Commitment, and the fact that to reach the goals these athletes are setting it's simply a necessity.

- Gymnastics is an all year, four-season sport, and one that requires the athlete to commit to a certain level of practice in order for them to SAFELY progress.
- When we place an athlete onto one of our teams, we are making a commitment to them that we are going to do everything in our power to have them competition ready at the highest competitive levels. In return, we require that the athlete do everything in their power to have themselves ready to compete at the highest levels.
- By accepting a position on an TNT team, the athlete is also making a commitment to their teammates that they are going to do everything in their power to help the TEAM be successful. In order to follow through on that commitment, the athlete needs to be at practice.
- TNT limits the number of athletes they accept onto any given team, and more often than not your child is being awarded a position on the team over another athlete. As such, they are making a commitment to their club that they will fulfill the responsibilities of the team position which was awarded.
- Workouts are planned for a period of a full year in preparation for competition; similarly, competitions are scheduled for the season in a manner that allows qualification to succeeding levels or meets. Missing any block of workouts or meets **will** put a gymnast out of phase with the rest of their team and could have an adverse effect on their advancement in progress, level, or competition.

Report Cards/Grade Point Average

TNT competitive gymnasts are required to keep a 3.2 or higher GPA (or equivalent if not on a GPA scale) or they will not be permitted to compete and/or practice.

Athletes must turn in their report cards directly to DeShaun Holden at the end of each semester

- Athletes who do not meet these criteria will be placed on probation for the next grading period. If their grades do not show improvement, they will be removed from the team to allow them the time to focus solely on school.

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- Students who are not on a GPA scale at their school (i.e. elementary students, students at alternative schools, etc.) are still required to turn in report cards. Each non-GPA assessed report card will be reviewed based on its own grading scale.

Exclusivity in training

Gymnasts may not train at any other gym, camp, clinic, or open-gym while training/competing and/or representing this facility without prior approval from the TNT Head Coach or a TNT owner.

External Gymnastics Camps

While gymnastics camps “can be” a good way for the athlete to have fun and try new skills, more often than not they are being put through these skills by coaches who have limited experience teaching the skills, by one who does not know how to spot it properly, or by one that may have a significant difference in training philosophy than their coach here at Top Notch which can severely impact progression when they return to practice.

In the past we have approved a group of athletes to go to camp if they 1) are all going to the same camp, and 2) if the camp allows one of our coaches to come work the camp (we do this so we can oversee what is going on with our athletes), and 3) it occurs at a time of the year where it does not affect their preparation for the upcoming season. If you are interested in this possibility, please see an TNT owner for more information and possible coordination.

Open Gym/Practice at different gym

TNT team athletes may not attend an open gym or practice at another gym without the express consent of their current head coach.

This will typically not be approved; however as with most things, there are possible exceptions, so please ensure you inquire with your child’s coach before engaging in this activity.

Tryouts at different gym

No TNT athlete will be allowed to “try-out” at another club while still actively enrolled at TNT without the express consent of an TNT owner. Coaches may not grant this approval.

Should TNT Mgmt. discover that this has occurred; the athlete will be removed from TNT’s competitive rosters ***with no refund or removal of financial responsibility granted to the parent.***

Home Equipment

PLEASE DO NOT PURCHASE HOME EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR CHILD TO “PRACTICE” ON.

The athletes need to learn how to leave their gymnastics at the gym. They are in the gym more than enough; when they are home they need to be a kid, enjoy the time off.

Not only is home equipment one of the biggest causes of athlete injury, but when they work on home equipment without a coach’s instructions they tend to build improper habits which take us a significant time to correct. Although you may think that providing them the home equipment would allow them to “get better” or work ahead, it almost always puts the athlete behind.

Participation in other Sports/Activities

Other Sports/Activities Policy (including school sports/activities)

- ***USAG Compulsory Level Athletes:***
 - **Restrictions:**
 - No restrictions. However, practice attendance requirements still apply, and the athlete may not participate in activities which will impact their ability to attend required practices or competitions.
- ***USAG Optional Level Athletes and ALL Elite bound program levels*** ○
Restrictions:
 - All TNT USAG Optional & Elite bound program athletes are restricted from participation in any other sport, including school sports. Other non-sport activities may be performed that do not impact the athlete's ability to adhere to the attendance requirements.

Skiing/Snowboarding

Skiing/Snowboarding for TNT Gymnasts is viewed in a highly negative light due to the extreme amount of impact a skiing injury can have on the athlete's ability to maintain the level of gymnastics training required.

- ***USAG Pre-Team and Compulsory Level Athletes:***
 - **Restrictions:**
 - No restrictions from Skiing/Snowboarding, but as with other activities their attendance requirements still apply.
- ***USAG Optional Level Athletes and ALL Elite bound program levels*** ○
Restrictions:
 - Restricted from all skiing/snowboarding

Sky Zone or Similar facilities

TNT highly discourages our athletes from participating at events held at locations such as Sky Zone or similar for one simple reason: there are no professional coaches working with them, and the injury rate is extremely significant.

Other Sports Policy General Notes

- TNT's USAG program is a college bound path, which means all efforts must be placed into the on-going goal of becoming a successful Level 10 or Elite gymnast. Colleges simply do not recruit High School gymnasts as the level of gymnastics performed is typically nowhere close to that of a seasoned Level 10.
- When we place an athlete onto one of our teams, we are making a commitment to them that we are going to do everything in our power to have them competition ready at the highest competitive levels. In return, we require that the athlete do everything in their power to have themselves ready to compete at the highest levels of the program.
- Schoolwork is a huge priority for the potential college level athlete. Between the number of hours required between schoolwork and gym practice, there is typically not enough time for

the athlete to successfully participate in any other sport **and** keep up their grades or the skills required to be successful at USAG optional level gymnastics.

Parent/Spectator Viewing Policy

We have learned from past experience that “Window Watching” has negative effects on the athletes, the families, and the gym. We absolutely want you to know what’s going on in the gym, but your child needs the freedom to work and train without an extra “coach” in the spectator area. Therefore, the following spectator viewing policy is in effect for all TNT teams:

Policy

Parent/spectator viewing of practice for all TNT teams (including pre-teams) are restricted to **one day per week, per family**. On days that parents do not choose to view practice, parents of athletes in one of these programs may be in the building no more than 30 minutes after scheduled practice starts, to 30 minutes before scheduled practice ends.

Practice Viewing Etiquette

While within the TNT facility, parents are to refrain from gossip or talking negatively about their own child, another child, a coach, or the gym in general. If this becomes an issue, the individual parent may be restricted from viewing practice at all times.

When your child is at practice, the coaches simply cannot constantly be called over for a discussion. If you need to have a discussion with your child’s coach that will take more than a few minutes, please make sure and schedule that time with the coach so they can provide you the appropriate amount of attention. In addition, interaction between gymnast and parent (visually or verbally) during workouts or at gymnastics competitions is not appropriate. A distracted gymnast is a prime candidate for injury.

Practice/Spectator Viewing Exceptions:

Exceptions may apply if approved by a TNT owner or the TNT Head Coach for:

- Families who drive a significant distance to attend TNT.
- On days that TNT requires a parent to be on site (i.e. Team meetings, Picture days, Team Events, etc.), parents may stay through the evening if they so desire in addition to their regular viewing day.
- If your family has another child enrolled in a preschool or recreational class, you may stay to watch that child's practice.
- Other circumstances as approved on a case-by-case basis.

Practice Schedules

Schedule Policy

Please remember that TNT Team schedules are subject to change at all times and we simply cannot guarantee that this schedule will remain constant throughout the entire timeframe noted. Schedules can change based on numerous criteria such as equipment/rotation space availability, as well as coach availability. When feasible, we will attempt to afford every team family affected by a schedule change an appropriate amount of time to plan for a non-scheduled change, but some circumstances beyond our control may cause an immediate change.

