

**TEAM PARENTS’ HANDBOOK**

**& GUIDE**

**2022-2023**

***All-Star Academy’s Mission***

We are committed to the development and excellence in the sports industry focusing on gymnastics, cheerleading, and tumbling.  We strive to encourage that anyone can participate at both competitive and non-competitive levels so that each athlete receives equal opportunities that support their level of skill and goals.   Through strong leadership, we teach that allowing your faith to become bigger than your fears leads to accomplishing personal goals and dreams!   With Christ as our guide, we aim to provide a safe, educational, fun and dedicated business that provides endless opportunities and encouragement for young athletes.  
  
   
  
**“He counts the stars and calls them all by name”  
  
Psalm 147: 4**

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***WELCOME TO COMPETITIVE GYMNASTICS!***

Our passion at All-Star Academy is teaching gymnastics to all who desire to learn, and our Competitive Gymnastics Program holds a special place in our heart! This program is designed to educate, train, and prepare your gymnast for more advanced and progressive practice workouts, skills, & routines, scored performances, and ultimately a positive team atmosphere and experience. We hold our competitive gymnasts to a high standard of commitment, self-motivation, work ethic, kindness towards other members & coaching staff, safety awareness, responsibility, and more. We truly love to see our gymnasts grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and in maturity by participating in the sport of gymnastics! We’re very glad you’re here!

**UNDERSTANDING THE COMMITMENT OF COMPETITIVE GYMNASTICS:**

* **Gymnastics is a YEAR-ROUND sport:**

Gymnastics is a year-round commitment. It is critical to the success of your athlete that they are committed to this sport during both school year and summer months. Gymnastics is unique in that it is one that requires such a high time commitment at a relatively young age. We ask that you understand this obligation when becoming interested in training & performing as a competitive gymnast, and also being the supportive parent of one. While we do support participation in other activities, typically the participation in too many activities may result in inconsistent successes, increased chance of injury, as well as a display of a lack of commitment to all programs involved. ASA fully recognizes that athletes are young, growing school students first and that family, academics, and religion must all be priorities. Ultimately, we expect our athletes and team families to learn to budget their time when other activities arise and make fair, thought-out decisions regarding their time management.

