

River Valley Gymnastics Inc.

Team and Pre-Team

Parent and Athlete Handbook

2020 - 2021 Season



Welcome note from River Valley Gymnastics President.

Welcome to the River Valley Gymnastics Team and Family! We are so happy to have both your athlete and yourself join us. My name is Hayley Foster and I am club President here at River Valley Gymnastics. The club is run by a volunteer board, so I wanted to take some time to introduce them to you and maybe answer any questions you may have regarding contact information of who does what.

My contact information is hayleyg29@hotmail.com

Our Vice President Natasha Kearney organizes all our fundraisers and volunteers so you will be seeing a lot of emails and facebook posts from Natasha with regards to helping out. Natasha can be contacted at natasha.kearney1@hotmail.com

Laurie Markey is our treasurer. Laurie deals with all invoices and monthly payments. Our coaches have nothing to do with any financial part of the club, so please refrain from asking them questions. Laurie can be reached at rvgtreasurer@live.ca

Dawn Wilson is also an assistant to our treasurer.

Katie Leeman is our club secretary.

Sara Pryde is a member at large.

Lynette Emberly is a member at large

Jayne Geddes our head coach/club director also sits on the board.

Our pre team and team handbook outlines all of our policies and procedures for the club.

Our coaching staff are as follows:

Jayne Geddes – Head Coach rivervalleygymnastics@live.ca

Tanya Gurthie - WAG & TG coach and Recreational Director rivervalleygymnasticsinfo@gmail.com

Mireille Cassie – WAG and recreational coach and Grand Falls location supervisor

Allyana Lavoie – WAG and recreational coach at Grand Falls and Florenceville-Bristol

Julia Colborne – WAG and recreational coach in Florenceville-Bristol

Carlie White – Recreational coach in Florenceville-Bristol

Sydney Emberly – Recreational coach in Woodstock

Anna McAllister – Recreational coach in Woodstock

Our website is www.rivervalleygymnastics.ca

You can also find us on Facebook and Instagram.

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1. River Valley Gymnastics Inc.

a. History of River Valley Gymnastics Inc.

River Valley Gymnastics Inc. was formed in 2007 to foster and develop a sustainable gymnastics club that would service the Woodstock, Hartland, Florenceville-Bristol and surrounding areas. Since then membership has spread to Perth-Andover and Grand Falls, as well as surrounding areas in Maine, USA. RVG has and continues to pursue excellence in instruction, organization and communication at all levels.

b. Club Philosophy

River Valley Gymnastics is an athlete centered, coach driven, volunteer supported organization.

c. Club Goals

River Valley Gymnastics is committed to teaching three equally vital goals for youth sport:

1. Fun, Fitness and Fundamentals
2. Confidence, self esteem and life skills through sport
3. How to achieve success at all levels in sport

d. Club Values

River Valley Gymnastics holds the following core values:

1. Holding Paramount the safety and well being of all the athletes
2. Demonstrating respect for all
3. Creating a motivating environment for every gymnast and their family
4. On going commitment to excellence in coaching and quality programming
5. Demonstrating professionalism, enthusiasm and hard work in and out of the gym
6. Building and supporting the River Valley Gymnastics community

f. Club Structure

River Valley Gymnastics operates under a volunteer executive board and the club's Head Coach. It is governed by the policies and procedures of the New Brunswick Gymnastics Association, Gymnastics Canada and the River Valley Gymnastics Constitution and Bylaws. The River Valley Gymnastics Constitution and Bylaws is posted on www.rivervalleygymnastics.ca and a paper copy can be issued upon request to any current board member.

g. Member Volunteer Executive Board

The responsibility of the Executive Board is to ensure, through a limited number of members, that the Club functions in a financially sound manner that fulfills the philosophy and values of the club as well as to help the club reach its goals. Board members meet at least once a month. Any member of the club that is in good standing can request an item be placed on the agenda of a Board meeting by submitting the item in writing, either paper copy or via email, to the President. Agenda items can be submitted only after all communication guidelines have been followed (see section 4 D). The item will then be placed on the agenda of the following Board meeting.

- i. President: Responsible for overseeing the activities of all Board members.
- ii. Vice President: Assistant to the President
- iii. Treasurer: Responsible for monitoring and reporting the financial activities of the Club, payroll and sending out monthly invoices to competitive members.
- iv. Secretary: Responsible for recording and reporting the activities of the Board.
- v. Head Coach/Club Director: Liaison between staff and executive, parents and executive. Responsible for the club's programming and day to day operation of the club.
- vi. 3 Members at Large: Responsible for assisting the executive in activities and decision making.

h. Club Staff

- i. Head Coach: The Head Coach, who also acts as the Club Director, is responsible for working in conjunction with the

executive in operations of the club. The Head Coach is the liaison between the executive and the staff, athletes and parents and will be responsible for all Team and Pre Team communications. The Head Coach is responsible for the technical direction, organization and administration of all programs offered by River Valley Gymnastics. The Head Coach is also the liaison and club representative for all New Brunswick Gymnastics Association matters and will attend all regular NBGA meetings.

ii. Team coaches and Pre-Team coaches: Responsible to the Head Coach for coaching competitive and pre-competitive programs as needed. Responsibilities also include communicating with parents, ensuring safety guidelines are met and reporting to the Head Coach on a regular basis.

iii. Recreational Director: The recreational director is responsible for aiding in the development, supervision and leadership of the recreational coaching team and programs in conjunction with the Head Coach.

iv. Recreational coaches: Recreational coaches are responsible to the Head Coach and the Recreational director for coaching the recreational programs as well as communicating with parents, ensuring safety guidelines are met and reporting to the recreational director on a regular basis.

2. Team and Pre-Team Programs

a. Coaching Philosophy

River Valley Gymnastics' coaching philosophy is to assist all gymnasts in reaching their fullest potential through the best possible instruction in a professional and positive environment of mutual respect. RVG recognizes that our coaches play a critical role in the athletic, as well as the personal, development of the athletes and therefore insists that the RVG staff consistently display personal standards that project a favourable image of the sport by:

- regularly seeking to increase their level of professional training and development,
- treating opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat, and encouraging athletes to act accordingly,
- treating gymnasts with dignity and directing comments to the performance rather than the gymnast,
- ensuring that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, ability and fitness level of each gymnast, and to educate the gymnast as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe gym environment,
- communicate with the gymnast's parents or legal guardians to regularly inform them of their child's development and progress,
- communicating and cooperating with registered medical practitioners and relevant sport specialists in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their gymnasts' medical and psychological conditions or ailments,
- considering the gymnast's future health and well being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured gymnast's ability to continue training,
- encouraging the gymnasts to respect and maintain their equipment and training facility.