Known schedule changes

At two scheduled times per year, practice schedules will be evaluated and potentially changed:

- **June**
 - Summer hours shift (See note below regarding summer hours)
- **August**
 - Back to school shift

Summer Practice (June/July)

Every team can count on having some practice times moved to the daytime hours during the summer schedule months with all attendance policies still being in effect. If you know your personal schedule will not necessarily allow you to get them to/from the gym during the day in the summer months' practices, please start your planning for other arraignments as soon as possible (i.e. potential carpools, etc.).

Private Lessons

In general, it is our opinion that our athletes all have sufficient practice hours for skill enhancement and achievement; however, situations do arise where a private lesson is warranted.

While you may always inquire with your child's coach about private lessons, our staff has been instructed to only do private lessons for TNT athletes in the below circumstances:

- Short term concentration/corrections on a certain required skill that has eluded the athlete during normal practice.
- Long term scheduled privates for the advanced athlete to work future requirement progressions which they are unable to perform in normal class due to time/curriculum limitations.

Private Lesson Policy

- Private lessons are not an acceptable substitution for regularly scheduled practice.
- Your child must be currently enrolled in a class at TNT
- Your payment account at TNT must be current
- The athlete must be displaying acceptable work ethic during regularly scheduled practices.
- All private lessons must be coordinated and approved through your child's team Lead coach; regardless of which coach you wish to perform the private lesson with (i.e. assistant coach, or coach on another team).
 - Because your child's primary coach works with your child the most, we want to ensure that any training plans the coach has in place with the athlete are not accidentally disrupted by a private lesson with another coach. It is also just a simple matter of courtesy to your child's primary Lead coach.
- The private lesson must be held at a time that does not interfere with normally scheduled practices.
 - **If your private is scheduled at a non-business hour time where there will be no one in the gym but the coach and the athlete, you are required to stay in the gym for the duration of the private lesson.**
- Primary coaches, at their sole discretion, may rescind their approval for a different coach to do privates with the athlete if they feel the private is impacting proper progressions or athlete approach/attitude in normal practice.

- Private lessons, and payment for the lessons, are coordinated directly between the coach and the athlete's parent.

Private lesson payments

Private lessons are outside the normal scope of your tuition and are performed on the individual coach's availability. TNT Coaches set their own private lesson rates. Please see your coach for rate, and payment method preferred (**check or cash only, no Credit Cards accepted for Private Lessons**).

Gifts

Gifts from parent group to athletes

Meet gifts are a great thing for the kids to get, however meet gifts should be kept useful, should be relatively inexpensive, and if food based, should be some type of healthy snack the kids can consume easily during the meet to keep their energy levels up.

- If you are coordinating the gift for your group, make sure that ALL parents that are part of a group for that specific meet are in sync with what the meet gift is, and are willing to donate, BEFORE it is purchased. DO NOT JUST DEPEND ON EMAIL. If you haven't heard a response from a parent in your group regarding the gift, reach out to them or see the front office and we can assist in getting a hold of them.
- Please do not turn this into a program where each parent group is trying to outdo the parent group before them. Our suggestion is that if you wish to do a bigger overall gift, save that one for the State Championships and have everyone participate to keep the overall costs to each family down.

Gifts to Coaches or other TNT Staff

Advance approval from an TNT owner is required before a client family may provide an TNT employee a gift or item worth more than \$25.00 that is not from the entire team (i.e. Holiday gift, end of season, occasional, etc....).

This policy is meant to prevent any appearances of favoritism or impropriety on the part of the coach; however, it is flexible in that giving individual gifts is not prevented. In the event you wish to give an individual gift to an TNT Employee, please discuss the matter with a Top Notch owner to discuss approval and appropriateness prior to gifting or purchasing anything.

Big Sister/Little Sister Program

This program is a mentorship style program run here in the gym. It's an opportunity for the "big" sister to develop leadership skills, and a chance for the "little" sister to have someone they can look up to and also a "go-to" peer that they can confide or ask questions to.

It's also a great way for the gymnasts to get to know each other a little better and to develop new friendships in and out of the gym!

In general, the upper level gymnasts will be paired up with the lower level gymnasts and vice versa. This generally gives the younger girls someone a little older, who may have more gymnastics and competition experience to look up to and ask any questions that they may have. It also allows the more experienced gymnasts to be a mentor to the younger girls. The gymnasts are encouraged to make good luck cards for each other's meets, acknowledge their sister's birthday, and keep in touch with their sister inside the gym.

If you are going to purchase a gift for your child's big/little sister:

- Cap the individual gift price from/for big & little sisters @ something reasonable, around \$15.00 or so.
- Make the gifts meaningful – something both athletes can use to remember their year together tend to be the best type.
- Try to keep purchased gifts to the “big” meets... i.e. Home Meet, First Travel Meet, State

If you are the parent of a “Big” sister:

- Remind your child that they are in a mentorship role. Occasionally ask them if they have talked with their little sister lately!
- This is a support role also; we EXPECT the big sisters to be going to a number of the little sisters meets during the season. AT MINIMUM, they should be there to support them for the home meet, one in season meet, and State.

If you are the parent of a little sister:

- Remind your child that they have someone in the gym that is closer to their age to talk to that has probably been through the same issues if they are having difficulties coping with the intensity or fears that accompany being a competitive gymnast.
- This is a support role also; we EXPECT the little sisters to be going to a number of the big sisters meets during the season. AT MINIMUM, they should be there to support them for the home meet, one in season meet (if within the local Atlanta Area), and State.

Team Publicity Policy

Top Notch Training Center, LLC. and/or its representatives may submit articles, advertisements and/or photographs to newspapers, other publications, the internet, and other news media concerning teams or individual gymnasts from time-to-time. The prime purpose for these submissions is for recognition of team and individual achievements; although, use of these photographs remains unlimited. Individual and family permission for these submittals is inherently granted when an athlete joins our team and the waiver of rights regarding this policy is included in your registration paperwork.

Maintaining Amateur Status & NCAA Eligibility:

In order to maintain USAG eligibility, and potential NCAA eligibility, the athlete is at no time allowed to accept financial compensation for participation on the Top Notch Gymnastics Team or as a result of their participation in Gymnastics. If your child is ever in such position, please bring that to the attention of DeShaun Holden immediately, and prior to entering into any agreement.

Please see Appendix B regarding additional NCAA information regarding planning for the potential college gymnast.

Meet & Competition Specific Items

Team Attire Requirements

All competitive TNT team members are required to purchase certain uniforms and minor personal equipment for the training & competition seasons. All of our athletes are required to wear the same uniforms, as designated by TNT management for the level assigned. Self-purchased uniforms will not be acceptable attire for competition meets, and if the assigned uniform is not purchased, your child will not be allowed to compete.

Costs ranges are provided on your team agreement as an estimate only, as final costs may vary depending on configuration and vendor charges/costs at the time of order. As always, we will work diligently to keep these costs towards the lower estimates by shopping multiple vendors, and by attempting multiple configurations of the uniforms. However, many of these costs are well beyond our control and are subject to the vendors pricing structure (which are all pretty similar).

Fitting and serviceability determination are at the sole discretion of TNT and no guarantee is made as to length of service of any uniform item.

At times, TNT will also facilitate a “gently used” item resale between parents. However, all used items must go through TNT Owners for inspection prior to being accepted for re-sale. Should you choose to purchase an item directly from another parent, you do run the risk of TNT declaring the item unserviceable, or ill-fitting, and being required to purchase an appropriate item.

PLEASE NOTE: FOR PERSONAL BUDGETING PURPOSES, PLEASE PLAN ON PURCHASING A NEW LEOTARD EVERY YEAR BASED ON YOUR CHILDS GROWTH PATTERNS.

