Welcome to the Team!!

Head Over Heels Gymnastics would like to welcome your family to our Competition Team. Through this team handbook, we hope to give you more insight into how our Competitive Team program operates and answer many of your questions.

First, and most important, providing a fantastic gymnastics experience is what this club is about. We are here for the young athletes, many who have hopes and dreams of being the best they can be in life and in the sport of gymnastics. We are here to support them in that dream.

To make that dream come alive the gymnast, parents and coaches must function as a TEAM.

After reading this manual, if you have any questions about the program, please ASK!

Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team Philosophy

Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team is meant to give every gymnast an opportunity to excel not only in gymnastics but in life. When properly taught, gymnastics teaches self-esteem, self-motivation, self-discipline, dedication, determination, work ethic, time management, teamwork, team spirit, leadership, sportsmanship, respect for danger, respect for others, poise and grace. When our students are done turning cartwheels, they will have established a base of life skills that will undoubtedly assist them through all of their non-flipping years.

Competition - It is part of our daily lives. We strive to be the best we can be in whatever we do. This competitive spirit, however, must be learned, nurtured and developed. We are committed to fostering the spirit of competition among our young gymnasts. Gymnasts must always remember to be respectful of teammates as well as coaches and portray sportsmanship in competition by playing fair, learning how to deal with failure, and winning graciously.

IMPORTANT REMINDER - Gymnastics excellence means becoming the best you can be individually. Their success is not measured by the trophies on the wall, but by the gifts they receive on their path to personal fulfillment.
Safety

Gymnastics is inherently a very dangerous sport. This fact combined with the high difficulty level many gymnasts at Head Over Heels Gymnastics will achieve only adds to the potential for injury. All parents must be fully aware of the risk involved in the sport of gymnastics. Speed, motion, height, flipping and the difficulty of the skill put our athletes in potentially life-threatening situations on a daily basis.

We at Head Over Heels Gymnastics are very aware of the potential danger and will make every effort to achieve and maintain a safe environment for our athletes. We believe in strength, flexibility and progressions to keep our athletes as safe as possible.

Training Content

In order to understand and appreciate what goes into the development of a competitive gymnast, one must understand exactly what it is we are trying to achieve during training. There are four fundamental areas of development, which need to be addressed during the training: (1) Strength, (2) Flexibility, (3) Skills, (4) Discipline.

(1) Strength Development – As with all sports one objective of the training is to make the difficult look easy. This is much easier to accomplish if the athlete has the strength required to master the skills. In most cases, the stronger the better. This is certainly true of gymnastics. It is also true that strength training can also play a role in the reduction of injuries. Strength development at the beginning or compulsory level focuses on building a base on which to build as the gymnast advances. Sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, running and so on are used to achieve this goal. While it may appear that the gymnasts simply repeat these basic exercises over and over again through the course of the year, in fact there are subtle and at times no so subtle variations in the performance of these exercises. Technique may be changed or improved, the number of repetitions change, resistance is altered, the range of motion is increased, and the athlete is continually challenged to complete his/her assignment.

(2) Flexibility Development – Flexibility development is also critical to the long-term success of the gymnast. Superior flexibility adds to the aesthetic appeal of the performance, allows the athlete to master skills more easily, and plays a role in reducing the frequency and seriousness of injuries.

(3) Skill Development – Skill development falls into two distinct, but related categories: Basics and New Skills. Basics are like the ABC’s of gymnastics. The gymnast uses these ABC’s to compose their gymnastics sequences and routines. If any of these basic building blocks is missing or defective, the entire performance is weakened. These basic skills, the building blocks of the sport, must be continually refined in order to permit the gymnast and his/her coaches to continually improve their performances. That is why we continually review and drill the basics.

(4) Discipline – Just like strength, flexibility and skill development, discipline plays an integral role when training. Training requires discipline from both the coaches and athletes. The coaches must be constantly keeping all athletes focused and training hard in order to allow them to continually improve their performance. Gymnasts must also keep themselves disciplined by forcing themselves to train harder when they get discouraged and keep focused when they get excited. Without discipline, the strength, flexibility and skills do not come.
USAIGC Competitive Program
All of our competitive team gymnasts are members and compete under the rules of the United States Association of Independent Gymnastics Clubs (USAIGC). Please check out their website to learn more information [www.usaigc.com](http://www.usaigc.com). The Competitive Levels are designated by color: Copper 1, Copper 2, Bronze, Bronze Diamond, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Premier. Head Over Heels Gymnasts will have the opportunity to compete in 3-8 competitions each school year and all gymnasts will have the opportunity to compete in local meets. The gymnasts must meet certain requirements to qualify for States, Regionals & Worlds. Please see qualifying requirements and descriptions below.

USAIGC Program at Head Over Heels – How Does It Work??

**Copper 1, Copper 2, Bronze, Bronze Diamond** – Each Competitive Level has routines that are choreographed by the Head Over Heels Coaching Staff. Each gymnast at a level will perform the same routine as the other Head Over Heels gymnasts from the same level. The coaches may modify some of the skills in the routines to highlight the gymnast’s strengths. It is our choice as a gym to have our gymnasts perform the same choreography. You will see other gyms that choose to have each gymnast have their own routines.

