



Technique - Growth - Achievement

# GIRLS TEAM HANDBOOK

*"TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE"*

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**Welcome To Our Team!**

**Welcome** to Territory Gymnastics Academy. Our dream is to create a culture of respect, commitment and strength, and to operate a national caliber gymnastics program – a program that is known and recognized within the community – a program that stands for quality. TEAM is the second step in our process and now YOU are part of our DREAM!

**Welcome** to the place where children can achieve their dreams with the support of very special people (YOU and the TGA Staff). This is the place where, as a TEAM: our athletes, coaches and parents/guardians, are encouraged to work together to accomplish those dreams in a fun, challenging and efficient way.

**Welcome** to the place where excellence ('artistic gymnastics') is the goal, but by no means does that mean YOU have to be perfect. Our team is one that prides itself on our quality and high standards in all areas of training, and life skills.

**Welcome to TGA**, where it is sincerely believed that the sum of the parts IS greater than any one individual. Our dream will become reality because of the efforts of good people working together to do good things for our athletes, each other and OUR TEAM. Working together makes the task at hand more productive, and more enjoyable.

## Our Mission Statement:

Our mission at TGA is to develop the health, confidence, responsibility and potential of each individual athlete, using quality gymnastics training as the tool that gets us there. We accomplish this by:

- Setting Goals and a positive path to achieve them.
- Helping participants to appreciate their abilities and self-worth.
- Helping participants to enthusiastically master the art of learning in a wide range of areas.
- Developing and refining life-long skills in self-esteem and pride, that come from being part of the best possible team.

## Vision and Values

Understanding whom you are dealing with and what they believe in is important, especially if you are entrusting the welfare and development of your child to a program. When you combine the responsibilities of staying in tune with one of the worlds most technically advanced sport's, the inherent risks involved in gymnastics and the monstrous role that we play in your child's development, it is paramount that we have the resources, desire and experience to do the job right.

TGA provides high quality, technically sound coaching, in an environment that encourages the growth and potential of each athlete within our program. It is of extremely high importance that our coaches are kept up to date in their knowledge and technical understanding of the required teaching methods, as well as remain engaged and in touch with various forms of learning material; including video resources, written articles and supplementary sporting materials. Our not-for-profit team offers opportunities for our coaches and athletes to be continually adding and improving their knowledge and skill base, and we pride ourselves on be able to offer workshops to coaches and athletes in and out of our programs.

## Our General Philosophy

TGA has been founded on the belief that gymnastics is not only the root of all sports, but that it provides a vehicle with which to teach skills that last a lifetime and assist in the development of every child in our program.

Gymnastics, when properly taught, can be the catalyst for a productive life, while at the same time instilling the benefits of health and physical fitness. Jumping, rolling, running, strength and flexibility are the basic aspects of many sports. No better foundation can be laid than one built on the basic activities of gymnastics.

Physical skill development is certainly a by-product of a good gymnastics program. TGA has made it our primary goal to ensure that our program delivers more than just pure physical skill; but that Determination, Work Ethic, Teamwork, Time

Management, Sportsmanship, Team Spirit and Respect for self and others are all skills that our athletes and participants learn within our programs. We will measure our success not by the number of trophies on the wall, but rather, what each child takes with them when they leave the sport of gymnastics...although, some never will!

## Competitive Team Philosophy

With the understanding of our basic philosophy, TGA's Competitive Team Program will always be dedicated to producing high quality, national caliber gymnasts. This does not mean, however, that every child earning a place in our competitive team must have the desire to someday be an Olympian! We will treat every athlete's goals and aspirations individually. Some kids do not have the desire to train at an elite pace, nor should they have to in order to be a valued member of our competitive team. This is not to say that the TGA coaching staff will accept mediocrity in training. We will always run a structured, disciplined program, as it is our belief that gymnastics is far too dangerous and costly to have training be considered just an opportunity for socialising. Our staff will demand respect and a strong work ethic from each and every athlete. Conversely, athletes will be treated with respect and provided positive guidance in order to help them reach their goals and maximum potential.

Another of TGA's fundamental beliefs is that we want our club to be as family orientated as possible. The coach, athlete and parent should be members of a cooperative communication triangle engaged to assist the athlete in reaching their goals. Parents can support coaching decisions by clarifying concerns with a coach in an open and caring way. It is important that parents show respect for the authority of your child's coach. If ever you feel the need to carry a concern to our Head Coaches, please know that our doors are always open to you and that we take your concerns and suggestions very seriously.

The number of hours that our coaches interact with athletes dictates that they will be major contributors in the overall development of your children. *This is a responsibility that we do not take lightly.* The expertise of our coaches ensures that decisions regarding your child's development and placement are made with only their best interests and goals in mind.