TNT USAG JO Team Travel Policies and Procedures

1. From time to time during the year we will be attending competitions outside the state.
 - a. Typically, Optional Gymnasts **will** have 2 in-season travel meets outside the state, and up to 2 post-season travel meets typically outside the state.
 - b. Compulsories may have one in-state, overnight, travel meet, or one travel meet outside the state.
2. Please remember we are traveling to a competition where we have no control over the dates and times. The gym will distribute meet information and host hotel information as soon as we receive it.
3. Gymnast families will make ALL OF THEIR OWN TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS but must have the gymnast at the specified location by the specified time in order for them to compete.
4. No gymnast is allowed to travel to an out of state meet un-chaperoned.
 - a. If you are not traveling to the meet, you are responsible for finding a chaperone for your gymnast. FOR GYM INSURANCE REASONS YOUR CHILD'S COACH CAN NOT BE DESIGNATED AS A CHAPERONE, SO PLEASE DO NOT ASK!
 - b. The chaperone is to be provided with a Medical release form and all pertinent information along with enough money to cover all cost (i.e. Meals, share of hotel room, share in car rental cost and incidental items).
 - c. The gymnast will respect the chaperones advice and guidance.
 - d. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the coach with a list of who is chaperoning whom before the team departs.

- e. Out of town meets are great fun and entertaining; however, it is our expectation that all TNT gymnasts who have attended the travel meet are required to attend at least one other session where our gymnasts are competing to show their support for their gym mates.
 - i. Please Note: Parents are not required to attend multiple sessions, only the athlete. If your travel arrangements do not allow for this, please discuss the matter with your child's coach.
- 5. On overnight meets, TNT gymnasts are not allowed to swim past 6PM on the evening before their scheduled competition. Additionally, we do request that the athletes are in their own room at a decent time and getting a good night sleep.
- 6. Please do not travel into the competition city the day of your child's competition, always plan on arriving the day prior at a minimum.
- 7. Unfortunately, attending travel competitions may require the gymnasts to miss some school time. We highly recommend discussing your child's gymnastics endeavors with their school, teachers, counselors, and principle as to provide them with a better understanding of his/her gymnastics future, as well as to maintain a proper working relationship with them for missed school time. TNT will always attempt to find travel meets which will limit the amount of missed school time, but please realize that there are sometimes numerous factors involved beyond our control in the meet schedule.

“Making lineup” & Scratching Events

All TNT competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. In addition, the gymnast must be in good health and have completed all assignment and attendance requirements to “make the lineup” for a competition.

During the competition season coaches may scratch a gymnast from specific events for a few reasons such as:

- Preparation Related Scratches
 - Missed practices prior to the meet
 - Incomplete assignments prior to the meet
- Safety related scratches
 - The athlete may not be ready to compete that event
 - The athlete has a minor injury that could risk their safety on that event
 - The athlete is showing significant challenges with an event at a meet during warm-ups that are not typical of her performance.
 - Athlete starts having a history of balking on skills during a meet or practice
- Disciplinary action scratches
 - Serious or reoccurring violations of gym rules.

The preparation and safety related items are relatively self-explanatory or have been explained elsewhere within this team handbook; however, please note that scratching after warm-ups is a “meet time decision” for a coach and is not done lightly. If your athlete is scratched at a meet, we will usually be unable to talk to you right away during the meet, but we will follow up with you as soon as possible to make sure you have all of the pertinent information. Scratching an athlete from an event is at the sole discretion of the athlete's coach, or TNT Management.

Scratching as a disciplinary action is very uncommon and is only used for serious, or reoccurring, violations of gym rules. Please note that if the gymnast is suspended from a competition due to poor attendance, incomplete assignments, a poor work ethic, negative attitude, balking, or any other reason, the entry fee is not refundable if it has already been paid. Ultimately, please remember that coaching technique, skill implementation, and athlete discipline are not subject to compromise with parents or the gymnasts. The coaching staff has the final say in all competitive program matters.

Meet etiquette for athletes:

1. Conduct yourself with grace and courage during competition. Accept all scores in a positive manner and learn from any mistakes.
2. Ensure you are in the proper attire, your hair is done appropriately with no unapproved bows/ribbons/etc., and no jewelry on. Your hair cannot be a distraction and may not touch your nose or face. Talk with your coach if you do not understand how your hair needs to be done for a meet.
3. During awards, gymnasts are to pay attention, and also wear their competition leotard and team warm-ups proudly. All gymnasts must be in their warm-ups for awards, which means jackets and pants on with the jacket zipped up.
4. All gymnasts are expected to stay until awards are over.
5. Congratulate members from the opposing teams when they do well; you will probably see many of these gymnasts competing over the years, and quite possibly might develop some new friends along the way!
6. Never leave the meet facility without your parents or guardian.
7. Do not go out to the stands during your competition to socialize with friends and family. Focus your attention on the task at hand – your competition.
8. Never speak in a negative way about another club, coach, gymnast, or judge; If you cannot say anything nice, don't say anything at all. If a situation arises where they are displaying a disrespectful attitude towards you, remove yourself from the situation and inform one of your coaches so they can handle the situation accordingly.

Meet Etiquette for parents/spectators:

It is the philosophy of Top Notch Gymnastics that the coaches, the gym administration, the parents, and the gymnasts are all part of the team and each have their role to play. Having a strong cheering section does wonders for team motivation and gives pride to the team; but as parents you should be aware that as members of Top Notch Gymnastics Team you also represent the gym and your fellow team parents. Listed below are general guidelines for competition situations:

1. Cheering for our team members: Cheer loud and often, but please do so in a courteous manner to the other athletes who may be competing.
2. Cheering for other athletes: Feel free to cheer for fine performances turned in by gymnasts from other teams. This shows great sportsmanship and is an excellent example for us to set not only for our kids, but for other parents/spectators as well.
3. Show your support: Show your support by proudly wearing your TNT spirit wear (t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.)!
4. Negative talk: Never speak in a negative way about our club or athletes, another club, coach, gymnast, or judge while in the stands, at practice, or a meet.
5. Restricted Areas: Under USAG rules the only adults allowed in the competitive area are the judges, those helping run the competition, and USAG professional members. Competitors are not permitted in the stands until after the awards ceremony.

6. Talking to the meet officials: **Under no circumstances** is a parent or gymnast **ever** to approach a judge or meet official before, during, or after competition to comment on, complain about, or even ask about a score. We cannot emphasize this enough, and failure to adhere to this policy can lead to our team being disqualified from the meet.
7. Contacting your gymnast: Please do not contact or talk to your gymnast once they are on the competitive floor, doing so risks not only distracting your child, but risks having our entire team (or the entire meet) disqualified under USAG regulations. If there is an emergency, please contact one of the owners there watching the meet or go to the front counter of the gym hosting the meet to contact your child.
8. Injury Situation: While we know this is a difficult thing to do sometimes, please do not rush out onto the floor if you think your child may have been injured during warm-ups or competition; please wait for your coach to give some indication that you should come into the competition area before doing so.
9. If you will not personally be at the meet:
 - a. Know the name and phone number of the facility where the competition is being held.
 - b. Communicate clearly with your child who is taking and picking them up, where they will pick them up and return him/ her, where they will eat and so on.
 - c. Provide them with an emergency number in case they are not able to reach you directly.
 - d. Send enough money with them to cover meals, snacks, call home, and to contribute for gas if appropriate.

Disciplinary Actions

The procedures noted below are not intended to be all-inclusive; and are presented as an expression of our beliefs as to what disciplinary actions are sometimes necessary and appropriate to deal with specific situations.

Minor Rules Infractions

Items such as general attention lapses, extremely minor discipline issues, and unfinished assignments are to be expected when working with children attempting to learn a sport as difficult as gymnastics. We understand that they are kids and there will be times where, like their teachers at school, we will need to take minor corrective actions to refocus the child. We consider these instances to be fairly common, and we will not generally communicate these disciplinary actions to the parent of the gymnast. The development of the coach/gymnast relationship is paramount, and we cannot run to the parents every time we have a minor issue unless a significant pattern evolves. Those relationships are built on time-shared beliefs in the same gymnastics related dreams and values, work performed together, and the emotional ups and downs that are part of all important ventures. The downs include minor discipline problems, and we will attempt to solve them within the framework of building the gymnast/coach relationship.

