

Manual Handling Policy

All EVT Gymnastics coaches are required to do their Manual handling on-line course, and must show proof of completion. Please copy and paste the link below, and it is free of charge for all British gymnastics members.

<https://www.british-gymnastics.org/courses/6390/health-safety-manual-handling>

It is not possible to eliminate manual handling altogether, correct handling techniques must be followed to minimise the risks of injury. A variety of injuries may result from poor manual handling and staff must all be aware and adhere to EVT Gymnastics manual handling policy.

Remember - lifting and carrying children is different to carrying static loads and therefore manual handling training should reflect this. All staff will receive training in manual handling as soon as possible after commencing employment and will receive on-going training as appropriate.

Preventing injuries

As with other health and safety issues, the most effective method of prevention is to eliminate the hazard – in this case, to remove the need to carry out hazardous manual handling. For example, it may be possible to re-design the workplace so that items do not need to be moved from one area to another. However, this is not possible for lifting children. Where manual handling tasks cannot be avoided, they must be assessed as part of the risk assessment.

This involves examining the tasks and deciding what the risks associated with them are, and how these can be removed or reduced by adding control measures. As part of a manual handling assessment the following should be considered:

- The tasks to be carried out
- The load to be moved (remember to think about the children moving at this point)
- The environment in which handling takes place
- The capability of the individual involved in the manual handling.

A number of factors increase the risk of manual handling injuries, and these should be considered and controlled. The following paragraphs offer a number of suggestions for the correct lifting procedure as well as planning and procedure.

Think about the task to be performed and plan the lift. Consider what you will be lifting, where you will put it, how far you are going to move it and how you are going to get there. Never attempt manual handling unless you have read the correct techniques and understood how to use them.

Ensure that you are capable of undertaking the task – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury. Assess the size, weight and centre of

gravity of the load to make sure that you can maintain a firm grip and see where you are going.

Assess whether you can lift the load safely without help. If not, get help or use specialist moving equipment e.g. a trolley. Bear in mind that it may be too dangerous to attempt to lift some loads. If more than one person is involved, plan the lift first and agree who will lead and give instructions. Plan your route and remove any obstructions. Check for any hazards such as uneven/slippery flooring. Lighting should be adequate

Control harmful loads – for instance, by covering sharp edges or by insulating hot containers. Check whether you need any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and obtain the necessary items, if appropriate. Check the equipment before use and check that it fits you. Ensure that you are wearing the correct clothing, avoiding tight clothing and unsuitable footwear. Consider a resting point before moving a heavy load or carrying something any distance.

Coaching children

“Supporting” and “Spotting” are integral with the safe learning of gymnastics skills and involve the techniques of observation and handling, to ensure the safe performance of the skill. Recommended safe practices as taught on BG coaching courses and at the club should be used.

Students and pregnant staff members will be subject to their own risk assessment.

Position Stand in front of the load with your feet apart and your leading leg forward. Your weight should be even over both feet. Position yourself (or turn the load around) so that the heaviest part is next to you. If the load is too far away, move toward it or bring it nearer before starting the lift. Do not twist your body to pick it up.

Lifting

Always lift using the correct posture: Bend the knees slowly, keeping the back straight. Tuck the chin in on the way down. Lean slightly forward if necessary and get a good grip. Keep the shoulders level, without twisting or turning from the hips. Try to grip with the hands around the base of the load. Bring the load to waist height, keeping the lift as smooth as possible.

Moving the child or load

Move the feet, keeping the child or load close to the body. Proceed carefully, making sure that you can see where you are going. Lower the child or load, reversing the procedure for lifting. Avoid crushing fingers or toes as you put the child or load down. If you are carrying a load, position and secure it after putting it down. Make sure that the child or load is rested on a stable base and in the case of the child ensure their safety in this new position.

Report any problems immediately, for example, strains and sprains. Where there are changes, for example to the activity or the load, the task must be reassessed.

The task

Carrying loads close to the body, lifting and carrying the load at arm's length increases the risk of injury. Avoid awkward movements such as stooping, reaching or twisting. Ensure that the task is well designed and that procedures are followed. Try never to lift loads from the floor or to above shoulder height. Limit the distances for carrying. Minimise repetitive actions by re-designing and rotating tasks. Ensure that there are adequate rest periods and breaks between tasks. Plan ahead – use teamwork where the load is too heavy for one person.

The environment

Ensure that the surroundings are safe. Flooring should be even and not slippery, lighting should be adequate, and the temperature and humidity should be suitable. Remove obstructions and ensure that the correct equipment is available.

The individual

Never attempt manual handling unless you have been trained and given permission to do so.. Ensure that you are capable of undertaking the task – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury.

Accident and First Aid

EVT Gymnastics has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare, ensuring and providing a safe environment and responding appropriately in the event of an accident. Accidents can be very distressing for anyone involved, so at EVT Gymnastics, ensure that we follow this policy and its procedures to ensure all parties are supported and cared for, and their health, safety and welfare is protected throughout their time in the gym.

The person responsible for reporting accidents, incidents or near misses is the coach or parent/carer who witnesses the incident. They must be recorded on the accident report sheet and kept in the accident folder and report it to the head coach (director). This should be done as soon as the accident is dealt with, whilst the details are still clearly remembered. Parents/Carers must be shown the Accident Report and asked to sign it as soon as they collect their child or if on site immediately.

If a child has a bump to the head it is of utmost importance that this is recorded on an accident form. Coaches need to give parents a bumped head form and make it clear for parents to look out for signs and symptoms of concussion and if concerned seek medical advice.

Accident forms are checked weekly for patterns e.g. one child having a repeated number of accidents, a particular area in the site or equipment or a particular time of the day when most accidents happen. Any patterns will be investigated by the head coach (director) and welfare officer. The head coach (director) will report serious accidents to the British Gymnastics for investigation for further action to be taken (i.e. a full risk assessment or report under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)).

The Accident File will be kept for three years from the date of the report, or in the case of a child, until they are 21 years of age.

Where medical attention is required, a senior coach will notify the parent(s) as soon as possible whilst caring for the child appropriately if parents/carers are not already on site.

Where medical treatment is required the head coach (director) will also inform the insurance company in writing. There must be no “diagnosis” of the injury by the first aider. If further help and assistance/treatment is needed, it is to be left to the parent or the professionals to make a decision as to the severity of the injury. Ice packs are in the First Aid bag. Do not apply these directly to the skin. Wrap them first in a kitchen towel, provided in the First Aid kit.

Dealing with a minor accident

The head coach will take the role in dealing with first aid incidents as they are not part of the coaching ratio. If a child has a minor injury, the coach needs to call for “help” from (head coach). The head coach will then deal with the accident and the coach can resume with their group, unless it escalates. In this instance the coaches need to split their group into another group and assist the admin team with first aid.

Dealing with a major accident

The head coach will take the role in dealing with first aid incidents as they are not part of the coaching ratio. If a child has a major injury, the coach needs to stop their gymnasts, call for “help” and blow the emergency whistle alerting the other coaches that the session needs to stop. The head coach or director needs to remove the uninjured gymnasts away from the gymnasium to a safe area. First aid qualified coaches need to help assist with the incident. The other coaches need to remain with the gymnasts and keep them calm.

Transporting children to hospital procedure

If the injury is severe, call for an ambulance immediately. DO NOT attempt to transport the sick child in your own vehicle. Whilst waiting for the ambulance, contact the parent and arrange to meet them at the hospital if not in the venue. A senior member coach must accompany the child and collect together registration forms, relevant medication sheets, medication and the child’s comforter. The head coach (director) must also be informed immediately.