**Silver, Gold, Platinum & Premier** – Each Competitive Level has requirements that must be fulfilled. The gymnasts at these levels will have their own individual routines choreographed to fulfill the requirements.

**Level Descriptions**

**Copper 1** – This is the beginning level of competition at Head Over Heels Gymnastics and is the level that gymnasts will move to after completing Pre-Team. All Gymnasts at this level will compete the same routine that is choreographed by Head Over Heels Staff (what we call the “Green” Copper Routine). The gymnasts compete their vault onto a stack of mats and stay only on one bar for their bar routine. They have short beam and floor routines. Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, States & Regional Competitions.

**Copper 2** – This is also an entry level of competition. All Gymnasts at this level will compete one of two routines that are choreographed by Head Over Heels Staff (what we call either the “Green” or “Purple” Copper Routine). The gymnasts compete their vault onto a stack of mats and stay only on one bar for their bar routine. They have short beam and floor routines. After a gymnast competes as a Copper 1 they must move to Copper 2 the next competitive season. Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, States & Regional Competitions.

**Bronze** – This is a beginner/intermediate USAIGC level. All Gymnasts at this level will compete the same routine that is choreographed by Head Over Heels Staff (Bronze Routines). The coaches may modify some skills in the routine to highlight each gymnast’s strengths. The gymnasts will now compete their vault of the Vault Table. They will also use both the low and high bars for their bar routine. The gymnast’s routines on beam and floor will be longer. Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, State, Regional & World Competitions.

**Bronze Diamond** – This is a special designation for Bronze gymnasts at competitions. The routines and requirements are exactly the same as the Bronze Level. If a gymnast attains a certain all around score designated by the USAIGC office two times during the season they will then compete in the Bronze Diamond division at the competitions. Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, State, Regional & World Competitions.

**Silver** – This is an intermediate level. This is the first time a gymnast will get their own routines meeting specific requirements outlined by USAIGC. The gymnast will have their own routines and the difficulty of the requirements increase. Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, State, Regional & World Competitions.

**Gold** – This is an intermediate/advanced optional level. The gymnast will have their own routines and are allowed to do more difficult skills. The gymnast’s individual vault will determine the start value. Along with their requirements on bars, beam & floor they have the opportunity to gain bonus (maximum - 1 tenth). Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, State, Regional & World Competitions.

**Platinum** – This is an advanced level. The gymnast will have their own routines and are allowed to compete any skills with no restrictions. The gymnast's individual vault will determine the start value. Along with their requirements on bars, beam & floor they have the opportunity to gain bonus (maximum - 3 tenths). Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, State, Regional & World Competitions.

**Premier** – This is the highest level in the USAIGC program. This level has their own routines and follows the NCAA rules to prepare the gymnasts to compete in college. Gymnasts in this level will have the opportunity to compete in Local, State, Regional & World Competitions.
Team Placement and Mobility between Levels at Head Over Heels Gymnastics

Our coaches determine the placement of athletes on our team based on their skill level. The gymnast will stay at the same level for the majority of the school year. The gymnasts need to have all of the skills mastered for the next level in order to move up. (*Moving from Copper 1 to Copper 2 is the only exception, please read the section titled “Copper Mobility” below.) Mastery of a skill is determined by doing the skill by themselves on competition equipment.

The mission of Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team is to develop healthy and confident gymnasts. One way in which we can help meet this goal is to place the gymnasts at the level where they can be most successful. This means that every gymast must be able to perform the skills and routines required at a given level comfortably. The skills should not be beyond her ability level.

We like to remind all of our parents and gymnasts that Gymnastics is not the same as school. In school, children move up a grade per year and that is a sign of success. However, that does not apply to gymnastics. Gymnasts should not expect to move up one level per year. Sometimes it can take multiple years to master new skills. With that, gymnasts may compete the same level for multiple years (while continuing to work on mastering the next level skills). Again, the coaches determine the placement of athletes on our team.

With the season ending late in the school year (end of May for Copper, end of June for Bronze & Up), we have decided that we are going to give the gymnasts until the end of October (October 30th) to get their skills for the next level. In order for your gymnast to move to the next level, she must have all of the skills for that level. You will need to see your gymnast’s coach to find out which level you should be registering her for as we get closer to September.

There will be 3 opportunities to move to the next level group:

- If your gymnast has all of the skills for the next level by August 19th, you will then register her for the next level for September. If she does not have all of her skills by that date, you will register her for her current level for September. If she gets all of her skills (by the end of the summer session) to move to a different level, we will transfer her to the new level and adjust any fees as appropriate.
- If your gymnast gets her skills during September, she can move up to the next level group on Oct 1. (If this happens after we have charged cards for Oct tuition, we will transfer her to the new level and adjust any fees as appropriate).
- If your gymnast gets her skills during October, she can move up to the next level group on Nov 1. (If this happens after we have charged cards for Nov tuition, we will transfer her to the new level and adjust any fees as appropriate).

How will we know if our gymnast has all of their skills?