1. The gymnast may not be permitted to rotate with their group at the designated time. They will have to stay and finish their work assignment or repeat the entire assignment on a particular piece of equipment.
2. The gymnast may be asked to sit out for a period of time to refocus
3. If balking on a skill is habitual, the gymnast may be given appropriate other gymnastics related items to perform which helps focus his/her attention and build the strength and conditioning to accomplish required skill.

Repeated minor rules infractions

These actions signify a need to work outside the coach and athlete relationship. In this instance we need your help to overcome a challenge that has proven too much for us to accomplish on our own. It does not necessarily mean that we are confronted with a serious problem; It only means that we need your help in expressing the significance of the issue before it turns into a major concern.

1. Parents will be notified of the issue
2. The gymnast may be asked to leave the gym and go home early.
3. The coach may request a meeting with a parent and the gymnast before they are allowed back into practice.

Serious Violations

Serious violations of our rules and policies, either by the gymnast or their parents, require stricter responses by TNT mgmt. These actions are very seldom used and are primarily for times when there is an ongoing problem with disruption and disrespect within the gym that has proven resistant to improvement. While we strive to produce an environment conducive to team work and problem resolution, we will not allow a bad attitude of one person to bring down the spirit and work ethic of an entire group.

1. The gymnast may be suspended from the team for one or more days.
2. The gymnast may be asked to leave the program

Dance Class Disciplinary Actions

If your athlete is on a team which has weekly dance training, this part of the instruction is extremely important, and they only receive it one time a week. Their focus and attention in this class is paramount if they are to be successful at this part of the training. Therefore, Dance class disciplinary actions are very cut and dry:

1. If the Dance instructor has to continuously advise the student that they are not following instructions, or if they are a habitual distraction in class, they will be provided ONE warning by the dance instructor, and the athletes coach will be notified.
2. If during subsequent classes corrective actions are not taken by the athlete, and the dance instructor has to advise them again, they will be removed from class and sent back to their primary coach.
3. IF an athlete is removed from dance class for disciplinary actions, they WILL be suspended from gym for one week. Please note, if they are suspended from practice the week of a meet, that also means they will be scratched from the meet for disciplinary reasons with no refund provided to the parent.

Parent Problem vs. Athlete Problem

It is important to note that, while highly unlikely or uncommon, it is possible that a gymnast will be asked to leave our program because of the actions or inactions of their parents. While we never want to “punish” a child for the parent’s actions, we simply cannot tolerate parents who by their words and actions, continuously do not support the policies and values of our program.

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Financial Obligation & Commitment

Team Tuition, Fees, and Additional Costs

Where are the costs????

All estimated pricing will be listed on your team level information form. This section of the handbook will not outline specific costs, but rather all the information behind the costs and the associated financial policies.

If you have any questions regarding any item listed, please discuss them directly with a TNT owner. Coaches will not be able to answer specific questions regarding these items.

Payment Methods

All team program families are required to participate in the TNT auto-pay program to ensure all required payments for your child's continued participation are received on time by TNT. Please bring any issues or concerns over this policy directly to an TNT owner, as your coach will not be able to assist you with this matter.

Team Auto-Pay Policy

Unless paid prior to the due date via other means, all TNT team charges will be charged to the auto-pay account on file. By accepting the team position, and signing the team agreement, you are committing to the following policy:

- Tuition will always be run on either the 1st or 15th of the month (parent may choose on auto-pay form)

Account Balances

Team accounts must be kept up to date in order for the athlete to maintain their position on the team. If a family issue occurs where an account may get behind for whatever reason, the team family is encouraged to discuss the matter with an TNT owner prior to the account becoming behind to discuss potential options.

Regardless of situation, at no time will an account be allowed to carry charges over from one season to the next.

Late/Overdue Payments

In the event an auto-pay payment is declined by your bank, we will contact you to make you aware. However, overdue accounts will have the following restrictions until the account is paid up to the current amount due:

- a. Disqualify the gymnast from competition, including state or post-season meets.
- b. Gymnasts may not be permitted to attend practice or team functions
- c. Gymnasts will not be permitted to do private lessons.
- d. Habitually late accounts may be asked to leave the gym permanently
- e. The account will be assessed a \$10 late fee

Annual Financial Commitment Requirement

Unlike the recreational program, which does not necessarily require longer than a month-by-month enrollment, you are now making a season-long time and financial commitment.

Team	Tuition & Timeframe Commitment	Competition Dates	# of In-Season Meets	Typical Post Season Meets (Must Qualify)
USAG Compulsory	Selection until end of May following competition season.	Dec to May	4-5	State Championships
USAG Optional	Selection until end of May or final competition of the season (Level Dependent)	Dec to May	5-6	State Championships Regionals (L6-10) Easterns (L9) Nationals (L10)
Hopes/Jr. Elite/ Sr. Elite	Selection until end of May or final competition of the season (Level Dependent)	Competitions Possible During Entire Year	6-15	U.S. Challenge U.S. Classics National Championships

Annual Financial Commitment Exceptions

Financial Obligation & Commitment Exceptions:

The following exceptions apply to the annual commitment policy:

1. If your family moves out of a reasonable distance from TNT due to work related relocation
2. Verifiable loss of work (laid-off, company closes, etc.).
3. If your child is injured DURING SCHEDULED GYMNASTICS PRACTICE, AT A SANCTIONED MEET, OR DURING A SCHEDULED PRIVATE LESSON, and your Doctor's office faxes or emails us a letter/note stating that due to their injury they must permanently (or long term greater than 2 months) discontinue their gymnastics training.
4. Injuries occurring outside of practice, or other events not listed, will be taken under advisement on a case-by-case basis by a TNT Owner.
5. Injuries occurring due to an activity specifically called out in this handbook as a non-approved activity (i.e. skiing/snowboarding, Sky Zone, etc.) will NOT qualify for any financial adjustments.
6. Please note that **only an TNT owner** may waive any commitment fees so unless you request action by bringing the situation to an owner's attention, no fees will be "automatically waived" and you will be charged.

If any of these exceptions apply to your family, please see an TNT owner to discuss options.

Early Drop Penalties

VERY IMPORTANT: Beyond the exceptions listed above, once you accept a position on an TNT team, you are accepting the commitment to pay all costs associated with that particular level regardless of your child's status in the program. This includes if you quit at any point prior to the end of the commitment, or if your child is removed from the team due to disciplinary or attendance issues.

While this policy may seem harsh on the surface, please take the following into consideration:

- Your child has been accepted on the team over another child. TNT routinely has to turn athletes away from spots on our teams.
- MANY of the costs associated with Team Dues and Meet Fees invoices are shared costs across the entire team membership, and the final charge to each family is determined by the number of families we grant spots to on our team.
- We do this to keep the costs as low as possible across the board for all of our team families. Please do not expect those costs to just be assumed by the other parents or the gym should you choose to un-enroll your child prior to the end of the commitment.

Registration Fees

Two required annual registration fees apply to all team gymnasts. Amounts for these fees are listed on your team acceptance letter for reference:

- TNT annual membership fee (due in June each year)
- USAG or AAU Annual Membership Fee

Estimated Team Dues & Meet Fees (TD&MF)

Team Dues & Meet Fees are a separate charge from your monthly tuition and are directly related to the overall costs associated with the gymnast's participating in the competitive meets such as (but not limited to):

- Sample Team Dues item inclusions:
 - Team coach annual background checks
 - Team coach annual USAG Memberships
 - Pre-Season in-house training camp (if applicable)
 - Additional pre-season judging (for entire team, not individuals)
- Sample Meet Fees item inclusions:
 - Athlete Meet Entry
 - Coach Travel/Daily Meet Related Costs (Each item if applicable: Mileage, Parking, Airfare, Lodging, Rental Car, Meals & Incidentals, etc.)
 - Coach Meet Session Fees

Team Dues & Meet Fees will vary from year to year, based on the team size, budget, and number/location of meets the team will attend throughout the season; however, typical ranges and dates are listed on your team acceptance letter for reference.