River Valley Gymnastics' coaches, Head Coach and Executive Board will not tolerate disrespect on any level inside or outside the gym. This includes, but is not limited to:

Disrespect of a:

- Coach to athlete or Athlete to coach
- Athlete to Athlete
- Parent to athlete or Athlete to parent
- Parent to parent
- Parent to coach or Coach to parent
- Parent, athlete and/or coach to an Executive member or An Executive member to a parent, athlete and/or coach.

b. Discipline

Gymnastics is a very exacting sport that requires athletes to exhibit maturity and behave in a disciplined manner. Everyday our gymnasts are asked to execute difficult skills that imply a certain amount of risk at all levels. In order to maintain safety in the training environment while allowing for progress, coaches must ensure that the gymnasts will conform to rules, follow specific instructions explicitly and not disturb through inappropriate displays of behaviour, both physical and emotional, the concentration of other gymnasts. Therefore, all behaviour in the gym is to be governed by a mutual cooperation and respect between coaches, athletes and parents. However, when a gymnast's conduct or effort in training does not meet the coaches' expectations some disciplinary actions may be taken. This discipline would take form of, in increasing severity;

- sitting out the athlete from the apparatus the group is currently on
- sitting out the athlete from the remainder of training
- notification to parents verbally
- notification to parents with documentation to the executive board
- suspension of privileges such as participating in demonstrations, parades, competition or specific gym equipment.
- suspension of athlete (please be aware that this could be a first step in discipline depending on the severity of offense especially if it is verbal or physical bullying)
- expulsion of athlete

Please Note: If you are called to pick up your child for any reason, ie; illness, injury, negative attitude, any discipline issues, parents are required to make arrangements to have their child picked up in a reasonable time frame. Athletes are not to be left to sit until the end of training waiting.

In the case of inappropriate behaviour on the part of a parent, discipline may take the form of:

- Notification to the Executive Board
- Meeting with the Head Coach and limited access to viewing training
- Meeting with Executive Board and suspension of viewing training and possibly competitions
- Meeting with Executive and expulsion from viewing of training and competitions, and possible expulsion from the club, which would include the expulsion of the athlete.

3. Selection Criteria and Streaming

a. General

The Head Coach, competitive coaches and recreational coaches will determine, through testing and observation, whether a gymnast has, or potentially could have the strength, flexibility, endurance, power, work ethic and coachability necessary to succeed in competitive gymnastics. Potential Team athletes will also be evaluated, through observation and past training experience, whether the gymnast displays the emotional and psychological qualities also needed in order to succeed in competitive gymnastics. This evaluation will include whether the gymnast has, and also to what degree she/he has;

- maturity,
- the ability to develop trust in coaches,
- the ability to handle the discomfort, aches and pain of competitive gymnastics training,
- the desire to learn new skills,
- the desire to work and improve on gymnastics skills,
- the determination to do his/her best,
- a positive training attitude,

- cooperation with coaches and team-mates,
- competitive spirit,
- good sportsmanship,
- seriousness of commitment,
- family support

b. Pre Team

The pre team program is a developmental program designed to enhance natural physical and psychological qualities to prepare young children, in a challenging yet enjoyable environment, for a future as a strong competitive gymnast. Our pre team program is not a continuation of our recreational programs. Children entering the pre team program, and their parents, must understand that their child has been selected to be a part of the streaming process and must commit to attend training sessions to pursue the goal of becoming a potential competitive team gymnast. By no means does this involvement or selection into the pre team program guarantee entry into the competitive team programs. Those that do not show a commitment, improvement and/or no longer demonstrate the potential to be a successful competitive team gymnast will be requested to enter back into the recreational stream. Pre team members will have one full year to acquire and master the competitive skills and routines found in the Junior Olympic level 1 program for women's or the NB Compulsory program for men's, as well as to meet the above qualities. Once an athlete meets the criteria, she/he will be invited to the JO level 1 women's team or the NB Compulsory Men's team. Parents will then be provided with all the necessary information for what it means to be on the team including monthly fees, team attire requirements, competitive parent commitment, competitive fundraising commitment, mandatory competitions and dates. If the parent chooses to no longer continue on the competitive pathway, then the athlete can re-enter the recreational stream at a level that is appropriate for the athlete. If an athlete does not reach the necessary criteria within a year of being a pre team member, she/he will be required to re-enter the recreational stream at a level that is appropriate for the athlete.

c. Competition Team

i. Compulsory Junior Olympic Program – WAG

Girls are selected into this program from the pre team program based on the criteria outlined in the pre team section. The Junior Olympic program was developed with the belief that all athletes, regardless of her potential, must have a solid foundation of basic skills in order to advance safely in competitive gymnastics. Gymnasts advance at a pace that is comfortable, with the possibility of competing in more than one level in one competition season, depending on how quickly she progresses. The developmental levels 1 and 2 are introductory, achievement-oriented programs where the athletes receive a placement ribbon based on the quality of her own performance. Athletes born in 2013 or before can participate in the JO levels 1 and 2. Athletes in the compulsory levels 3, 4 and 5 are ranked based on all the athletes competing in the same level and age range.