Each gymnast will have a skill card with the required skills for each event listed. The gymnast will have to successfully perform the required skills at 3 different workouts. The coaches will record the date each time they successfully perform the skill. When they have 3 dates on their skill card, it is then considered that they “have that skill.” Once the skill card is complete, the gymnast will know that she is ready to move up. Please feel free to check in with your coach once in a while to check on your gymnast’s progress.

**Copper Mobility** – Copper 1 is the beginning level of competition. All Copper 1’s will perform our “Green” routines that were choreographed by Head Over Heels on each event. Copper is different than the other levels because once a gymnast competes in Copper 1, the following year they must move up to Copper 2 regardless of their skill level. This is a rule that comes from USAIGC not from Head Over Heels. Once a gymnast moves to Copper 2, the gymnasts will be perform either our “Green” routines or “Purple” routines. The “Purple” routines are slightly more advanced Copper routines choreographed by Head Over Heels. The coaches determine what routine a gymnast will compete based on their skill level. A gymnast MUST have all of the skills for the “Purple” routine in order to compete that routine. What routine a gymnast competes depends on their skills on each particular event. For example – A gymnast may compete the green routine on Bars, but the purple routines on Vault, Beam and Floor. This is the only level that a gymnast can switch routines mid-year. For example – if the same gymnast from above gets all of her skills for the purple routine on bars mid-year, she will be able to perform the purple bars routine at the next competition.

**Recommended Training Days**

All of our team gymnasts must attend a minimum of 2 days per week during the school year. For gymnasts in Bronze Level and higher we strongly recommend training more than the minimum 2 days per week. This is especially true for Silver gymnasts and above!! By adding the additional workouts, the gymnast can potentially learn and improve at a faster rate. Gymnastics is a sport of repetition, and the more repetition the better. (By working out just one extra day per week, the gymnast will train approximately 100 hours more during the year when compared to the gymnast who just attends the minimum.) This is especially true for gymnasts who are looking to move to the next level.

**Please note-** It is very difficult for the gymnasts to move to the next level if their attendance is sporadic. It is almost impossible to move up to the next level if the gymnast does not attend the summer session.
USAIGC Event Specializing
Bronze and Higher Level gymnasts who compete at a level for a second year (or longer) will have the opportunity to “Event Specialize” on up to two events at the next level, provided they meet the following criteria:

1) Mastery of the skills for that level on the desired event
2) Routine choreography for the desired event for the next level (there may be additional fees associated with this choreography)
3) Payment of meet entry fees for both the all-around and event(s) that the gymnasts participate in.
4) In order to event specialize at the next level, gymnasts must also compete all-around at their current level.

Qualification Requirements for USAIGC Gymnasts to State, Regionals & Worlds
State/Regional Championships Qualification Requirements – To qualify to the State/Regional Championships Copper, Bronze, Silver & Gold gymnasts must attend a minimum of 3 USAIGC local competitions. Platinum & Premier gymnasts must attend a minimum of 2 USAIGC local competitions. The qualification score must be achieved at least once. World Championships Qualification Requirements – Gymnast must compete in the State/Regional Championships and attain the qualification score at that competition to qualify to Nationals. Only gymnasts at Bronze, Silver, Gold Platinum and Premier from Head Over Heels will be eligible to qualify/compete at Nationals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Qualification Score from Local Meet To States</th>
<th>Qualification Score from Local Meets/States to Regionals</th>
<th>Qualification Score from States/Regionals To Worlds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copper 1</td>
<td>28.00 AA</td>
<td>29.00 AA</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper 2</td>
<td>29.50 AA</td>
<td>30.50 AA</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze &amp; Bronze Diamond</td>
<td>32.00 AA</td>
<td>33.00 AA</td>
<td>34.00 AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>31.50 AA</td>
<td>32.50 AA</td>
<td>33.50 AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>31.00 AA</td>
<td>32.00 AA</td>
<td>33.00 AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>31.00 AA</td>
<td>32.00 AA</td>
<td>33.00 AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premier</td>
<td>32.00 AA</td>
<td>33.00 AA</td>
<td>34.00 AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Specialist</td>
<td>7.50 per event</td>
<td>8.0 per event</td>
<td>8.50 per event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These qualification scores are subject to change. The 2016-2017 USAIGC rules have not been released at the time of this Team Handbook

PAYMENT POLICIES & FEES FOR 2016-2017
Please visit the “Fees, Info and Policies” Page on our website for an explanation of registration procedures and monthly tuition.

Description of Membership Fee and Monthly Tuition

Annual Membership Fee - $30
This fee helps cover the administrative cost incurred in the running the programs we offer. This is a family fee and covers everyone in your immediate family.

Monthly Tuition - Varies
Tuition will be collected monthly. The Monthly Team tuition will include gym time, coaching, Team administration, supplies and coaches’ time at competition. There are no prorated fees due to missed/cancelled practices. These may include vacations, days missed when coaches are out of town for competitions, holidays or scheduled gym closings. Head Over Heels Gymnastics may also cancel team workouts for competitions, clinics, in-house competitions, special events or team outings.