Please Note: TD&MF PAYMENTS DO NOT COVER ANY ATHLETE/FAMILY TRAVEL

For All JO level 1-10, Gym Stars, Xcel Silver, Gold athletes, your initial TD&MF invoice will cover all meets through the State Championships. For those levels which have possible post-season meets after State, or for Elites, the following sections apply.

Additional Possible Fees for USAG JO meets (Levels 6 through 10)

- Initially billed team dues cover initial entry into a meet for their team session, but do not cover any expenses for additional sessions the athlete may qualify to (i.e. Event finals, etc.); Nor do they cover any Post-State meets such as Regional's, Easterns, or Nationals.

- b. If your gymnast qualifies to one of these meets or additional sessions, you will receive a follow up team due and meet fees invoice to cover any associated costs which will be required to be paid in full before competition
- c. If you are financially unable to meet this obligation it is your responsibility to inform your child's coach, or an TNT owner immediately if you are unable to attend. If you do not inform us prior to us paying for your child's entry, you will still be responsible for the billed costs.
- d. Costs for sending the coaches to these meets are distributed evenly between the families of those athletes who qualified and will attend.
- e. TNT reserves the right to book all coaches travel and set their travel schedule.

Additional Fees for USAG Elite/Pre-Elite Athletes

Prior to Elite qualification, your TD&MF invoice only covers those meets for which you will compete as a USAG JO gymnast. Additional fees will apply for any qualification meets participated in. Once qualified as Elite, your child will be ineligible to compete in any USAG JO meet; therefore, your TD&MF invoice will consist of your Elite meet entries and you would not have a separate invoice.

Additional Team Dues and Meet Fees Policies

- a. TNT strongly encourages all team members compete in all scheduled meets, including all travel meets. If a team member chooses to not compete in a meet, the family will still be responsible for the shared team expenses related to the meet.
- b. TD&MF are part of the annual contract for team membership, and therefore non-refundable with the following exception:
 - 1. If an athlete is injured and excused by Doctor's note from competition, the Meet Fee for the unattended meet will be refunded as long as it has not already been paid by TNT. Once paid to the host club, the meet fee is non-refundable.
 - 2. For families with multiple team level children, team dues and meet fees apply to each child individually; there is no family rate or discount.

Parent “Home Meet Participation” Requirement

All team parents are required to “volunteer” time at the multiple home meets TNT hosts throughout the year.

1. Two options are available for the parent meet participation requirement:
 - a. Buy Out
 - b. Complete the credits.
2. Similar to TD&MF, the credits worked requirement may change year over year, and will be announced around August 1st of each year. The formula which will be utilized to determine the number of hours per family required will be:
 - a. *“Number of hours to complete all required tasks/number of athletes.”*
3. If you have more than one team athlete, you must complete the parent participation requirement hours for EACH athlete.
4. Typically, two meets will be run by TNT (Top Notch Classic, and Top Notch Invitational) which will allow ample opportunity for all families to meet their required hours. Meet participation requirements can be achieved through a variety of tasks, including:
 - a. Gym Setup
 - b. Timer during session
 - c. Computer Scoring Assistant
 - d. Hospitality & Concessions
 - e. Admission
 - f. Awards
 - g. Meet Tear Down
 - h. Other items as needed & published by gym mgmt. depending on the meet.
5. Please note: these requirements must be performed by the parent or adult parent representative with one exception. Gymnasts over the age of 11 may volunteer as Timers.

Mandatory Commitments Chart by level

"X" = required.

Item	Compulsory Teams	Optional Teams	HOPES, Jr/Sr Elite
Annual Tuition Commitment	X	X	X
Annual TNT Membership Fee	X	X	X
Annual USAG Membership Fee	X	X	X
Uniform Expenses	X	X	X
Team Dues & Meet Fees	X	X	X
Possible post season additional Team Dues & Meet Fees	N/A	X	X
Home Meet Working Requirement	X	X	X
Attendance Requirement	X	X	X
Restrictions on outside sports/activities	No, if attendance requirement maintained	X	X
Travel Required	Possible, Yearly Decision	X	X
Auto-Pay Required	X	X	X
Preseason TNT Training Camp Attendance	X	X	X
Grade Point Average requirement	N/A	X	X

Appendix A: Team Gymnast Specific Rules to Follow

The below listed information is for the gymnast; however, the parents are encouraged to review this information with their child and understand it as well.

1. **Respect yourself:** All your efforts should go into building up your abilities. Fuel your body with nutritious food; rest your body with plenty of sleep; protect your body by being safe in the gym; listen to your body when it tells you to stop either because of illness or injury; heal your body when it tells you not to continue; and celebrate your body by making it strong, flexible and powerful enough to do the wonderful things expected of it in this sport.
2. **Respect, but conquer, your fears:** Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult of all sports. You will suffer setbacks, frustration, fear, and defeat. Expect these things, learn from them, face them, and overcome them. Set high goals and achieve them progressively step-by-step. Maintain a positive attitude because it is your attitude that helps you defeat your fears and frustration.
3. **Respect your teammates:** They have their own goals and dreams, but they are also here to help and support you. Cheer for them when they attempt new skills, accomplish skills that are difficult for them, or when they are competing. Accept compliments with a simple "thank you".
4. **Respect Others:** Treat everyone with respect – yourself, teammates, coaches, staff and parents. Be kind to those younger gymnasts who look up to you, and do not think of yourself as better than other gymnasts. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses.
5. **Respect Your Gym:** Always act in a way that shows your respect for yourself and the gym. There is no place in our gym for talking back to coaches or other adults, or crying because

you have given in to your frustrations and fears. Show respect for your safety and the wishes of your coaches by staying off the equipment without the specific permission and supervision of a coach.

6. **Drugs and Alcohol:** NO TEAM MEMBER IS ALLOWED TO USE TOBACCO, ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL DRUGS. Refrain from using all chemical substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. We spend many hours together trying to be the best we can be. All of that work is a complete waste of time if you blow it on drugs or alcohol, and you will be suspended or dismissed from the team if you engage in these inappropriate activities.
7. **Participate in all scheduled practices and competitions:** Please remember you are participating in highly competitive sport. In order for you to work towards the goals YOU have committed to trying to attain, missing a meet due to social engagements is typically unacceptable unless otherwise approved by your coach in advance. Arrive on time and stay until practice is over. Get any taping or other preparations completed before practice begins.
8. **Don't Gossip:** TNT athletes are expected to stop any gossip they may hear, and be committed to not starting or continuing gossip.
9. **You are expected to work hard and to try your best:** This is all that we will ever ask of you and this is always what you should demand of yourself.
10. **Ask permission to leave the gym:** This applies to leaving practice early, going to the restroom, or calling home. The main reason to ask is so that your coach always knows where you are.
11. **Be honest:** Cheating is the ugliest form of disrespect. It shows disrespect to your coaches, to your parents, to your teammates, and most importantly to yourself.
12. **Tell your coach when your body is telling you to stop or slow down:** This shows respect for your personal self and your coach. If you are sick, on medication, or are injured, we need to know, and you need to listen to your body. You *will* have minor aches and pains in this sport, they are relatively unavoidable and are not typically cause for you to skip practice or sit out certain portions of practice. However, pain is the body's way of telling you to stop or that you have gone too far, so for any pain which seems abnormal or "just isn't right", PLEASE SPEAK UP, you are the only one that can tell us what your body is telling you!
13. **NO CELL PHONE USE DURING PRACTICE:** This includes text messaging. If you need to contact your family for any reason, you must ask permission from your coach and use the phones located in the front office. We will not permit you to receive phone calls during practice unless it is a family emergency.
14. **The stereo system in the gym is off limits!** Only coaches are allowed to switch the radio stations. The gym staff will select a radio station that is appropriate for all the gymnasts in the gym.
15. **Cubbies:** Lockers are a privilege and if abused the privilege will be revoked. Food cannot be kept in the cubbie otherwise you risk bringing in the bugs and rodents. Only items needed for gym may be kept in the cubbie; (i.e. Tape, hair clips, deodorant, brush, an extra leotard etc.). These cubbies are Top Notch Training Center. property and can be searched at any time without consent by an TNT Owner, Director, or Coach. Use of the cubbie consents to this search without reservation.
16. **Always wait inside for your ride:** Gymnasts are not to wait outside for pickup following practice.