- Argo – Born in 2013 to 2011 Level 4 / Born in 2012 to 2011 Level 5
- Tyro – Born in 2010 to 2009
- Novice – Born in 2008 to 2007
- Open – Born in 2006 and before

Levels 3, 4 and 5 are progressive in nature, building upon those skills required at the previous levels. All athletes in levels 1 through 5 compete the same routines, from choreography to skills. Each level increases in complexity and difficulty in the make up of the routines.

ii. NB Compulsory Program – MAG

This newly developed program is specific to New Brunswick only. This program is an entry level into the Men's Provincial Program and is designed to allow boys to have a more comprehensive and successful transition into the competitive stream. This is an achievement oriented program where athletes are awarded placement ribbons based on the quality of his own performance. Athletes are not ranked at this level. This program is open to boys ages 6 years and up.

iii. Optional Junior Olympic Program – WAG

The optional levels include levels 6 to 10. Levels 6 to 10 have choice in skills, provided they meet the requirements outlined for each level. Artistry is a key component in the choreography of each routine. Each level builds on the previous levels.

iv. Canadian Provincial Program – MAG

The boy's provincial program is designed to allow gymnasts to progress from the beginning levels of competitive gymnastics to elite and high performance. Levels 1 and 2 are compulsory levels, along with Elite levels 2, 3, and 4, with the athletes all competing the same routines on each event. Age categories are based on the day of birth. Provincial Levels 3 to 5 are optional levels with the athletes having choice in the skills performed provided they meet the minimum requirements.

v. Competitive Tumbling and Trampoline – TG - Boys and Girls

Competitive TG follows the New Brunswick Gymnastics regional program for the beginner levels which progresses into the Gymnastics Canada Provincial levels. Both recreational and competitive levels all train together in this program. At competitions athletes are ranked in each category. Participants are also able to compete in different levels on each apparatus in TG. For example, an athlete can compete in Level 1 Tumbling, Level 2 Trampoline and Level 3 Double Mini. Athletes are also able to compete one, two or all three events. There is no all around competition in TG unlike in Artistic.

d. Placement into training groups

Generally, athletes will be placed into training groups based on the level he/she will start competing at the beginning of the season. On occasion an athlete may be placed in a group that is not at his/her current competition level. This could be due to early high-performance potential if he/she is placed in a higher group or that there is no room in the next level up group so he/she is needing to remain in the group he/she is currently in. It could also be that an athlete quit and has returned but there is no space in the level group she is competing at. In this case the athlete will be placed in the next appropriate group that has room until space becomes available in the desired group. The Head Coach has the final say in the placement of gymnasts in their respective training groups.

e. Placement into competition level – WAG only

Each category and level of gymnastics competition has certain skill requirements. The score of a routine is arrived at by determining firstly whether the skill requirements have been met by the gymnast and secondly by the form and perfection displayed by the gymnast in the execution of those skills. Accordingly, each gymnast will be placed in the competitive level best suited to her skill level, form, routine quality and maturity. Athletes will need to achieve a minimum standard of competition success before she can be considered to be moved to the next level up.

i. JO 1 and 2 – A minimum of four second place ribbons achieved at a competition.

ii. JO levels 3 to 7 – A minimum All Around score of 36.00 once or a score of 35.00 at two competitions.

iii. JO levels 8 & 9 – A minimum All Around score of 35.00 once or a score of 34.00 at two competitions.

Scores can be used from any competition throughout the season. Scores from the previous season can also be used. Once the minimum standard has been met, the gymnast's coach can request for the Head Coach to test their athlete for the next level up. The testing is as follows:

The athlete must demonstrate 3 routines on each event. A score for each skill in each routine will be awarded points: 1 – Not ready, 2 – Almost ready, 3 – Ready. Scores will be added up and an average of %85 on Bars, Beam and Floor and %75 on Vault will be required in order to be permitted to move up levels. If an athlete meets the criteria then she can move up competition levels and depending on the training group level she is in, she may also be required to change training groups.

Skill assessments will take place throughout August, either formally having the athletes demonstrate routines, or informally watching the athletes while they train. This assessment will be used to place athletes into their Fall training groups. It is wise for parents to find out the training schedule of the next level up in case their child earns a spot in the next level up training group. In October all athletes will participate in a formal skills/routine assessment in the level their coach feels is the appropriate fit. Since there is a lot of learning and improving time between the last competition of the previous season to October of the current season, athletes will not have to have meet the minimum scores in their previous level to be tested in the next level up. Once the first competition has occurred athletes will then need to meet the score criteria as well as the testing criteria in order to move up levels during the competition season. Testing will only be requested by coaches after the minimum competition score has been met and they feel the athlete is ready for the next level. Similarly, if an athlete achieves a score below 29.00 or lower at two consecutive competitions, provided she competed all 4 events, she will automatically be required to move down a level, with the exception of injury or illness. This may also mean a move in training groups.

All gymnasts progress at different rates, according to age, physical growth, maturity, etc...; therefore, not all gymnasts can progress from one level to the next at the same rate. However, even within the same level, each gymnast who trains seriously is certain to progress and experience increased personal success. The Head Coach has the final say in the placement of gymnasts in the respective competition levels.

f. Participation at competitions

i. Individual Participation

A gymnast will be invited to a competition based on such factors as:

- Gymnastics discipline (WAG, MAG or TG) and whether it is included at the competition or not
- Competition level and whether it is included at the competition or not
- Gymnast's preparedness
- Gymnast's physical and emotional health
- Gymnast's training attitude and work ethic
- Gymnast's attendance at training sessions
- Whether it is necessary to attend in order to be able to attend future meets or qualify for Team

NB

Once a gymnast has been invited to attend a meet, it is up to the parents or guardians to decide whether or not he or she attends. However, please ensure that your athlete is attending the right amount of mandatory competitions. Failure to compete at the required mandatory competitions will result in your child having to leave the competition team. Gymnasts will only be exempt from this rule with a physician documented illness or injury that prevents him/her from competing, or for any serious unforeseen circumstance. Parents will be required to provide medical documentation from an appropriate health care provider, ei; doctor, physiotherapist, etc... to the Head Coach prior to the affected competition in order for the registration fee to be reimbursed. This is a policy from the NBGA and therefore RVG, who is required to pay all registration fees in advance of each competition, will not receive

a reimbursement from the host club unless we can provide medical documentation. If a parent fails to provide this on time, there will be no refund issued to the parent, no exceptions.

Generally, a gymnast will not be allowed to participate in a meet if he or she does not attend practices immediately before the meet. Parents will be notified of competitions as much in advance as possible with the registration fee and registration deadline. Registration fees for competitions are due before the competition takes place. Failure to pay the registration fees on time will result in your child being pulled from the competition.