**Horseheads Location – Bronze, Silver and Up USAIGC Gymnasts may choose to participate in an additional practice per week at either the Ithaca or Vestal locations. Horseheads gymnasts must attend a minimum of 2 practices per week in Horseheads and can then do a 3rd and/or 4th practice at one of the other locations. Payment will still be made to the Horseheads location for the practices done at the other locations. This can only be done on a monthly basis with the tuition being charged on the 20th of the month for the following month’s tuition**
Other Fees Associated with being on the Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team

Full Competitive Attire Fee - $260 (Without Practice Leotard*)
Full Competitive Attire Fee - $305 (With Practice Leotard*)
(Practice Leotard is NOT required)
Due on Sept 19th or December 19th (depending on your gymnast’s first month of team)
If this fee is not paid by the 19th, it will be charged to your card on file on the 20th.

1) Team members will be required to purchase a Long Sleeve Competition Leotard & Warm-up. We will be changing leotards and warm-up style approximately every 2-3 years. Every gymnast must order a new leotard for the 2016-2017 season. We will be keeping the warmup that was used in the 2015-2016 season. If your gymnast has outgrown her warmup, please speak to your coach to get another one ordered. Our competitive attire are special order items. Parents will be in charge of picking the sizes and signing off on them. Once the competitive attire is ordered there are no returns, refunds or exchanges.

** (New for 2016-2017) Practice Leotard– We are offering the gymnasts an opportunity to order a short sleeve team leotard. This leotard can be worn to practices, special events and finals at Worlds. This is not mandatory. The fee for this will be due at the same time as the other competitive attire. This leotard can only be ordered at the same time as the competitive attire. (This leotard is available online directly from the company anytime at a higher price).

Individual Pricing For Competitive Attire
Leotard Price - $150
Warm-up Jacket Price - $75
Warm-up Pants Price - $35
Practice Leotard (Not mandatory) - $45

USAIGC Membership Fee – $40
You will receive an email with instructions on how to register your gymnast with USAIGC in August.
This registration must be completed and the fee must be paid in order for your gymnast to participate on our competitive team.

Meet Entry Fees - Varies
You will receive meet information via email. If your gymnast wishes to attend that competition the meet entry fee (cash or check only) will be due by the deadline given. Each meet has a different fee (approx. $70-$150) which is designated by the host gym. Your gymnast will not be able to attend the competition if the entry fee is not paid by the deadline or is late. A $10 gym fee will be added to the entry fee. This gym fee covers meet entry administration and coaches’ fee for competitions. There will be NO refunds after the competition deadline.

Beam & Floor Choreography Camp Fee (Copper & Bronze) - $20
Copper and Bronze Gymnasts are required to attend the Mandatory “Choreography Camp.” During this camp, your gymnast will learn her beam and floor routines along with all of the other gymnasts at her level. The Choreography Camp Date will be announced during the summer and will be held in the fall. This camp will be held at one of the Head Over Heels locations. The cost for the camp is $20 and is paid directly to the gym via cash or check.

Beam & Floor Choreography Fee (Silver, Gold, Platinum & Premier) - $150 Floor / $45 Beam
USAIGC gymnasts will need their own floor and beam routines choreographed. Your head coach will work with you to set this up. Your head coach may or may not be the person choreographing your gymnast’s routine. It may be another coach on staff or an outside choreographer. The gymnasts will arrange a time with their head coach and/or choreographer to learn their routines. The costs are $150 for the floor routine and/or $45 for the beam routine (paid directly to the choreographer via cash or check). There is also a fee for the music. Gymnasts should change routines approximately every 1-2 years.

Floor Music Fee for USAIGC Gymnasts (Silver, Gold, Platinum & Premier) - Varies
**How to Order Floor Music for USAIGC Gymnasts (Silver, Gold, and Platinum & Premier)**

Please remember that you will have to dance and tumble to this music. It is best to pick music that not only the gymnast likes but judges will like as well. New popular music is not always the best choice!! If you need some help, please talk to your head coach for ideas! **There are a bunch of other floor music websites out there. Feel free to order through a different site if you find music you like. Please just double check with your coach about the length of the music based on your gymnasts level.**

**Silver gymnasts should order the SHORT Version of the music they like.**

- Go To [www.floorexpressmusic.com](http://www.floorexpressmusic.com)
- To listen to music choices Go to the “Songs Page” and go down to the bottom and use the drop down menu under CD Title. Hit Submit Query. On the next page you can listen to the 30 second clips or demo of the songs. When your gymnast chooses the song she likes it is time to order.
- Click “How To Order”
- Go to the internet order paragraph and click on “Songs Page”
- At the bottom of the page use the drop down menu next to CD Title, Put in the CD # and Press Submit Query (you can also download the song and burn the CD’s yourself)
- Scroll down until you find the Track # (please make sure the track # & track name is the same as on the CD)
  - Select a CD + 1 Backup CD (or you can purchase a download and burn your own CDs-please use a high quality burner & CD)
  - Press Order and Finish with Payment
  - Please have the CD’s shipped to your home
  - When you receive them put your gymnasts name along with the gym name on both CD’s.
  - Place one CD in your gymnast’s bag and bring the other CD into the gym.
  - Once your gymnast brings her music into the gym it will be time to set up her private lessons to choreograph her beam and floor routines with your head coach. The gymnasts will need three (1 hour) private lessons to learn their own routines. The cost of each private lesson is $45, this can be paid directly to the gym via cash or check. Please either see your head coach at the gym or you can email the gym to arrange these privates. Your head coach may not be the only coach choreographing, but all communications will start with them.