* **Practice Attendance/Make-Up Policy:** 
  + Gymnasts are expected to attend all practices listed for their level, however our coaching staff understands that there can be conflicts with practice times (school events, schoolwork, special events, family events, family vacations, health risk exposure, and sickness).
  + **For personal practice absences, we do not offer a make-up practices. With our extensive practice schedule and our ever-growing recreational programs, we cannot and do not offer make up times individually.**
  + For unexpected weather closures, holiday closures that are not fifth week days in the month, and competitions that replace practice days, make up practices are up to Coaching Management discretion. You will be notified of these times by coaching staff when they are given confirmation by management. These will not be rescheduled and gymnasts cannot attend other level practices besides their own.
  + **Gymnasts are required to attend practices the week of competition.** If you are absent for any practice during the week of competition you will not be permitted to compete at the following meet. Not attending practices immediately prior to competing poses a safety risk for gymnasts. No refunds available.
  + **We do not offer “hybrid” practice schedules**. Once your gymnast has been placed at a certain level, they can only attend those respective practices.
  + **We expect all gymnasts to arrive for practices on time or slightly early to begin practicing at their scheduled time**.
  + Those who do not enroll in sessions through any/all/partial summer training months (June-August) will be required to meet the following before advancement:
    - Will be placed in skill appropriate group upon returning to the competitive program at coaches’ discretion
    - Schedule & complete a minimum of 4 private (1 hour) sessions with a coach per month un-enrolled (June-August)
      * To work on level advancement skills
    - Perform each required skill up to coach’s standards
* **Time/Financial Commitment:**
  + **Tuition Payment:** All competitive team members are required to be enrolled in our EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) program for automatic tuition pay on the 1st of every month.
    - No practice, competition, or team bonding activity can be attended without up-to-date/current tuition paid in full.
  + **Club Fee:** Annual fee of $110 per gymnast to help fund coaching staff travel & time throughout competition season. To be paid on October 1 (will be automatically processed with October tuition). Club fees due up front for those joining after October 1st. This covers team picture fees, aids in paying coaches at competitions, & provides a boost to our team bonding fund for the year.
  + **Competition Entry Fees:** Athlete entry fees vary per level & meet. Each competition will have its own deadline for registering & paying your athlete fee. Entry fees can be processed at the ASA front office, over the phone, or via email giving permission to run a card on file. Fees range from $45-60 for non-sanctioned competitions (Xcel Bronze/Silver). Fees range from $100-155 for sanctioned competitions (Xcel Gold/Platinum/Diamond). These fees are automatically charged for you on the respective due dates unless we hear otherwise from you via Band. No refunds available. ASA is not responsible for “meet gifts” for those who do not attend competitions that provide them.
  + **USAG Membership Fee:** All Xcel Gold, Platinum, & Diamond athletes must be registered as a USAG Athlete. $65 per renewing athlete for the 2022-2023 season. $25 for first time members. Complete by August 22nd. Instructions for this will be given to you.
  + **Team Uniform/Apparel:** Each family is responsible for work out leotards & apparel equipment necessary for training (practice leotards, grips, tape, braces, etc.). Required team apparel orders will be ordered in August. Other apparel items may be available each year to purchase that may or may not be required. If you have a leotard from a past year that you can no longer wear, you have the option to sell 2nd hand to another team member. Please use ‘Band’ to communicate team apparel items only that you wish to sell for a discounted price. All transactions for 2nd hand apparel are to be done without ASA staff involvement.
  + **Choreography (Xcel Bronze, Silver, Gold & Level 5):** Floor and beam routines are created by ASA coaching staff and require 1-on-1 time to personalize & teach each gymnast. A choreography schedule will be available to those who qualify for this time to sign up with their coach. All choreography will be done in July & August. Choreography fees are to be paid to ASA at time of scheduling. Xcel Gold/Platinum/Diamond will require 3 hours (two separate 1.5 hour sessions) for a total of $120.
  + **Annual Team Pictures:** **PICTURE DAY 2022: DECEMBER 18TH @ 3:30 pm.** Each year we schedule a picture day for all team members and coaches. Our photographer provides access to all our photos in a private online gallery that only ASA parents can access. Photography fees are collected to participate (included in club fees) whether you are present or decide to order/print pictures or not.
  + **Practice Schedule & Tuition Rates for 2021-2022 Season:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LEVEL/GROUP** | **MONTHLY TUITION** | **PRACTICE #1** | **PRACTICE #2** | **PRACTICE #3** |
| PRE-TEAM (active Jan-Apr) | $106 | TBD | TBD |  |
| XCEL BRONZE | $156 | Tuesday 6:00-8:00p | Thursday 6:00-8:00p |  |
| XCEL SILVER | $182 | Tuesday 5:15-7:45p | Tuesday 5:15-7:45p |  |
| XCEL GOLD/PLATINUM/DIAMOND | $216 | Monday 5:30-8:30p | Wednesday 5:30-8:30p | Friday 4:15-7:15p |

* + **Breakdown of the Year:**
    - **June 1:** Initially commit to the ASA Competitive Gymnastics Program for 2021-2022 season
    - **June-October:** Off-season training to acquire the strength and skill required for their level
    - **July:** Final, official placements for athletes in their levels.
    - **August-October:** Final preparations for the competitive season
    - **November-April:** Competitive season
    - **May:** Spring training begins!