1. Mandatory Competitions

All WAG team members, JO levels 1 to 10, must attend 4 out of the 5 New Brunswick held competitions each season, including the Provincial Championships held in late March or early April. ALL MAG team members are required to attend 3 out of the 4 New Brunswick held competitions each season, including Provincial Championships. All TG athletes must compete at 2 out of 3 of the New Brunswick held competitions each season, including Provincial Championships. All WAG, MAG and TG athletes will also be required to attend any competition RVG hosts throughout the season.

a. Competition dates – Please see Competition Agreement form.

g. Team New Brunswick Selection

One member from each gymnastics club, generally the Head Coach or a coach appointed by the Head Coach will make up each technical committee for the NBGA – WAG, MAG and TG. These committees are the only persons responsible for making the final team selections for both the Atlantic, Eastern and Canadian Championship Teams. Athletes are chosen at the Provincial Championships based on the scores from Provincials and all NB qualifier meet.

The Head Coach will ensure that gymnasts who can qualify for Team NB get all the necessary information as it is made available. Team NB members are announced at the Provincial Championships during the awards ceremony.

i. Atlantic Championships – WAG & MAG

Open to JO Levels 5 and up born in 20010 or before, MAG level 1 and up born in 2010 or before. The selection of gymnasts to represent Team NB at Atlantic Championships will be based on the NB selection criteria set forth by the NBGA women's artistic gymnastics committee and the men's artistic gymnastics committee. This is generally based on:

- Top 3 gymnasts that make the qualifying score at Provincials set by the NBGA WAG / MAG committees in January /February of each season,
- 3 wild card positions. The NBGA WAG & MAG committee will base the wild card selection by looking at the athletes that make the qualifying score at Provincials and a minimum of 2 previous qualifying meets held earlier in the season. Scores are then input to determine which 3 athletes will help the team score the highest all around score possible in order to increase NBs chance at a podium finish.

Atlantics is not a mandatory competition. However, parents will need to make their intentions clear to NBGA via the form provided by the Head Coach in advanced of the Provincial Championships. The form is to be returned, on time, to the Head Coach. Any forms turned in past the deadline will result in the athlete being unable to participate at Atlantics and his/her name will not be on the athlete list at the selection meeting.

ii. Eastern Championships – WAG, MAG and TG

Open to WAG JO levels 7 Tyro and up, MAG Levels 3 and up and TG Levels 1 and up born in 2010 or before (JO Level 7 Argos are not included on the Easterns Roster) The selection of gymnasts to

represent Team NB at the Eastern Championships will be based on the NB selection criteria set forth by the NBGA WAG committee, MAG committee and the TG committee. This is generally based on:

- Top 2 gymnasts that make the qualifying score set forth by the NBGA WAG / MAG / TG committees in January/February of each season,
- 2 wild card positions. The NBGA WAG, MAG and TG committee will base the wild card selection by looking at the athletes that make the qualifying score at Provincials and a minimum of 2 previous qualifying meets held earlier in the season. Scores are then input to determine which 3 athletes will help the team score the highest all around score possible in order to increase NBs chance at a podium finish.

Easterns is not a mandatory competition. However, parents will need to make their intentions clear to NBGA via the form provided by the Head Coach in advanced of the Provincial Championships. The form is to be returned, on time, to the Head Coach. Any forms turned in past the deadline will result in the athlete being unable to participate at Easterns and his/her name will not be on the athlete list at the selection meeting.

iii. Canadian Championships – WAG, MAG and TG

Open to WAG JO Level 9 (born in 2009 – 2007 only), WAG JO Level 10, WAG National Novice, WAG Elite junior and senior, MAG Open, Senior, Junior and novice National levels and TG National level. The selection of gymnasts to represent Team NB at the Canadian Championships will be based on the NB selection criteria set forth by the NBGA WAG committee, MAG committee and the TG committee. This is generally based on:

- Top 2 gymnasts that make the qualifying score set forth by the NBGA WAG / MAG / TG committees in January/February of each season,
- 2 wild card positions. The NBGA WAG, MAG and TG committee will base the wild card selection by looking at the athletes that make the qualifying score at Provincials and a minimum of 2 previous qualifying meets held earlier in the season. The committee will also consider athletes that make a higher than average score on 2 or 3 events that strengthen the areas where the Team is weak, or if the athlete has the potential to medal on an event.

Canadians is not a mandatory competition. However, parents will need to make their intentions clear to NBGA via the form provided by the Head Coach in advanced of the Provincial Championships. The form is to be returned, on time, to the Head Coach. Any forms turned in past the deadline will result in the athlete being unable to participate at Canadians and his/her name will not be on the athlete list at the selection meeting.

f. Team Travel

i. River Valley Gymnastics Team Travel

This includes, but is not limited to, competitions outside of New Brunswick, summer camps, clinics and extra training activities. The selection of a traveling gymnast is based on various factors including:

- Age and category
- The gymnast's need to be exposed to a higher level of competition, judging and/or training.
- The gymnast's need to gain experience as an independent traveler and team member.
- Invitation by the NBGA WAG, MAG or TG committees.
- Gymnast's training history, work ethic, respect for coaches and teammates.

The selection of a gymnast to travel is the sole responsibility of the Head Coach except where designated by the NBGA WAG, MAG or TG committees.

ii. Team New Brunswick Travel

This includes competitions, training camps and clinics an athlete has qualified to attend based on any of the criteria set forth by the WAG, MAG and TG committees. Athletes must agree and follow all Team NB travel rules and policies in order to be permitted to attend and must remain in good standing with RVG and NBGA in order to be permitted and invited to attend future Team NB travel events.