**USAIGC Regional & Worlds Coaches Fee**

**Regional Fee - $50**

**Worlds Fee - $100**

USAIGC Regionals & Worlds are competitions that are not factored into your normal meet entry fee. With the higher cost of coaches travel expenses for these meets (mileage, airfare, rental car, long hotel stay and coaches time) we will be assessing a USAIGC Regional & Worlds Coaches Fee. Along with your Regionals Entry Fee there will be a $50 Regionals Coaches Fee Due. Along with your Worlds Entry Fee there will be a $100 Worlds Coaches Fee due. These fees must be paid prior to traveling to either Regionals or Worlds. If this fee is not paid before the Competitions, your gymnast will not be eligible to compete.

**Team Program Policies**

**Expectations of Athletes**

The way you act in the gym is a reflection of your respect for yourself, for teammates, and for Head Over Heels Gymnastics. Only the highest standard of behavior will be acceptable. The following actions show respect and are expected of a Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team member.

1) You are expected to work hard and do your best.
2) Arrive at the gym ready to participate with proper attire (Girls – Leotard or Leotard and Bikers), hair pulled back, jewelry off, gum in the trash can and ready to go!
3) Optional Gymnasts must carry a copy of their music in their bags at all times.
4) If grips are worn we recommend having 2 pair in case one breaks.
5) Practice will begin promptly at designated times and gymnasts must be ready to perform at that time.
6) Treat other gymnasts with respect, be kind to those gymnasts younger than you, and do not think to hold yourself out as better than other gymnasts. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses and if you have not found them yet, you WILL.
7) Only concern yourself with things that YOU can control, which are YOUR ATTITUDE, YOUR EFFORT....YOUR GYMNASTICS!!
Expectations of Athletes Continued

8) Maintain a positive attitude when facing fears and frustrations. Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult of all sports. All gymnasts suffer setbacks, frustration, fear and defeat. Expect these things, learn from them, face them and overcome them!

9) Ask permission to leave the gym. This applies to going to the restroom, getting a drink or talking to parents. The main reason is so that your coaches always know where you are.

10) Always act in a way that shows respect for you and for the gym. There is no place in our gym for displays of anger or disgust, talking back to coaches or other adults, or crying because you have given into your frustrations or fears.

11) Be honest, cheating is the ugliest form of disrespect. It shows disrespect to your coaches, your parents, and most importantly to yourself.

12) Show respect for your safety and to the demands of your coaches by staying off the equipment without the specific permission and supervision of a coach.

13) Always wait inside the facility for your ride. Gymnasts are not to wait outside for pick-up following practice.

Expectations of Parents

Parents play a huge role in the development of a successful gymnast. Your role is every bit as important as that of the gym, coaches and the athlete. The following actions and ideas are expected of Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team member’s parents.

1) A gymnast’s parents are an instrumental contributor to her success and happiness. Tuition and fees must be paid on time and a commitment to transport your gymnast to and from workouts and competitions must be made. In addition and equally important, parents must help instill work ethic, values and provide support for your gymnast to be successful.

2) Please do not talk to your gymnast during practice, including if your gymnast is getting a drink. It is important for the gymnasts to stay focused and with their group.

3) If you need to get a message to your gymnast during practice, please talk to the office staff and they will relay the message.

4) Parents are not permitted on the gym floor and must refrain from coaching or commenting during any training session. If your child is not paying attention or messing around, we realize it is tempting. This is the job of the coaches.

5) We encourage you to watch your gymnasts practice a few times a month to see her progress and work ethic. It is also important to let your gymnast practice without you present to allow them to completely focus on the instruction from their coach.

6) We feel that communication with the parents of our team members should be open and flowing. We email all important team information

7) Parents are expected and encouraged to show proper respect for our sport at all times. Rude, belittling, or negative comments about coaches, parents, and other gymnasts are always inappropriate and have no place in our program.

8) If you have a problem or concern, please speak to the coach. Complaining to other parents cannot solve your problem, nor can we solve them if we do not know about them. So save your self the time and aggravation and come to us.

9) Be encouraging and positive to your child. Be careful of comparisons, because each child is an individual with different talents and capabilities.

10) Please be on time to pick your gymnast up after practice.

11) Please familiarize yourself and your gymnast with the Team Handbook. It is important that the parent and gymnast understands the rules and policies of the competition team.

12) If you have any questions regarding the gym or your gymnasts... please contact the gym via phone or email. Under no circumstances should a coach get a call on their personal lines. Please remember that this is our job and our free time or personal time is important to us.
Other Policies and Procedures

2) **Workout attire.** Girls must wear a leotard or leotard and bikers. No jewelry is permitted and hair should be pulled tightly away from gymnast’s face.