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Appendix B: College/NCAA Information & Timelines

DeShaun Holden and your child's coach are your primary points of contact regarding college recruiting. Please note that the recruiting process can be very intensive, time consuming, and although we will assist you through the process and are very instrumental from a marketing standpoint – THE BULK OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR GETTING TASKS DONE FALLS ON THE ATHLETE AND THE PARENTS.

Please use the following information as guidelines only and ensure that you are coordinating all college recruiting efforts with the gym to make sure your child is being put in the best position for success. There are an extreme amount of NCAA rules surrounding eligibility, and the last thing any of us wants to do is ruin an athlete's potential for making a team due to the fact their eligibility was compromised.

College Athletics Planning

Athletic scholarships are awarded by a college coaching staff based on their program's needs. In order to put yourself in the best position you can, there are numerous steps to follow to provide you that opportunity.

Some of the key steps are:

- Gymnastics Skill Set Development
- Grades, Grades, Grades
- Timelines
- Planning & Communications/Visibility (Self-Marketing)
- Academics
- Educating yourself on the NCAA Rules

General Timelines

- FRESHMAN YEAR COMPLETED
 - o Evaluate Schools/ What is important to you?
 - o Begin Taping Meets and Practice Sessions
 - o Research colleges of interest
 - o Meet with High School Counselor (about Eligibility Requirements)
 - o Ideally competed first year Level 10 with 10.0 start values on all apparatus
- SOPHOMORE YEAR
 - o Consider what you would like to study in college o Visit College Campuses/Unofficial visits
 - o Upload Video(s) to YouTube
 - o complete questionnaires on college athletics websites
 - o Put together and send out Introductory emails
 - o Check with HS Counselor on your status with core requirements
 - o Work with club to Schedule College Coaches in gym visits (July 15th after 10th grade)
 - o Possible verbal commitment
- JUNIOR YEAR

- Sign up and take standardized tests (ACT SAT)
- Check with HS Counselor on your status with core requirements
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (clearinghouse)
- Update Videos on YouTube
- Continue unofficial visits
- Possible verbal commitment
- SENIOR YEAR
 - Make sure colleges have HS transcripts and test scores on file
 - Take up to 5 Official Visits
 - Commit to a school
 - Sign your NLI (November of Sr. year for early signing, April for regular signing)

Planning

Create a Target List of Schools

Compile a list of schools that you are interested in attending.

- Keep in mind your academic level
- Be realistic about your athletic talent ○ Do you want to compete, or just be on the team? Remember, in college you have to earn a spot in the lineups each and every competition, and on every event. It's completely different from club in this regard.
- Give a lot of thought to your school preferences
 - Always start with a wide range of schools, and then narrow it down as you move along in the process.
 - If your list of schools is too small, your chances of earning a scholarship (or even a spot on a team) will be very low.
 - You should have an idea of the type of school you want to attend (location, size, environment, etc.), the major you want to study, and the type of team you want to be a part of. You will be perceived as a mature and responsible candidate if you are able to describe what you want in a school. If you have no preferences whatsoever, coaches will see you as someone without goals or aspirations.
 - Collect the e-mail addresses and phone numbers for all coaches on your school list. However, do not email the coaches without having either DeShaun Holden or your current coach review the content.

Social Media

We simply cannot emphasize this enough: Facebook, Twitter, etc., are a window into the athlete's personality, thoughts, and habits. Prospective colleges **WILL** look at these items to get a glimpse of the character of the athlete. Get the social media posts under control, don't "friend" random people that post obscene or other questionable posts, keep it clean.

Video

This is a HUGE piece of the puzzle. **DO NOT** post any videos to the athlete's official page that are not approved by TNT; we KNOW what they are looking for and posting a video which doesn't meet requirements can have a significant negative effect on the athlete's recruitability.

Be brief and concise, College coaches typically will not spend more than 5-8 minutes on reviewing any one athlete's documents or videos.

Although some coaches may have some varying requests, in general they want to see:

- 2 best vaults from competition
- Best bar routine from competition
- Best beam routine from competition
- Best floor routine from competition
- Short clips showing other skills the athlete is working in practice

General tips on recruiting videos

- Do not add music to the video, especially not music with explicit language. ○ **DO NOT MAKE THIS A MUSICAL OR THEATRICAL PRODUCTION!!!!**
Remember – short and concise! Don't include video of when they were a kid starting out, all sorts of transitional slides showing them as a "person", birthday parties in the gym, or add in loud obnoxious music to spice up the video.... That is one of the quickest ways to get the coach to move onto the next athlete they are reviewing. They simply don't have time for the theatrics....
- Use a high-quality video if possible. If using iPad, iPhone, etc... Make sure you are filming in landscape format.
- Put the video online so that coaches can see it easily – do NOT mail DVDs to coaches unless they request it. YouTube works best for this. Include a link to that video as a part of your resume.
- Keep videos updated as skill levels progress.

Know the NCAA Rules and Regulations

- Know all the rules that apply to you based on your year in high school.
- Know exactly how coaches can contact you and how you can contact coaches. These sound similar but are two separate rules.
- Read the NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Centers to be cleared for athletic scholarships.
- Research which core courses you must take and the grades you must earn to be academically eligible; then arrange your academic calendar around those requirements.
- Research which exams you must take and the minimum score requirements.

Definitions & General NCAA Rules

- A Prospective Student Athlete (PSA) is any student who has entered the 9th grade. At that point she becomes a PSA and the NCAA Rules kick in.
- Rules governing communication with PSA's are very strict.

NCAA RULES REGARDING Gymnast PSA Contact

	Questionnaires, Camp Information, NCAA Materials and Nonathletic Publications	Recruiting Materials	Electronic Correspondence	Telephone Calls	Off Campus Contact	Official Visits	Evaluations and Contacts
Women's Gymnastics	Anytime	Beginning September 1 of junior year	Beginning September 1 of junior year (includes all forms)	Beginning September 1 of junior year (unlimited)	Beginning July 15 following junior year	Opening day of classes of PSA's senior year	Seven (7) recruiting opportunities (contacts and evaluations combined) per PSA and not more than 3 of the 7 opportunities may be contacts

Contact

A contact is any face-to-face encounter between a prospective student-athlete (PSA) or the PSA's parents, relatives or legal guardian(s) and an institutional staff member or athletics representative during which any dialogue occurs in excess of an exchange of a greeting. Any such face-to-face encounter that is prearranged (e.g., staff member positions himself/herself in a location where contact is possible) or that takes place on the grounds of the PSA's educational institution or at the site of organized competition or practice involving the PSA or the PSA's high school, preparatory school, two-year college or all-star team shall be considered a contact, regardless of whether any conversation occurs. However, an institutional staff member or athletics representative who is approached by a PSA or the PSA's parents, relatives or legal guardian(s) at any location shall not use a contact, provided the encounter was not prearranged and the staff member or athletics representative does not engage in any dialogue in excess of a greeting and takes appropriate steps to immediately terminate the encounter.

Evaluation

Evaluation is any off-campus activity designed to assess the academic qualifications or athletics ability of a PSA, including any visit to a PSA's educational institution (during which no contact occurs) or the observation of a PSA participating in any practice or competition at any site.