## Resources

The following information will help your child to understand and introduce them to the world of competitive gymnastics, and is designed to keep you informed of our expectations and guidelines for participating at each level within our program. This handbook has been compiled to give our prospective and current team members a complete look at the competitive team program. Competitive gymnastics requires a great deal of support from many contributors in both training and competition. We aspire to create one of the finest gymnastics clubs in Australia by adhering to the standards that we believe in whilst also creating a strong 'culture' for high quality gymnastics, strong support systems and encouraging individual potential.

## What is Pre-Team & Junior Development Team?

Pre-Team & Junior Development Team at TGA includes **Shining Stars** and **Shooting Stars** Athletes, respectively. Although Pre-Team & JD-Team gymnasts are not considered part of the Competitive Team, we feel the information following can help with understanding and making the important decisions involved in the future.

Pre-Team & JD-Team is the stepping-stone between the recreational class programs (Steps 1-7) and the Competitive Team Program. It is a place for talented kids to develop their skills and explore the avenue to the competitive team world. It is a place that introduces small in-club competitive events, and skill challenges, whilst allowing the athletes to “get their feet wet” without incurring the full obligations associated with being a member of our Team.

Pre-Team & JD-Team is a place to experience accelerated learning. Since the training hours increase, so does the learning. Expectations are higher, challenges are greater and the results follow suit. Gymnasts have the opportunity to compete in “fun in-house competition events” that are designed to assist young gymnasts in becoming familiar with the rules of competing. Our Pre-Team & JD-Team Squads are focused on development of the Australian Levels Program 2017 and beyond, in Levels 3-10.

Pre-Team is NOT a place for participants who have no intention of continuing into the world of competitive gymnastics. Pre-Team is NOT to be used as an advanced recreational/non-competitive class.

### **Additional Pre-Team & Junior Development Team Information**

This Team Handbook is full of information about our expectations and responsibilities as coaches and team members at TGA, from the perspective of our Competitive Team Program.

We view Pre-Team as a distinctly important and unique part of our total program, and would like to provide the following “FAQs” and answers to help in understanding it.

#### **Q: How does a gymnast get involved in Pre-Team (from 2019 onwards)?**

**A:** *Continually throughout the year, participants in TGA’s recreational STEPS Program are evaluated for potential advancement. Athletes are identified by factors including readiness, skill attainment, interest and potential and are invited to ‘trial’ for placement. Occasionally a gymnast participating in our recreational program is invited to join one of our Pre-Team squads mid-year. At that time, our Head Coach will sit down with you and go over any questions you have on a small group or individual basis.*

#### **Q: If my child is invited on to a Pre-Team, what does that mean?**

**A:** *Based on several factors including current skill level, potential and age, your child may be invited to become a member of one of TWO Pre-Team/Development groups, Shining Stars or Shooting Stars. Each group is assigned a specific coach and training schedule. As discussed in the ‘Requirements’ of our Team Handbook, membership on one of our Pre-Teams is a year-round commitment and carries both term, and school holiday training fees.*

*SHINING STARS – This is our introductory level OR ‘Pre-Team’. Young Gymnasts are challenged to further their basics by developing the physical ability and skill repertoire in*

accordance with Gymnastic Australia Level 3 requirements and TGA skill curriculum. It is generally offered to talented 6-8yr olds who are placed in 2hour/twice a week training program.

**SHOOTING STARS** – This is our Junior Development Team. The goal of this level is to prepare for an advance track through Gymnastics Australia's Level 3-10 program. It is generally offered to talented 4-6yr olds who are placed in 2hour/twice a week training program. Young gymnasts are encouraged to develop high-level physical abilities and skill advancement in preparation for competition.

Pre-Team & JD-Team gymnasts begin to put combinations of skills together to form "routines" specific to a national set of standards. These routines are then used in club-based competitions where scores are given based on the execution of the skills. These athletes will have the opportunity to participate in "FUN COMPETITION EVENTS" (not that all competitions aren't fun!), so as to introduce the experience of competitive gymnastics. We will present a proposed club competition schedule as early as possible in the New Year, and whilst none of these competitions are mandatory, those athletes with no desire to participate should not consider joining a Pre-Team or JD-Team group. Parents may choose as many of the proposed competitions as they would like but should minimally consider 1-2 events.