**COMPETITIVE TEAM BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:**

* **Competitive Coaching Expectations (General):**
  + We hold our competitive coaching staff to the highest standard of quality skill coaching. We train & mentor our staff to care deeply for our gymnasts and to help them develop life skills in all their athletes. Fostering a positive, encouraging, focused, organized, and safe program is our top priority. Requirements such as background checks, Safesport certifications, and fundamental education courses are monitored and must be kept current to remain on the ASA Coaching Staff. Coaches are held responsible for well-thought out plans for practice and skill progression throughout the entire year and are expected to attend all competitions. Coaches will attend team bonding activities when able. ASA Coaching Staff will also be prepared to relay any/all information to athletes and parents about program/policy details and answer questions about gymnast individual progression. Coaches may not give out personal cell phone numbers to gymnasts or parents, but can communicate verbally or through brief email conversations if necessary. Email conversations with coaches must remain about personal gymnast progress/performance questions. All other scheduling/fee/general policy questions should be taken to ASA front office.
* **Parent Expectations:**
  + **Encouragement:** Your role as a gymnastics parent is an important one! Your willingness to provide unconditional encouragement and support for your gymnast will allow them to see that you are proud of them no matter how far they choose to take their competitive journey – and we expect our team parents to agree with this statement. Your gymnast should feel supported and loved when they feel victorious and even more so when they feel defeated. Help your child understand that as long as hard work and dedication is there improvement will follow.
  + **Punctuality:** Make every attempt to have your gymnast at practice 5-10 minutes early each practice day. Coaches are fully aware and understanding that athletes are students first and a heavy schoolwork load will trump practice attendance at times. Please communicate with ASA coaching staff through Band if this or a similar situation occurs. If you are going to be late picking up your child or another adult will be carpooling or picking up your child, please communicate that with ASA coaching staff through Band. Persistent tardiness will be addressed.
  + **Nutrition & Medication:** Prepare your gymnast physically for practice and competitions by encouraging a healthy diet, proper hydration, and appropriate medication dosages & sleeping habits. Make sure your gymnast is provided nutrition before and after workouts and provide only water to drink during training times.
  + **Trust Coaching Staff:** Refrain from coaching your gymnast. Technical corrections given by parents can create conflict between gymnasts and coaches. We ask you to trust our training process and know that we always have the best interest of each child at heart. All gymnasts progress at their own rate and our responsibility as competitive coaching staff is to monitor and help progression in the gym. Parents can support coaching decisions by clarifying concerns and questions with ASA Coaching Staff while remaining respectful of the authority of their child’s coach. We take all concerns and suggestions brought to our attention seriously and work to provide the best program we can for our competitive athletes.
  + **No Gossiping/Comparing:** We work to support those who support us! Our team families are expected to be advocates of ASA’s Competitive Program. We expect all team parents to be excellent examples for their growing gymnasts, as we expect our coaching staff to be as well. Never compare your gymnast to another child, whether they are more or less advanced, younger or older, etc. There is no good to come of any comparison of that sort.
  + **Zero Tolerance Agreement:** We do not tolerate bullying, shaming, hurtful gossip, or verbal/physical/emotional abuse. Unacceptable behavior from a parent or child to another child, parent, or ASA staff member in any manner will risk your child’s place in our competitive program.
  + **Adhere to our Policies:** Thank you for trusting us with your gymnast’s competitive pathway! We strive to care and educate your child as a gymnast and a person. If you respect us enough to play this large role in your child’s life, please respect that we do our best for the progression of your child and always have their best interest at heart. ASA reserves the right to revise policies as ASA Management Staff sees fit to best provide for our students and staff in all programs.
  + **Attend Parent Meetings:** ASA Coaching Staff wishes to communicate regularly and effectively with team parents through multiple resources including email, the Band app (messaging board), and parent meetings throughout the year. These meetings must be attended to continually get important information regarding updates, changes, revisions, addressing concerns, answering questions, and so on. Please see “Parent Meeting Schedule” further in this guide.

*We are immensely grateful for your support of our competitive program and we hope to foster open, communicative, and friendly relationships with each parent involved. With that being said, it is important to remember that ASA Gymnastics is a place of business and policies are expected to be respected and complied with.*

**Competitive Gymnast Expectations:**

* **Be Ready:** Arrive on time to the gym physically ready to train on each scheduled practice day. This means you’ve eaten a healthy meal before practice with enough time to digest properly. You are dressed for practice in your leotard and spandex shorts (only if desired) with your hair secured away from your face. You should be ready to walk into the gym as soon as your coach takes attendance – coats off, sweatpants off, shoes off, restroom used if necessary, water bottle in hand, etc.
* **Be Prepared:** Have any/all equipment you need to practice properly. This includes but is not limited to:
  + Water bottle
  + Hair ties/soft head bands
  + Band aids
  + Tissues
  + Hand sanitizer
  + Deodorant
  + Grips
  + Athletic tape
  + Pre-wrap
  + Mini/travel scissors (to cut tape)
  + Nail clippers (to take care of rips that need tended to)
  + Braces, ankle/wrist supports, personal padding, etc
  + Safety strap for glasses
  + Inhalers
* **Practice Wear:** Leotards MUST be worn – no t-shirts, tank tops, unitards, or sports bras as tops. No leggings allowed during training. Spandex, or tight athletic shorts may be worn at any time EXCEPT for the week of a competition.
* **Attitude Check:** Arrive with the right attitude! Walk into ASA with the intent to participate with a positive & appropriately competitive attitude. Coaches help gymnasts set goals, give them the tools needed, and provide every opportunity possible to reach them – but it is up to the gymnast to put in the work. It’s expected to have frustrating practices or moments every once in a while, but we expect each gymnast to learn how to handle their reactions & turn tough moments in to growth moments. Any frustration that becomes negative behavior toward a coach, team member, or staff member will not be tolerated.
* **Ask Permission:** Ask your coach for permission to use the restroom, get a drink, get a band aid, etc. Safety concerns arise when your coach does not know where you are within the gym.
* **No Cheating:** Cheating is the worst form of disrespect for your coach, your teammates, and yourself and is deemed as unacceptable as it is in school.
* **Talk to your Coach:** Communicate with your coach when you don’t feel well, are injured, or are struggling with something emotionally. Coaches can help you with most things you bring to their attention, but they cannot read your mind. Open communication is important to training safely as a competitive gymnast.
* **Take Constructive Criticism:** Gymnastics is not an easy sport. Coaches provide loads of encouragement and corrections with the expectation that you learn how to take the corrections/criticism with a positive, determined attitude toward doing what is asked of you. Corrections are given for the purpose of helping you increase your scores, so the ability to take re-direction and criticism without a negative attitude is important to put into practice.
* **Enjoy Being a Gymnast:** We are all here for the same reason – We love gymnastics! Though we teach our competitive gymnasts to conform to higher standards of behavior, focus, and skill progression, we never want gymnastics to feel like a “job”. Gymnastics requires strong-minded, determined attitudes to overcome failures. This means hours upon hours spent in the gym working to perfect the smallest details of our routines. Trust the process of training and put every effort you can into becoming the most coachable gymnast you can be for ultimate success.