3) **Attendance.** We encourage the gymnasts to be at every practice. Please see our info & policies on our website for our Team Make-up policies.

4) **Emergency Procedure.** In the unlikely event of a medical emergency, this will be the procedure. Emergency First Aid will be administered, including requesting of emergency medical technicians and an ambulance if needed. If you are at the gym when an injury occurs do not come onto floor until the coach gives you the appropriate signal. If you are not at the gym, you will be contacted using the emergency contact information located on your registration form. Your instructions will be followed from that point on. In the event we are unable to make contact with a parent, we will make arrangements to contact the medical staff and hospital closest to the facility.

5) **Inclement Weather Procedures** If your Local School District is closed Head Over Heels will not be open for Morning classes or Unstructured Playtime. We will make a decision if we are holding afternoon classes by 1:00pm. If the weather improves and there are no safety concerns, we MAY hold afternoon/evening classes. Cancellations due to the weather will be on the gym answering machine at least 1 hour before classes start (this also includes inclement weather closings on a Saturday). Cancellation notification will also be sent to your email on file and posted to our Facebook page. Make-Ups can be arranged for missed classes due to weather as long as the child is currently enrolled.

   Ithaca location follows – Ithaca City School District
   Horseheads location follows – Horseheads Central School District
   Vestal location follows – Vestal Central School District

6) **Team Information:** We email all team information. Please make sure to provide us with your email address. If there is a change in your contact information/email, please let us know as soon as possible.

7) **Summer:** We highly recommend the gymnast attends our summer day program/Team classes to keep up with their skills, learn new skills and stay in gymnastics shape.

8) **Private Lessons:** Private lessons are available. The fee for privates are $28/½ hour and $48/1 hour. If you are interested in private lessons please see the front office.

9) **Competitive Attire:** Our competitive attire are special order items. Parents will be in charge of picking the sizes and signing off on them. Once the competitive attire is ordered there are no returns, refunds or exchanges.
Disciplinary Actions

The rules and policies, which govern the gymnasts and their parents, have been outlined here and in other sections of the Handbook. In the event that there is an ongoing pattern of disruption or there are major rule infractions, it may become necessary to impose some disciplinary action in an attempt to improve the situation.

The list and the procedures noted below are not intended to be all-inclusive. They are presented as an expression of our beliefs as to what disciplinary actions are necessary and appropriate. We will treat all of our gymnasts and gym parents as individuals and will seek to impose the most effective disciplinary actions based on each unique set of circumstances.

Examples of Disciplinary Actions

1. The gymnast may not be permitted to rotate with his/her group at the designated time. He/She will have to stay and finish his/her work or repeat the entire assignment on a particular piece of equipment.
2. The gymnast may be asked to sit and watch.
3. The gymnast may be given appropriate conditioning to perform which will help focus her attention and build strength to accomplish the task at hand.
4. The gymnast may be asked to leave the gym and go home early.
5. The coach may request a meeting with the parent.
6. The gymnast may be suspended from the team for one or more days or may be scratched from a competition. Please note that if the gymnast is suspended from a competition due to poor attendance, a poor work ethic or negative attitude (or for any other reason) the entry fee is nonrefundable.
7. The gymnast may be asked to leave the program if we cannot get her to conform her behavior to the expectations of the team, coach, or the gym.

Notes: The first three items on the above list are 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. We cannot and will not run to the parents every time we have a problem. We will attempt to build our own relationships with our athletes. Those relationships are built on time shared, ups and downs that are part of all-important ventures. The downs include discipline problems and we will attempt to solve them within the framework of building a relationship.

The fifth item on the list, requesting a conference, signifies a need to work outside the coach and athlete relationship. In this instance we need your help to overcome a challenge that is 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.

The final two items on the list are reserved for the most serious violations of our rules and policies. They are seldom used. They are reserved primarily for times when there is an ongoing problem with disruption and disrespect within the gym that has proven resistant to improvement. We will not let the bad attitude of one gymnast to bring sown the spirit and work ethic of an entire group.

Actions or Inaction of Parents

It is also possible that a gymnast will have to leave our program because of the actions or inaction of her parents. While we never want to punish a child for the actions of her parent(s), we will not tolerate parents who by their words and actions do not support the policies and values of our team program.
Gymnast Health

Treatment of Rips

Gymnasts should expect to get rips on their hands from the bars from time to time. Gymnasts are expected to still do bars when they have a rip or get a rip. Here are some treatment methods that the gymnast can do at home to help heal and prevent rips.

1. Before going to bed the gymnast should put ointment on the rip (Neosporin, Preparation H), followed by a band aid and a sock over the hand. They should keep this on while they sleep to keep the moisture in.
2. Hand lotion, vitamin E or aloe vera can also help heal a rip.
3. Trimming calluses is also recommended. (Younger gymnasts must have help with this)
4. If rips are a problem for your gymnast we do sell palm guard grips at the office to help prevent rips.