4. Gymnast Guidelines

a. Attire and Appearance

i. For training – Pre-Team and Team

- WAG gymnasts must wear a leotard. Tights are optional. Coaches may from time to time 'ban' the wearing of tights such as a month before competition or certain days of the week in order for the athletes to get comfortable wearing only a leotard. Mid drift bearing leotards are not permitted in the gym – no exceptions. WAG gymnasts are to be bare foot or in gymnastics shoes.
- MAG gymnasts are permitted to wear a singlet or shorts and a t-shirt / tank top. All MAG gymnasts are required to wear a top - no exceptions. MAG gymnasts are also permitted to wear socks for the events that they are required to at competition.
- T&T gymnasts are permitted to wear clothing that is appropriate for gymnastics and easy to move in. T-shirts are acceptable as well as gym shorts, yoga pants, leggings and tank tops that are fitted. Mid drift tops are not permitted in the gym – no exceptions. Gymnasts are to be bare foot or in trampoline shoes.
- All gymnasts are permitted to wear yoga pants, jogging pants and sweat shirts on colder days in the gym. No jeans are permitted.
- No jewelry or watches shall be worn as this constitutes a safety hazard for the gymnast and the coach. Medical bracelets are permitted but should be taped down for training and competitions. Small studded earrings are allowed.
- Hair must be tied up and out of the gymnast's face.

ii. For competitions - Team

All RVG competitive gymnasts are required to obtain and wear a team uniform for competitions as follows, unless otherwise directed:

- Team leotard or singlet, shorts and long pants
- Team track suit
- No jewelry, watches, headbands or face paint shall be worn at competitions or the gymnast will incur a deduction from the Head Judge at the competition. Very small studded earrings are permitted only if the gymnast must wear them.

b. Gym Bag

i. For training – Pre Team and Team

- Hydration – Bring a water bottle – no energy, pop or sports drinks are permitted during training. Water is an athlete's best source of hydration. Children, even gymnasts, do not expend enough electrolytes during practice in order to warrant the need of energy or sports drinks. In fact, they never expend enough to ever warrant the need of energy or sports drinks in their formative years. These drinks will cause more damage with absolutely no upside. Water is what they need, and lots of it.

- Snacks – no junk food is permitted during training. Healthy, energy sustaining snacks are what is needed during training. This means no chocolate, no chips, no granola bars (most of them have chocolate and are held together with syrup), no cookies. Think fresh fruit (bananas, pears, oranges, cherries and apples are the best), good carbs (low fat popcorn, pretzels, crackers, whole grain bread and whole grain pastas), protein (chicken, not McNuggets), fiber (yogurt and granola, vegetables and low-fat cheeses).
 - Extra training attire. Sometimes gymnasts forget their suit. It is good to always have an extra one tucked away in the school bag or gym bag in addition to the one they plan on wearing for training that day. Also, if your gymnast has a locker, he/she could keep that extra suit there.
 - Personal effects such as elastics, deodorant, hair brush, sports tape, ankle braces, tiger paws, etc...
- ii. For Competition - Team
- Grips – it is the gymnast’s responsibility for remembering to bring their own grips to competition. They should take them from the gym on their last day of training before each competition. It is also their responsibility to remember to bring them back to their next day of training following each competition.
 - Snack – gymnasts should pack a small, light and appropriate snack in case. If the snack is not permitted in training, then it is not permitted for competitions. Snack should be easy to eat. Care should be taken not to send a snack that can easily stain, mark or make sticky the leotards, track suits or the gym floor.
 - Bottle of water – gymnasts are not permitted to get anything, including drinks or snacks during the competitions so ensure they have a bottle of water packed in the competition bag.
 - Extra hair elastics, gel, hairspray and clips. No bobby pins.
 - Parents are not permitted to pass anything to their children during the competitions. This includes passing it via a coach, another athlete or competition staff / volunteers. Please ensure everything your child will need, or will potentially need, is packed in their competition bag and that your child is capable of carrying the bag him or herself.
- c. Training expectations and guidelines – Pre Team and Team
- i. Attendance
- Gymnasts are expected to attend every scheduled training session. Gymnasts are expected to not miss practice except for serious reasons and very rarely for social engagements. Gymnasts should inform their respective coach of any planned absence and, if possible, for any unexpected absence via text, phone call or private Facebook message. Do not post absences on the RVG Facebook page. This is not the appropriate forum.
- ii. Punctuality
- Gymnasts should arrive on time for the start of training and be prepared for class. This includes having their training attire on, hair pulled back and jewelry off. Otherwise gymnasts should plan to arrive a few minutes early in order to have time to get ready.
- d. River Valley Gymnastics Gymnast Code of Conduct – Pre Team and Team
- An RVG gymnast always shows respect to coaches, judges, officials, parents and fellow gymnasts.
 - An RVG gymnast follows the instruction of coaches quickly and exactly.
 - An RVG gymnast supports, cheers and encourages teammates during training and at competitions, camps, testing and clinics.
 - An RVG gymnast trains with a determined attitude.

- An RVG gymnast always attempts to do every skill and progression with good form and technique.
- An RVG gymnast always tries to be the best that he/she can be.
- An RVG gymnast takes good care of the Club's equipment and equipment at gym's where RVG is a guest.
- An RVG gymnast takes pride in her Club and makes sure that he/she takes part in keeping the gym clean and tidy.

e. Competition Guidelines - Team

Good sportsmanship is expected from all River Valley gymnasts. No rude or disrespectful language to coaches, officials or athletes will be tolerated. No comments should be made which are meant to distract or demean other competitors.

Specifically, a gymnast cannot leave the competition floor, for any reason, even at the end of the competition, unless she obtains the coaches' and the event head judge's permission. Doing so will result in immediate expulsion from the competition and no awards will be given to the athlete even if he/she earned them.

5. Club Policies and Procedures

a. General – Pre-Team and Team

When a child joins the River Valley Gymnastics Club as a pre-team or team gymnast, the parent or legal guardian of the gymnast in turn makes a considerable commitment of time, energy and finances toward the operations and various functions of the Club.

b. Fees

i. Training fees – Pre-Team and Team:

The Executive Board reviews and establishes the training fees each year before September 1st of each new season. The fee for competitive and pre-team gymnastics is a yearly fee that is divided into 12 months. Scheduled time off and holidays are taken into account when setting fees. Training fees are due at the beginning of each month and can be paid via e-money transfer to rvgtreasurer@live.ca.