**Q: My daughter enjoys gymnastics, but doesn't think she is interested in competing. Is Pre-Team/JD-Team the right place for her?**

**A:** Understanding that these groups are a stepping-stone to our Competitive Team Program, we view competition as an important part of the experience. The opportunity to compete, perform and be part of a team in competition is one of the biggest paybacks for the time and effort spent in the gym. Pre-Team members are encouraged to compete at fun competition events that give them a taste of competing in a "non competitive" environment. Getting out there and "showing off their stuff" should be an important goal. One of the greatest benefits of participating in gymnastics is the self-confidence and poise gained from competing.

**Q: How are the costs to participate in competitive events paid and what are we paying for?**

**A:** Each competition your child attends will have a charge to register. These fees range from \$20-\$60 per competition (usually depending on the size and quality of the event). TGA will set a due date for competition registration fees to be paid, and this can be done via cash, EFTPOS or direct deposit into the club's bank account. It is important that due dates are met in order to keep the process efficient and avoid disappointment of missing out. The fee you pay to the club covers your child's registration, any awards, and coaching fees during the event.

**Q: Whom do I talk to if I have questions about Pre-Team and my child's progress?**

**A:** As is the case for our Pre-Team, JD-Team and Competitive Team members, any questions or issues should first be directed to your child's coach. They are in the best position to give you feedback on how your daughter is doing in the gym. They may also have insights about how to support your child through difficult skill development, inter-group relations or other training concerns. If there is a need to go beyond talking with the coach, the Head Coach and TGA's Management Committee are always available to you.

**Q: When my child was in recreational gymnastics we could make up missed class sessions. Can we still 'make up' if we miss a scheduled training day?**

**A:** Unfortunately not. In special cases where a long absence is recorded or upcoming due to illness (and where a medical certificate is provided), we can provide a 'credit' on your next invoice for the duration of the absence.

**Q: Once we decide that Pre-Team/JD-Team is the best opportunity for our child, how do we get going?**

**A:** *Once you receive your Invitation Letter, you will need to attend our orientation meeting designed to explain the program in further detail as well as answer any applicable questions. You will have the opportunity to secure your child's place in a Pre-Team/JD-Team class at the conclusion of the meeting by paying the annual membership and insurance fee (\$100 per gymnast), otherwise you are welcome to consider the information presented and return with your decision before the New Year training program commences (3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019).*

**Q: What is needed from me as a parent?**

**A:** *First and foremost your job is to be your child's biggest gymnastics supporter. You need to establish open communication with your coach/coaches in order to provide for the best possible learning environment. TGA is a pro-parent organization and we want our parents involved with everything as long as they leave the actual coaching to us. You will be asked to fill out several forms that will serve as a base of information used by the bookkeeper, coaching staff and management. Please have all appropriate forms completed prior to participation.*

*Some parents like to take an active role in learning the rules, policies, procedures and intricacies of our wonderful sport. This is fantastic provided that they do not enter into coaching mode. Stay informed by checking our website ([www.tgadarwin.com](http://www.tgadarwin.com)), and check your mailboxes for newsletters, updated and/or important information and above all else...when in doubt, ask questions and respect the expertise and decisions of our coaches and staff.*

## What is Competitive Team?

Competitive Team membership is for the child who wants MORE of the sport than can be achieved by participation in our recreational program. Of all members we approximate that only 10% are Competitive Team members, and the remaining are involved within our Non-Competitive, Recreational Steps program.

Involvement in our Competitive Team Program comes about when a child has completed a testing process and is invited to the Team. The majority of our Competitive Team members are originally from a recreational program. Competitive Team requires more dedication and commitment from the athlete, the parent and the coaches.

Our national governing body, Gymnastics Australia, directs competitive gymnastics. The Australian Levels Program (ALP) includes competitive levels 1-10, where ALP 1-2 are foundation skill based and included in our recreational STEPS Program. Territory Gymnastics Academy has the desire, passion and dream to be strongly represented in all ALP Levels.

## Team Levels

At ALP levels 3, 4, and 5, gymnasts compete in what is called "Compulsory Levels". A core group of nationally recognized and respected coaches, judges and choreographers have designed routines to establish and develop sound fundamentals in the early competitive years. Each athlete performs the same routine of specific requirements, and the gymnast who performs closest to these requirements scores the highest.

ALP level 6 is a transitional level from Compulsories to Optionals. Gymnasts are given a specific set of requirements, but are able to decide between similar elements on beam & floor to best suit their strengths. The athlete that performs the required elements with the greatest amplitude, style and form will score the best.

Level 7, 8, 9 and 10 are considered beginner-advanced Optional levels. The ALP requires certain 'groups' of elements to be performed, however, it is up to the creativity of the gymnast and coaches to design routines around the gymnast's strengths.