Dowel Grips

Gymnasts moving up into USAIGC Silver should start wearing dowel grips. One pair of grips cost approximately $50. Gymnasts should always have 2 pairs of grips broken in. The gymnast will also need to have wristbands to go under their grips. The gymnasts should alternate between the pairs for each bar workout. It is the gymnasts and parents job to check and make sure the grips have no rips, tears or the leather is too thin. Grips usually have to be replaced every 6-12 months. Gymnasts should also be re-sized periodically. Please make sure your gymnast is checking their grips periodically, they can be dangerous if they are worn out. Gymnast should not wear a used pair of grips or borrow another gymnast's grips. This can be dangerous!

Parents are in charge of ordering their own gymnasts grips. Go to ten-o.com and go under “Grips”. We recommend either Pixie Grips w/ Buckles (for very small gymnasts under 9 years old) or Tensport or 501 Blues Velcro Uneven Bar Grips (for gymnasts 9 years old and over). You can find a sizing chart on the website. Please remember to order 2 pairs. Gymnasts will also need wristbands to go under the grips (you can get these on the website or at the gym) If you have any questions, please see your gymnasts coach.

In case of an injury

In case of an injury during workout or competition, please wait for your coach to give some indication that you should come onto the floor. In most cases you will not be invited onto the floor, because the injury will be relatively minor and the coach will take care of it. Your gymnast will continue training or competing and will need to maintain his/her focus. In cases of more serious injuries where the gymnast will be finished for the day the coaches will let you know what course of action to take.

Care of an injury

Remember the acronym R.I.C.E.

R = Rest the injured body part
I = Apply Ice
C = Apply Compression
E = Elevate the injured extremity above heart level

Apply ice for 20 minutes at a time 3-4 times a day for 48 hours after the injury. The application of ice in this manner can cut the healing time for minor injuries in half.
Competitions

Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team philosophy is that the coaches, the gym, the parents, and the gymnasts are all part of the team. Please remember gymnasts and parents alike, the gym is noted by judges, coaches and other gym parents for a number of things. Appearance, behavior, manners, etc. and especially the manner in which the gymnasts conduct themselves at all times. Sportsmanship is important in this sport both from the gymnasts and parents. We try and give a tentative meet schedule out in October for the upcoming school year.

Competition Schedule

At the beginning of the school year (September/October), a tentative schedule of meet dates and locations will be handed out. Meets may be added, changed or canceled. We will be attending 3-9 meets throughout the school year depending on your gymnast’s level. Please remember you can choose the number of competitions you wish to enter your gymnast in.

Entry into a Competition

We will send out entry information (including place, date & meet entry fee) via email. If you would like to register your gymnast for that meet the meet entry fee (cash or check only) will be due by the deadline given. Each meet has a different fee (approx. $70-$150) which is designated by the host gym. Your gymnast will not be able to attend the competition if the entry fee is not paid by the deadline or is late. A $10 gym fee will be added to the entry fee. This gym fee covers meet entry administration and coaches’ travel expenses for competitions. There will be NO refunds after the competition deadline.

Competition Information

The average meet can take as little as three and a half hours or as long as six. Approximately 1-2 weeks before the competition we will email you a “meet information sheet” with specific days/times, hotel names and meet address. The gymnastics club that is holding the competition will set the final meet schedule. Please do not call a host gym for meet information as we will be happy to provide everything you need to know.

Please note: We get the info out to you as soon as we receive it from the host gym (So please don’t email us asking about the info!!)

Parents Obligation for Meets.

It is the parent’s responsibility to make sure the gymnast is on time to the competition. (1/2 hour earlier than time given) It is the responsibility of each individual gymnast’s family to make and pay for travel, hotel (if needed) and meal arrangements for all competitions, clinics and other team events unless otherwise stated by the team staff. We do encourage all of the gymnasts and their families to go out for a meal together after the competition. This promotes team bonding, unity and FUN! Admission is charged for all spectators at meets.

The Meet Takes How Long?

The average meet can take as little as three and a half hours or as long as six hours. Most competitions run in a format similar to below

Warm-up – Usually 15-30 minutes long. This time is for general stretching and getting equipment settings specific to the gymnasts
March In – All the gymnasts line up and march in to the gym to be presented to the audience and judges. The National Anthem is usually played. This takes about ten to fifteen minutes.
Competition – The gymnasts now actually warm-up on the events and compete. The receive scores from the judges on each event. This may take approximately 2 hours to complete.
Awards – If the host club running the meet is on the ball, you may only have to wait five to ten minutes before the awards are handed out. It has been known to take significantly longer to get the awards ready. Once they are prepared it may take approximately half an hour to hand out awards.
Insight to Judges at a Competition

Scoring at a gymnastics competition can sometimes not be the easiest thing to figure out. Here are some pointers to remember:

• All judges are different. This is a very subjective sport. Your gymnast’s scores from meet to meet can vary greatly, even if the routine they perform is similar. It is very hard to compare scores from meet to meet since it can vary on how hard or easy the judge is, the level of other competitors and sometimes for no reason at all. It is better to focus on your gymnast’s performance and if they improved.

• Copper, Bronze & Silver routines all start from a 10.0 if a gymnast fulfills all of the requirements. Gold, Platinum & Premier routines have different start values. This start value depends on what skills are in your gymnast’s routine. Each level has different requirements that the gymnasts must fulfill in order to get the maximum start value. Gold, Platinum & Premier also can receive bonus points.