1. Exiting the Pre Team or Team Programs:

Athlete's that wish to no longer participate in the Pre-Team or Team Program for any reason at all will be required to provide an 'Exit Letter' to the Head Coach (NOT your child's class coach. However, they can be copied in on the email) via email before the end of the month in which your child wishes to be done. Failure to do so will result in the athlete being billed and being responsible for paying the fee for the following month(s) until a proper 'Exit Letter' is received by the Head Coach. If an athlete wishes to return to the team within an 11-month period he/she will be required to pay a \$50.00 re-entry fee. It may be requested that your child come in for testing depending on how long your child has been absent from the sport. This will help determine which class your child should be placed in to. Placement in a pre team or competitive class after re-entry testing will be based on class availability and the athlete's skill level. There is no re-entry fee for previous competitive athletes that wish to switch disciplines or enter into the recreational stream. There is no re-entry fee for an athlete that has moved away and has moved back or for an athlete that has experienced a prolonged illness requiring him or her to leave the sport (a medical note will be required upon exiting the program). Please be aware that if your child leaves the sport for an extended period of time, 2 months or more, he or she may not be able to begin competing in the same level they exited in, especially if they exited before the summer months of training. A lot can be lost in a small period of time in the sport of gymnastics.

ii. Floor Routines for JO 6 and up – Team:

There is a mandatory fee of \$120.00 plus tax for floor routine choreography. Athletes moving up from the compulsory levels in into the optional program will be required to have an original routine all their own. Those currently in the optional program who have routines can keep their routine for up to two years and then will be eligible for a new routine. A coach may request it or the parent may request it. Routines will be choreographed by the Head Coach. Routines will be done on a one on one basis. Music will be selected by Head Coach (suggestions from athlete and/or parent are welcome) to reflect and highlight the athlete's best qualities as a gymnast and a dancer. Routine choreography will be booked between parent and Head Coach at a mutually convenient time. Athletes will have a minimum of two sessions. The Head Coach will provide ongoing support throughout the season as needed. Please note the fee will be due in full once the parent has confirmed agreement and the first appointment is booked. A lot of work is put in well before the first appointment such as music selection and much of the choreography.

- iii. Team Attire – Team:
All team members are required to purchase the necessary team attire needed for competitions. This includes the team track suit and the team competition outfit.
- iv. New Brunswick Gymnastics Association annual fee: Pre-Team and Team:
NBGA membership and insurance fees are determined by the NBGA and Gymnastics Canada (GCG) and are due with September registration fees. This fee is non-refundable under any circumstance.
- v. Competition registration procedure and fee – Team:
This season you may check off all the competitions you intend having your child participate in. Reminders for final registrations will be sent out and everyone will have one month prior to each competition to either confirm attendance or to confirm nonattendance. This means what you check off on the competition agreement form is not set-in stone, however, if you fail to respond to the appropriate registration email then what you check off on the competition agreement form will be what you are committing to. It is requested that you only respond to the correct email thread for competition registrations – please do not send responses via Facebook, text message, replies to other emails, verbally, or through your child's class coach. It is much too confusing and time consuming to be searching in several different locations to gather competition registrations. It will be the parent's responsibility to ensure that competition registration is properly communicated using the appropriate channels in order to avoid being improperly billed.
- vi. Coaches fees for competitions – Team:
Coaching fees are the cost of sending coaches to competitions. These fees are included on your monthly invoice and reflect only the amount of mandatory competitions your child is required to attend based on his/her discipline. If your child chooses to attend an additional competition in New Brunswick an additional coaches fee of a maximum of \$50 will be charged to your account. If a competition is outside of New Brunswick the coaches fee will not exceed \$75 unless otherwise communicated. Coaches fees will not be reimbursed due to illness or injury as the fees to send coaches remain the same.
- vii. Nonpayment of fees – Pre-Team and Team:
River Valley Gymnastics operates on the 'Pay to Play' premise. Fees must be paid at the first of every month in order for an athlete to be permitted to continue training. If no payment is received by the end of the month, the athlete will be suspended from training until all fees are paid in full. In addition, nonpayment of fees will also prohibit your child from being able to participate in competitions, training camps, clinics and any event that requires a registration fee.
- viii. Injury or extended illness – Pre-Team and Team:

If an athlete experiences a serious injury inside or outside the gym, or illness that a physician requires an extended recovery time of 4 consecutive weeks or more, a 15% discount will be applied to the next month invoice following the athlete's return to training. A note from the Doctor will be required in order to receive this discount. A return to train, and to what extent they can return to training, note from a physiotherapist or physician will also be required before an athlete can resume training. It is expected that after one month, or less, the athlete is able return to some level of training, even with a broken bone, and therefore no further discounts will be given. Exceptional circumstances can be looked at case by case if necessary, such as severe concussions or serious extended illnesses.

c. Communications and concerns – Pre-Team and Team

Coaches are generally available to speak with coaches before or after each class. Parents can book private meetings with coaches. Coaches under the age of 18 years will have the Head Coach present at any private parent meetings. Communication about competitions and RVG events will largely be communicated via monthly newsletter, email, Facebook posts and website by the Head Coach. Should you as a parent have a concern about an aspect of their child's training, development, or behavior in the gym, here are the steps to follow:

- Schedule an appointment for a mutually convenient time with your child's class coach to discuss the concern
- If the matter cannot be resolved with the class coach, or is not appropriate to address with the class coach, then the next step is to schedule an appointment with the Head Coach at a mutually convenient time for both parties.
- If, after the following steps have been followed, you feel the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you are able to contact the secretary of the Executive Board to have this issue discussed at the following Executive meeting. The Executive will not review any concerns unless the above steps have been followed.

d. Canceling and rescheduling of practices – Pre-Team and Team:

Normally, the training schedules of each group will not be changed. However, where it is more desirable or necessary to change the time or date of a training session or sessions, the coaching staff will endeavor to give 5 days' notice of such change. This will be given via paper notice and/or email and will be documented on the club website. Where circumstances are such that 5 days' notice cannot be given the class coach will give notification by phone to each member of the training group. This is NOT for storm cancellations.

If classes are canceled due to holidays or storms coaches are not obligated to make up these classes. If classes are canceled for personal reasons or are unscheduled but not storm related, coaches must do a make-up class.