## Competitive Team & Pre-Team Requirements

Territory Gymnastics Academy would like all Team families to know how very much we appreciate your support. We aim to begin 2019 by becoming close to many families and sincerely hope to build even more partnerships and lasting relationships in the future.

It is important to establish certain expectations, rules and procedures in order to become completely transparent and successful among all members.

<b>Training Fees</b>	FULL annual fees paid prior to the 1 <sup>st</sup> week of training will receive a <i>5% discount</i> off the total. Monthly fee amounts are due by the 1st of each month – February to December (total of 11 installments) Training Fees include all ‘holiday’ and school-term training.
<b>Family Discount</b>	Families with more than one child participating in our program will be entitled to accept a ‘ <i>family discount</i> ’ of 5%, 10% for second & third children, respectively. No other discounts will apply for Training Fees.
<b>Outstanding Fees Penalty</b>	After the 7 <sup>th</sup> day of each Month, any unpaid fees will receive a friendly-reminder invoice. Athletes may not train if the outstanding fees are more than <b>4 weeks</b> in arrears. If fees fall behind for a second time, or are not paid immediately following notice at 4 weeks, your Team placement for the remainder of the year will be revoked.
<b>Year-round Commitment</b>	Although we encourage families to take holidays together, it is our policy that Competitive Team members consider training at TGA as a year-round commitment. Your commitment to a 12-month training cycle ensures consistency in coaching, skill acquisition and development, and greater progress towards achieving goals.
<b>Refund Policy</b>	TGA does not offer refunds for any reason, except medical or injury related (4+ weeks only), nor do we pro-rate for missed training sessions. Fees are determined monthly and are considered from the total cost of the program for the year.
<b>Registration, Membership and Insurance</b>	All TGA members are charged an annual fee of \$132.00 that covers each gymnast’s registration and insurance with Gymnastics Northern Territory and Gymnastics Australia. It also includes a club membership fee to offset the cost of expenses including administration, coaches planning & programming, communications and equipment maintenance levy.
<b>4 Weeks Notice</b>	TGA requires an <i>in writing</i> 4-week notice should your child decide to leave/retire from our program. Due to the cost of supporting Competitive Team members and the commitment of the club and coaching staff, it is your important responsibility to notify your child’s coach and the TGA Committee 4 weeks prior to your child leaving the gym (for whatever reason). During that month, your child is still more than welcome to continue training.

<b>Control Tests</b>	<b>Control Tests</b> are ‘mock-meets’ where gymnasts perform their routines in a competition setting, with the purpose of verifying each gymnast’s readiness to complete their skills and routines SAFELY and at a good standard. Control Tests will take place throughout the year, as required, in FULL competition format – gymnasts must wear competition uniform.
<b>Physical Abilities (PA) Tests</b>	<b>Physical Abilities Testing</b> will be done bi-monthly from January. Physical Abilities form the foundation of a gymnast’s ability to progress to the senior levels (7-10) and develop skills safely (to avoid chronic injury) and efficiently. It is the focus of our competitive program and ensures the longevity of each athlete on Team.
<b>Facility Maintenance</b>	TGA has secured general cleaning services, but given the scope of the task, and the use of the facility day-in, day-out, it becomes necessary for daily assistance from staff and members. We request that each and every gymnast makes a conscientious effort to be responsible for their belongings and ‘own clean up’ as well as helping out with the daily “tidy up” of equipment & matting. Coaches will organise this tidy up at the end of each session. This entails picking up any rubbish, straightening mats, stacking spotting blocks, picking up weights and putting away any personal belongings. Chalk misuse, drink spills and misplaced personal equipment (eg. “panda paws”) seem to be the most common problems in keeping our facility clean. We ask that coaches monitor the use of chalk and ensure gymnasts keep all personal items in their gym bags when not in direct use.
<b>Team Attire and Grooming</b>	TGA Team members are expected to not only act, but also look respectable when representing our Team. Whilst in the gym Team members should dress in a Leotard OR Leotard and Training Shorts ONLY. No loose shirts, shorts or clothing is permitted. Hair is to be pulled back from the face and neck, into a tight bun. When you are representing the club at a competition, or travelling with the Team, please remember that your demeanor, grooming and attitude represent TGA, and a High Standard of behaviour is expected. Athletes that are not appropriately dressed and ready for training will not be permitted to participate.
<b>‘Gym Bag’ Essentials</b>	All Team gymnasts must have the following in their day-to-day ‘gym bag’: Wrist bands Socks Strapping tape (1 roll minimum) Sweat towel Grips ( <i>where required</i> ) Elastic resistance band x2 Cotton/Fabric gardening gloves (for use on metal, strap bar) WATER BOTTLE