Evaluation Days

An evaluation day is defined as one coach engaged in the evaluation of any PSA on one day (12:01 a.m. to midnight); two coaches making evaluations on the same day shall use two evaluation days.

Recruited Prospective Student-Athlete (PSA)

Actions by staff members or athletics representatives that cause a PSA to become a recruited PSA at that institution are:

- a. Providing the PSA with an official visit;
- b. Having an arranged, in-person, off-campus encounter with the PSA or the PSA's parent(s), relatives or legal guardian(s);
- c. Initiating or arranging a telephone contact with the PSA, the PSA's relatives or legal guardian(s) on more than one occasion for the purpose of recruitment; or
- d. Issuing a National Letter of Intent (NLI) or the institution's written offer of athletically related financial aid to the PSA (excluding summer term awards prior to initial full-time enrollment).

Telephone Calls

All electronically transmitted human voice exchange (including videoconferencing and videophones) shall be considered telephone calls. All electronically transmitted correspondence (e.g., electronic mail, Instant Messenger, facsimiles, text messages) shall not be considered telephone calls.

CONTACTS, EVALUATIONS AND TELEPHONE CALLS

Off-Campus Recruiters

An institutional staff member is not permitted to recruit off campus until he or she has been certified on an annual basis as to knowledge of applicable recruiting rules.

Telephone Calls During Conduct of Athletics Contest

Telephone calls to a PSA (or the PSA's relatives or legal guardians) may not be made during the conduct of any of the institution's intercollegiate athletics contests in that sport from the time the institution's team reports on call at the competition site at the direction of the coach until the competition has concluded and the team has been dismissed by the coach.

Telephone Calls - Institutional Staff Members - General Rule

All telephone calls made to PSAs (or the PSAs' parents, legal guardians or coaches) must be made by the head coach or one or more of the assistant coaches who count toward the numerical limitations in that sport.

Visits to a PSA's Educational Institution

Visits to a PSA's educational institution that will occur during that portion of the day when classes are being conducted for all students must receive the approval of the executive officer (or the executive officer's designated representative) of the PSA's educational institution.

Contact at PSA's Practice or Competition Site

Recruiting contact may not be made with a PSA prior to any athletics competition (including a non-institutional, private camp or clinic, but not an institutional camp or clinic) in which the PSA is a participant competition, even if the PSA is on an official or unofficial visit. Contact includes the passing of notes to a PSA by a third party on behalf of an institutional staff member. Contact shall not be made with the PSA as follows:

- a. At any site prior to the contest on the day or days of competition
- b. From the time the PSA reports on call (at the direction of his or her coach or comparable authority) and becomes involved in competition-related activity to the end of the competition even if such competition-related activities are initiated prior to the day or days of competition;
- c. After the competition, including competition that requires more than one day of participation (e.g., a tournament), until the PSA is released by the appropriate institutional authority and departs the dressing and meeting facility; and

- d. Coaching staff members may not send electronic correspondence to a PSA while he or she is on call for competition at the competition site. Coaching staff members may send general correspondence (including electronic correspondence) to a PSA while he or she is on call and not at the competition site or while the PSA is at any location once he or she has been released by the appropriate authority, provided the correspondence is sent directly to a PSA and there is no additional party (e.g., camp employee, coach) involved in disseminating the correspondence.

Visit (Without Contact) to PSA's Educational Institution

A visit (without contact) by a coaching staff member to a PSA's educational institution counts as an evaluation for all PSAs in that sport at that educational institution.

Evaluations Are Sport Specific

The limitations on the number of evaluations are sport specific; therefore, a PSA being earnestly recruited by an institution in more than one sport may be evaluated on the permissible number of occasions in each of those sports during the academic year. Evaluations are counted TNTinst the sport of the coach making the evaluation.

Evaluations in Team Sports

In team sports, an institution shall use an evaluation for each PSA participating in a practice or contest observed by the institution's coach, except for an evaluation that occurs on the same day as permissible contact. An institution's coach who is attending an event in which PSAs from multiple educational institutions participate in drills (e.g., combine) shall use an evaluation only for each PSA participating in the event that the coach observes engaging in the drills.

Evaluations in Individual Sports

An institution's coach who is attending a practice or event in which PSAs from multiple institutions participate in drills (e.g., combine) or competition in an individual sport on a specific day shall use an evaluation only for those participants that the coach observes engaging in practice or competition. The evaluation is not counted for a particular PSA if a contact is made with that PSA during the same day.

Tournament Evaluations

Evaluation during each day of a tournament held during the academic year shall count as a separate evaluation except as follows:

- a. Evaluation of multiple contests in a tournament that occurs on consecutive days (and normally at the same site) shall count as a single evaluation;
- b. Evaluation of multiple contests in a single tier of a tournament (e.g., sectional, district, regional) shall count as a single observation. If a particular tier of a tournament is subdivided into identifiable segments (e.g., conducted on different weekends), evaluation of contests in each identifiable segment counts as a single observation.

Other Multiday Events

Evaluations at a multiple-day event (e.g., jamboree, round robin, showcase) constitute separate evaluations for each day of the event unless the event is conducted in a tournament format in which a winner of the event is determined.

Evaluations/Contact at PSA's Educational Institution

If a coach makes an in-person recruiting contact at a PSA's educational institution, all evaluations (other than observations of athletically related activities) made on that calendar day at the PSA's educational institution shall not count among the permissible number of evaluations for any PSA at that institution in the applicable sport.

Communication After Commitment

The restrictions on the forms and frequency of communication shall no longer apply after: (1) the PSA signs an NLI or the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid; or (2) the institution receives a financial deposit in response to the institution's offer of admission.

Communications/Self-Promoting/Providing Yourself the Best Opportunity

General Communications Notes

- Make sure you always spell and grammar check your emails.
- Respond to every coach that replies to your e-mail.
- BEFORE you communicate with coaches, get familiar with their school and sports programs so you can ask informed questions and explain why you are interested in their school.
- Make sure you are prepared ahead of time for all discussions with a coach. Learn about their most recent season, have answers to questions coaches might ask, and have a list of questions for the coach.
- Never, EVER ignore any e-mails or phone calls from a coach – you never know how your recruiting process will unfold. A school you were not as interested in attending at one point may end up being one of the few options you have to choose from at the end.

How do I Get a College Gymnastics Coach to Evaluate Me?

Gymnastics coaches primarily use video to do initial evaluations of athletes. Only after they have narrowed down their recruiting board will they take the time to see a potential recruit in person. The gym is a key critical part of this process as the restrictions placed between the college and the parent/athlete do not apply to the gym; we can have as much contact with them as needed, and they can also take/return our calls regardless of athlete eligibility timelines/PSA contact rules applicability.

However, please note: we will not just call 100 colleges for you; especially if you are not at a level where you are likely to be recruited. For example, don't ask us to call the #1 ranked team in the country if you are not a consistent JO Level 10 Nationals qualifier placing in the top 10.... This goes back to doing your homework on creating your skill list and being realistic about your talent level.

Getting Scouts and Coaches to Watch You

It is not easy to convince a coach to come see you in person. In order to have a coach make that effort, you need to be a great athlete, provide them with great video and detailed statistics, and be in constant communication with them. Traveling is expensive, and coaches have a low budget allotted for scouting athletes in person.

Update Coaches on Your Progress

One or two responses from coaches doesn't mean that you are guaranteed to be recruited by them, or that you are even a serious candidate. You need to actively follow up with coaches by sending them updates on recent athletic or academic accomplishments. Coaches will typically NOT let you know if they are no longer interested – it is your job to check in with them about your status.

Let Coaches Know Your Schedule

You need to be proactive in letting coaches know exactly what your club team schedule is for major invitational. The key is to already be in contact with a coach and let them know exactly where you will be and see if they will come watch you. Just because you see a coach watching your meet doesn't mean they are watching you.