STORM CANCELLATIONS – storm cancellations will generally be posted on Facebook and the RVG website between 1pm and 2pm. If classes are not canceled there will be no post. However, if there has been no post by 2pm but the weather is showing increasing severity, it is best to check Facebook and/or the website before heading to the gym. If your child takes the bus to the gym and there has not been time to make other arrangements please note there is generally a coach at the gym when cancellations are made. The coach will remain with any athletes at the gym until they are picked up. Please make arrangements to have your child picked up in a reasonable time frame as we want to ensure everyone's safety during inclement weather and driving conditions.

f. Viewing Policy – BOTH PRE TEAM AND TEAM

RVG has a viewing policy that restricts parents, family and friends to being able to view practices only for either to first 20 minutes or last 20 minutes of each training session – no exceptions. This policy is required in order to provide:

- A quiet atmosphere for serious training in the gym,
- Complete focus of the gymnast on the instructions of his or her coach,

- Enforce the feeling that gym time is the gymnast's very own time and responsibility,
- The feeling that gymnasts belong to a team,

The intent of the viewing policy is to strike a balance between

- Giving the coaches and the gymnasts quality training time together,
- Minimize disruptions and distractions in the gym

With this goal in mind, the following requests is made of all parents as to the interpretation of the viewing policy:

- Drop off and pick up of the athlete to be done inside the gym rather than outside the building
- While in the gym, do not attract the child's attention
- Wait until the end of class before engaging in conversation with your child's class coach
- Ensure that your child has everything he or she needs in order to train. This includes their suit and snacks. Please do not interrupt class in order to notify your child that you have brought them their snack. It immediately takes their focus away from training and can lead to lost focus for the remainder of the training session.

Team parents are permitted and encouraged to watch complete training sessions 1 week before a competition in order to help the gymnast prepare for an audience.

g. End of practice pick up policy – Pre-Team and Team:

With the large number of children and other user groups in the gym at any given time, the coaches cannot be responsible for the coming and going of everyone. Parents are to ensure that they come into the gym to pick up their children. The Club does not want children leaving the gym alone, especially at night. This also gives parents a chance to check in with coaches and to network with other pre team and team parents. If you have given permission for your child to go unattended to the park, the pool or the arena the supervising coach must be given notification of this or your child will be unable to leave the gym alone.

h. Fundraising – Pre-Team and Team:

Fundraising is an essential component for any not for profit organization. Becoming a pre team and team member of River Valley Gymnastics will require an increase in the fundraising commitment. Fundraising money is used to purchase new equipment, make repairs to existing equipment and athlete development. Fundraising at RVG has a direct benefit to all of the children involved. For further information on this season's fundraising commitment and fundraising events / dates, please see the Fundraising Commitment Policy and Agreement form at the end of this document. It must be signed and returned with all the documents no later than the date requested.

i. Parent Commitment – Pre-Team and Team:

Parent time commitment is a requirement for all pre team and team athletes. River Valley Gymnastics has numerous events throughout the season that require help and time from its members to ensure that all planned events run smoothly and successfully. For full details on this policy please see the Parent Commitment Policy and Agreement form at the end of this document. It must be signed and returned with all the documents no later than the date requested.

6. Parent Guidelines

a. General – Pre-Team and Team:

The parent of a gymnast should always be supportive and positive in their remarks on the performance and progress of gymnasts. The essence of gymnastics training is for the coach to constantly point out and seek to correct even the smallest of error in form or technique. Gymnasts do not need another source of criticism. Criticism by the parent on certain aspects of training, i.e., bent legs or bent arms, may cause the gymnast to focus on something other than what the coach is trying to accomplish, i.e., stuck landings – no falls. Parents should refrain from making technical comments or suggestions to their child. Those

comments could interfere with the progression sequence the coach is trying to achieve and therefore is very confusing to the athlete.

Parents should encourage and promote healthy eating and sleeping habits appropriate for a competitive athlete who wants optimal training and success in competition. Parents should discourage excess consumption of junk food and fast food, and teach the gymnast to make educated nutritional choices as well as promote healthy sleeping patterns such as going to bed early and not allowing phones and tablets to be taken to bed.

b. For Training- Pre Team and Team

Parents should ensure that the gymnast arrives for training on time and prepared, or a few minutes early so that the gymnast has time to get prepared and ready to start warm-up promptly. We ask that parents please notify their child's class coach, in an appropriate manner, that their child is not able to attend class prior to the start of class in the case of illness or as early as possible in case of planned absences. A parent should not attempt to contact a coach during training time unless there is an emergency. Parents are also encouraged to keep their child home if they are experiencing flu and cold like symptoms in order to help control the spread of illness, especially during the competition season.

i. 'Overuse' injuries / 'training pain'

Due to gymnastics being an impact sport during young athletes growing years, from time to time they will complain of pain. Pain can be caused by tendonitis, muscle tears, small stress fractures, growth plate issues, previous injuries that have not healed properly, etc... This pain can disrupt their training and require a modified training plan. Due to this, if an athlete is complaining of pain consistently for a period of one week with no signs of improvement, parents will be required to book an appointment with a health care professional – this can be a physician, a physiotherapist/chiropractor/massage therapist, etc... (RVG's is a strong supporter of Dr. John Neil and Town Health Solutions). In order to continue with training parents must let the class coach know that an appointment was made and follow up with the results of the appointment. This way coaches can adequately modify training in order to aid in the healing process and not further aggravate the injury or create a new one. If an appointment is not made or communicated to the class coach then we ask that the athlete stay home until the pain has cleared up. The good news is that many of these issues can be cleared up quickly when caught early but only with the support of a proper diagnosis and treatment plan.

c. For competitions - Team

Athletes must arrive at the competition site 15 minutes before the start time of the scheduled warm-up period.

- The parent should not enter the competition area for any reason. This can result in the athlete being expelled from the competition by the Head Judge of the competition.
- The parent should not attempt to contact or speak to their children during the competition as it takes the focus away from the task at hand. Cheering from the stands is definitely permitted.
- Parents should be supportive of all River Valley gymnasts and exhibit good sportsmanship as a spectator.

Where applicable, parents should not leave the competition site with their child until the announcement of Team NB members, regardless if your child is attending or not.

d. Injury or Illness – Pre-Team and Team

If a gymnast should become ill, or injury him or herself during training, the respective coach will assess the situation and depending on the severity of the condition will:

- Elevate and ice the injury if appropriate
- Have the child sit and rest for all or part of a rotation
- Modify the training so that the injured body part is not used, for example, conditioning exercise, flexibility, bar training.

- Notify the parent of the injury and give instructions on care at pick up
- If an injury or illness requires immediate care, the class coach will call the parent to come pick their child up early. The coach will recommend care for an injury or illness, which could consist of home care, a trip to the hospital or Dr's office, depending on the severity.