• Once the gymnast starts her routines judges will then take tenths away from the gymnast start value.
  Examples of Items that the judges can deduct for:
  Falling
  Stopping (if it is not supposed to in the routine)
  Bent Arms
  Bent Legs
  Flex Feet
  Spotting
  Not performing a skill
  Those are just to name a few!!!!!

• If you have any questions on what your gymnast needs to improve on to increase her scores talk to her coach. It is best to talk to your gymnast’s coach at the gym where it will not be as hectic!!

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

1. Arrive at the competition the competition site ½ hour before open stretch time.
2. Find his/her coach as soon as she arrives.
3. Remain on the competition floor at all times during the competition.
4. The gymnast must have proper attire on including Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team competition leotard and warm-ups.
5. It is the gymnasts’ responsibility to make sure that they have their grips in their bag. (If grips are used).
6. Optional gymnasts must bring their own floor music.
7. All gymnasts’ hair should be very neat. If makeup is worn, it should be worn in moderation. No jewelry permitted except for very small stud earrings. No nail polish or toenail polish permitted.
8. Behavior of Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team gymnasts should always be one that they and their coaches will be proud of. Discussions regarding your teammates, other teams, coaches, etc. should all be done with respect. Gossip and negative talk are unacceptable.
9. There is no place for crying and uncontrolled emotions during a gymnastics meet.
10. Be courteous, respectful, and polite to all meet officials, hosts and hostesses, competitors, and coaches. The only time you should approach a meet official is to thank them for hosting or judging the meet.
11. Remain seated at all times when not performing.
12. Stay with the team the entire competition. Once the gymnast has entered the competition area there should be no contact between the gymnast and her parents.
13. Cheer for all members of the Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team.
14. Stay for awards dressed in your Head Over Heels warm-ups. As a participating athlete you MUST stay for all awards and to accept any presented to you with courtesy and gratitude. Remember that you are not just representing yourself. You are acting as a representative of Head Over Heels as well.
15. If the gymnast does not win an award there is no place for crying. We need our gymnasts to have good sportsmanship in winning and defeat.
16. Gymnasts are allowed to put a small healthy snack and a drink in their bag for competition. (Please be sure to store the drink in a different pocket then grips)
Meet Etiquette for Parents

1. Get your gymnast to the meet on time.
2. Pay the meet entry fee by the deadline. Your child will not be able to attend the competition if the entry fee is not paid by the deadline. No exceptions.
3. Parents are required to make arrangements for transportation to and from the competition.
4. Parents are responsible for travel expenses to and from the meets.
5. Under competition rules the only adults allowed in the competitive area are judges, those helping run the competition, and coaches.
6. **Please do not contact or talk to your gymnast or the coaches once they are on the competitive floor.** We ask them to focus all their energy on the competition and we want as few distractions as possible. After the meet is over they will come and see you.
7. Please do not coach your gymnast in the gym or at meets. This is the coaches' job.
8. As you watch your gymnast try to focus on improvement in skills, do not compare scores to other gymnasts.
9. Cheer for all members of the Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team and feel free to cheer for fine performances turned in by the gymnasts of other teams. Please show respect for all competitors; you never know whose parents are sitting near you.
10. Take responsibility for promoting Head Over Heels Gymnastics reputation. Never make negative comments about other gyms, coaches, gymnasts, or judges. As a Head Over Heels Gymnastics Team parent you also represent us and your behavior will reflect on our whole family.
11. **Under no circumstances is a parent ever to approach a judge or meet official before, during, or after a competition to comment on, complain about, or even ask about a score.**
12. Be positive at all times!! It may require extra work sometimes, but your attitude will determine your child's attitude and their success both in gymnastics and in life.
13. If you have concerns or comments about the meet see your gymnast’s coach after their next practice or email the gym. **Please do not approach the coach during the competition about these comments or concerns.**
14. Every gymnast must come prepared for the competition. Girls: Competition leotard, warm-up, bag, grips, hair pulled back, no nail polish, no jewelry
15. Once you say goodbye to your gymnast before warm-ups he/she is our responsibility. Please do not plan to meet or talk to your gymnast during the competition.
16. If a gymnast has a crisis during the meet and starts crying he/she will be sent to the restrooms to compose themselves. We appreciate how hard it is to watch your child cry, but we think it is important for them to learn how to deal with setbacks during competition without parental help. Please help us to help them grow and let them learn to cope with both success and failure- do not meet them in the restroom during the meet.
17. If your gymnast gets injured at a competition, please stay in the stands. The coach will signal for you if you are needed.
18. No Flash Photography is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Please check your camera in advanced.
19. Do not call a host gym for meet information. We will be happy to provide everything you need to know. Please note: We get the info out to you as soon as we receive it from the host gym. Sometimes we do not get the info until 2 weeks before the meet.
20. Do not call a host gym for a copy of the scores. Your coaches will have that information and can provide you with it after the meet.

Head Over Heels Gymnastics welcomes you to Team and Our Gymnastics Family!!!!