Start the Process Early

In order for coaches to generally measure an athlete's true potential, it is important to follow them over the course of a few years. You should start contacting coaches as soon as you have highlights and videos from your first Level 10 season (if you are looking at Division 1 schools). By the time you reach your senior year, you will have been in contact with these coaches for more than 3 years and they will know who you are.

This type of commitment and responsibility sets you apart from other athletes. Don't worry if coaches don't respond to your e-mails when you send them your resume as a freshman or sophomore – it's just the first step to gaining name recognition from a coach.

Improve Your Grades

Having a stellar academic background is a huge advantage in the recruiting process. Athletes who meet the minimum qualifications are eligible to receive an academic scholarship that does not count towards the athletic budget of the coach. Meeting the following requirements only makes you eligible for academic scholarship money; it does not guarantee that you will receive it. To receive a scholarship from the academic department, incoming freshman usually need to have a 3.5 GPA, be in the top 20% of their class, and have excellent SAT or ACT scores.

Practice Talking with College Coaches

When speaking to a coach, remember to use proper grammar, and have a clear understanding of exactly what you want the coach to know about you. When writing e-mails, use spell check, and format your e-mails correctly. An e-mail is NOT a text message; you must address the coach properly and sign your name on the bottom. Talk to coaches as if you were interviewing for a job!

Also, have a mature and professional e-mail address – nobody wants to recruit an athlete with the e-mail address with the name *hottiegymnast@email.com* – instead, use something like *Myname@email.com*.

Be enthusiastic when communicating with a coach and study up on their program. Have something to offer to the conversation! How well you communicate is looked at!

Don't Miss Deadlines

Applying to schools and getting a scholarship are two separate processes. You need to fill out an application and get accepted to a school you are interested in attending. Find out when the

application deadlines are during your senior year and plan ahead to make sure you are submitting your application on time.

Also know what the recruiting deadlines are – there are specific signing periods for each sport, and once these signing periods end, you will no longer be able to receive a scholarship. It is also important to register AND be cleared by the NCAA Eligibility Centers so that coaches know you are academically eligible.

How to be most marketable?

Most college gymnasts are required to be able to compete in multiple disciplines. Almost all Division I gymnasts are expected to be competing and placing very well at Level 10 regionals and Nationals.

Academic Requirements for College Athletes

What Are the Academic Eligibility Requirements?

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sets academic minimums for gymnasts, but oftentimes those are not good enough to get into many universities of choice.

NCAA Academic eligibility requirements can be found on the NCAA website at:

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/NCAA/Eligibility/index.html>

Appendix C: Being a TNT Athlete

PLEASE DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD

The successful TNT Athletes Training Philosophy

- **Priority Setting/Self Discipline/Time Management:** Knowing what has to be done to achieve a goal in both Gymnastics and Academically.
- **Self-Motivation:** Not depending on other people for your motivation, and working hard because you want to
- **Respect:** For your teammates, your coaches, your gym, your parents, and yourself.
- **Sportsmanship:** Always playing by the rules, whether we are winning, or losing
- **Dedication:** Doing what it takes to stay focused on your goals
- **Leadership:** ALWAYS setting a good example through your efforts and actions
- **Teamwork & Cooperation:** Supporting teammates through a positive attitude
- **Proper Nutrition:** Maintaining foundations of a healthy lifestyle and fueling the athlete body appropriately.

Qualities of a great TNT athlete

CONFIDENCE: An athlete displays a quiet inner confidence based on preparation, her own and that of her teammates. Confidence is a belief based on your daily work habits and your constant progress. This kind of confidence is contagious within a team and is built as athletes subject themselves to tough challenges and practices and see the value in hard work. These athletes develop a “go for it” mentality, become unafraid of failure, and remain confident in “rough waters”. They prepare hard every day. When success follows, athletes tell you it’s because of the effort they put into preparation.

The non-athlete has a false confidence, not built on preparation but on factors she doesn’t control. Maybe she is blessed with great athleticism. Maybe she thinks that the team will “carry” her. In either event, she does not put the same effort or attention into practices as do the athletes on the team. Having true confidence is a choice.

TEACHABLE SPIRIT: Athletes want to learn and improve. They bring an enthusiasm for “continuous improvement” every day. They know that correction happens because a coach sees potential in them to get better. They have learned to take correction as a compliment and look at correction as an opportunity to improve. The athlete responds to correction with verbal and physical cues that she is listening and learning.

The non-athlete looks at any correction as criticism, and often responds with an excuse. Having a teachable spirit is a choice.

PRIDE: The pride of an athlete is a shared one. It is found in the “shared joy of the inner circle”, a feeling among team members that no one on the outside can understand. Shared pride involves a desire to become as good as possible for yourself and for your group of teammates. It involves unselfishness, and accountability. Team pride is developed in parts of the game that require more effort than skill, where determination is more important than talent. (Example: “optimistic recovery” by everyone when a ball is lost.)

The pride of a non-athlete is self-oriented, often selfish. Such players often develop a “sense of entitlement”, where she thinks athletic skill should guarantee special treatment. Developing the right kind of pride is a choice.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The athlete is responsible and demonstrates it when she takes personal accountability for what happens to her. When things are not going well, she looks at herself first to see where she can act to make a difference. She becomes a problem solver, better able to cope with stress and more likely to persevere when facing difficulties. She realizes that “you are either getting better or you are getting worse”, that if you are not making steady improvement, you are losing ground to those athletes who are.

The non-athlete blames everyone but herself when things do not go well. She often fixes her focus on things she cannot control rather than those she can. Being accountable is a choice.

COMPETITIVE PERSEVERANCE: The athlete and great teams are not deterred by bumps in the road. Since she is committed to continuous improvement, she can recover quickly from a mistake and refuse to remain discouraged. Positive, competitive, persevering athletes are “mentally tough”, a quality that allows an individual to remain confident, enthusiastic and positive. Athletes, who are mentally tough, simply cannot have their spirits broken. They can lose to an opponent ten times and look forward to the next rematch. They welcome challenges and look forward to the toughest competitions as tests of themselves.

A non-athlete is easily discouraged and allows yesterday’s failures and disappointments to interfere with today. Non-athletes are unable to recover quickly from mistakes. Perseverance and positive attitude are a choice.

DISCIPLINE: This is nothing more than focused attention and effort. To be successful individually or collectively, sacrifices involving discipline (“focused attention and effort” are required.) Great athletes not only accept discipline, they embrace it for the benefit of the team. They have the strength of character to overcome temptations and pressures and will do what’s right for their team at the moment of truth. Discipline is exhibited by attentiveness, enthusiasm, sportsmanship, respecting authority and personal responsibility. Because they display “athletic integrity”, disciplined athletes are better teammates. They are reliable and trustworthy, are always there for their teammates. For a team, discipline can be the characteristic that sets them apart and gives them an edge.

The non-athlete chooses self-indulgence (“I’ll do what I want!”) over self-control and only thinks of discipline in terms of punishment. Accepting discipline (“focused attention and effort”) is a positive form of teamwork. It is also a choice.

TEAM FIRST: Teamwork is a rare gift that allows ordinary people to attain extraordinary results. The process of becoming a good teammate is a decision based on attitude, specifically the choice of interdependence over independence. The athlete intentionally puts the needs of the team ahead of herself. She will NEVER LET HER TEAMMATES DOWN. She understands that everyone on a team can have different roles that together can make the team stronger. On a great team all roles have equal value, and great teams are made up of athletes who have given up the quest for individual glory, who willingly and wholeheartedly commit themselves to the team effort. Sports provide many individually satisfying memories, but for the true athlete, nothing can compare with the memories built from being part of something bigger than yourself.

The non-athlete is a selective participant, looking to satisfy her own needs first by being selfish with her effort, attention or behavior. Putting the team first and not letting your teammates down in any situation is a choice.