After an illness or injury, or if a gymnast is taking medication that may affect his or her performance, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the coach of any such condition (for example, an ear infection may affect balance). This will allow the coach to properly modify the training of the gymnast. Parents will have 30 days from the time of an injury that has taken place in the gym or at an NBGA/RVG sanctioned event to make a claim to NBGA. All athletes will be required to have a return to training note from a Doctor if there was a visit to the emergency room or Doctor's office in relation to an injury that has happened inside or outside of the gym.

Please note – crutches will not be allowed in the gym as they pose a danger for tripping and causing further injury.

- i. Injuries that happen during training and RVG sanctioned events – this also includes overuse injuries – YOUR NBGA INSURANCE INFORMATION
Injuries that are acute in nature that happen during RVG sanctioned events such as regular training, camps, clinics, competitions and demonstrations, are eligible for use of your NBGA insurance. Overuse injuries due to gymnastics training are also eligible. Please be aware that you have a maximum of 30 days from injury to submit a claim with the NBGA insurance company Sport NB. RVG is not responsible for making the claim on your behalf nor is the NBGA. Parents can make a claim or inquire about making a claim by using the following link: <http://sportnb.com/en/programs-services/sport-insurance>

e. Parent Code of ethics – Pe-Team and Team:

As parents of River Valley Gymnastics athletes, you are an important part of the overall experience of all people involved here. Parents, athletes and coaches must work together in partnership respecting the roles and responsibilities of each other. In doing so we are all working together to help all the athletes achieve the success they are striving for and deserve. Together we can create the opportunities and support every athlete needs to become the best gymnast he or she can become.

The following code of conduct will help all parents to ensure that everyone is working together as a team and not against each other:

- Parents should work with their child and coach to establish realistic goals and timelines and then support them as they work toward these goals.
- Parents should come early before class or stay late after class to speak with their child's coach. At no time should a parent come in to the training area and expect a coach to leave their group to go to them in order to discuss any issues during training time when a coach is busy coaching. As a parent you would not want your child's coach to stop coaching to have a conversation with a parent that could be done at a time that does not take away from your child's training, so please respect this for everyone else. Parents can also schedule a mutually convenient time with a coach to discuss any issues privately.
- Parents should show respect for their child's coach by acknowledging their expertise, training, knowledge and supporting their decisions on technical issues.
- Parents should encourage their child to always play by the rules. Support RVG teaching that hard work and consistent, honest effort is as important as awards in order to help them learn how to accept the results of competition without undue disappointment. Turn defeat into victory by helping your child focus on the small successes and to keep working toward skill improvement, skill acquisition and consistency in technique, as well as good sportsmanship.
- Parents should never publicly question a judges scoring or coaches' decision. If you have a question or concern, use the appropriate protocols to address them. Parents are also

not permitted to approach judges after a competition to ask about scores, nor should judges volunteer any information. Please ask your child's coach, at an appropriate time, to clarify any judging concerns you may have.

- Parents should always remember that children learn best by example. Applaud good performances whether that child is yours, an RVG athlete or an athlete from another gym. Model respect and courtesy towards other athletes, coaches, parents, competition organizers and judges, and expect the same from your child.

Dr. Alan Goldberg- Peak Performance for Athletes, Coaches and Parents

First, there is absolutely no substitute for hard work. Cutting corners won't ever get you to where you want to go. You have to be willing to consistently step outside your comfort zone whenever you train. You have to be willing to do the sweaty, uncomfortable, inconvenient and often times painful extra things in order to become a champion. Cutting corners and cheating in your training will ensure that you always fall short of your goals. Honestly busting your butt on a daily basis and doing everything possible will ensure that you'll get closer to your goals.

Second, be true to yourself. Follow your values and ethics. Don't compromise who you are for what you think others may want for you. Stick to your beliefs. Do what you think is right. Don't listen to the "experts" if these experts want you to abandon all that you believe in. Don't listen to "your friends" if these individuals demand that you act in a way that compromises your values or quest for excellence.

Third, love what you're doing. You have to have fun to be successful. You have to be in love. You have to be in love with your sport, in love with the challenge, in love with the journey, in love with all the hard work and sacrifice. You have to have a passion for your sport and the pursuit of excellence. Passion will always fuel your efforts and lead you to greatness.

RVG is THE place to BE!

2020-2021

**River Valley Gymnastics 2020-2021 Season
Parent/Gymnast Acknowledgement and Agreement - Handbook**

Both the parents (if applicable) and/or guardian including the gymnast are required to read the 2019 – 2020 Team Handbook before signing this form.

Please check off boxes and sign below:

- I/We have thoroughly read and understand the River Valley Gymnastics Team Handbook.
- I/We have gone over the handbook, with my/our child. We support the philosophy of the River Valley Gymnastics Team. We hereby agree to follow all of the rules, procedures and policies presented in the team handbook.
- I/We understand that if, at any time, we cannot be a supportive and positive force in and outside of the gym and in the life of my/our child and the other children at River Valley Gymnastics we will relinquish our place on the team. Negative talk to other parents outside of the facility, inside the facility may put your child's place on the team in jeopardy.
- I/We understand that if I/we approach a judge or meet official before, during or after any competition to question, comment on, complain about or discuss a score or the judging of a meet I/we are making the decision to remove my/our child from the competition.
- I/We understand that if my child fails to attend the mandatory competitions I/we are making the decision to remove our my/our child from the team.
- I/We understand that as the parent(s) of a River Valley Gymnastics Team member, I/we have agreed to fulfill all of the time and financial obligations such as training fees, registration fees, meet fees, coach's fees, competitive apparel and other obligations related to my/our child's participation.
- I/We have gone over the Gymnast Guidelines, in particular the Gymnast Code of Conduct, with my/our child and have I/we have a clear understanding of what is expected of our child inside and outside of the gym as River Valley Gymnastics Team Members.

Gymnast #1 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Gymnast #2 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Gymnast #3 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian #1 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian #2 Signature: _____ Date: _____

It is important to the success of the program that all members and responsible parties sign this agreement form, so that misunderstandings will be minimized.

Please refer back to this document anytime you have a question about RVG policies or procedures.