**PROGRAM/LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS:**

* **Pre-Team Program:** This program is to prepare athletes who are interested in being part of our competitive team and teach them the foundational skills that they need to begin competing. Pre-Team provides an opportunity to be a part of our ASA team and gain the confidence and skill set to progress on to our competitive program. Your coach will advise you when it is appropriate to transition into a competitive level & which level is suggested. This part of our competitive program is active from January through April. Level advancements occur at the start of May.
* **Xcel Program:** USA Gymnastics states that *“the Xcel Program is designed to offer a broad-based, affordable competitive experience outside the traditional Jr. Olympic Program to attract and retain a diverse group of athletes. XCEL is an alternative USA Gymnastics program offering individual flexibility to coaches and gymnasts. The goal of Xcel is to provide gymnasts of varying abilities and commitment levels the opportunity for a rewarding gymnastics experience.”* With the allowance of more personalized routines with varying skill requirement options to include, this program welcomes a more diversely-skilled group of gymnasts. Xcel serves as a detour from the traditional Junior Olympic program when a gymnast is not ready for the next level but has done well at their most recent level. Your coach will communicate when participation in this program is recommended for your athlete.

**LEVEL ADVANCEMENT:**

As USA Gymnastics states*, “The USAG Junior Olympic program was developed with the belief that all athletes, regardless of their potential, must have a solid foundation of basic skills in order at advance safely.”* Level advancement cannot be compared to moving up in grades in school. We cannot guarantee that a gymnast will move on to the next level each season. While it is difficult to know how a gymnast will perform, specific benchmarks must be demonstrated for advancement. Factors such as performance at the previous level, physical readiness, focus, age, dedication, maturity, attendance throughout the entire year (12 months), and more influence the coaches’ decision on level placement. All level placements will be determined by head coaches & team staff and will be announced/discussed privately at advancement time. Advancements occur in May each year.

**PRIVATE LESSONS:**

These are designed to improve on or learn specific skills. Private lessons cannot replace regular training sessions; however, they are available if a gymnast needs the additional gym time to help catch up on, or improve specific skills. A coach will recommend a lesson if the situation arises or you can request one with your coach privately. Private session times can be scheduled based on your coach’s availability outside of practice time. Speak with your gymnast’s coach to see what options they may have and then proceed to purchase/book your private lesson with the front office.

**\*Private lesson prices:**

**Team Coach / Assistant Coach: 30 min = $35 60 min = $65**

**Head Coach (Ms Madi) = 30 min = $40 60 min = $70**

**PARENT MEETINGS:**

ASA Team Staff will hold regular meetings to discuss information, news, upcoming events & issues relevant to the team program. **Team parents are required to attend meetings either virtually or in person (when offered).** This ensures that information is being clearly communicated and questions/clarifications answered can be heard and understood by all.

Team Parent meetings scheduled for the 2022-2023 season are as follows.

* **Intro to our 2021-2022 Season! All the new info you need to know**
  + August 3rd (Wednesday) @ 7:45p
* **Apparel Sizing**
  + August 8th-12th @ 12:30p (Gymnasts measured in practices throughout this week)
  + August 12th (Friday) 🡪 APPAREL ORDERS DUE
* **Meet Etiquette Discussion, Review How to Dress & Prepare Properly for Competition**
  + October 19th @ 7:45p (Wednesday)
* **Mid-season/New Year Check-in/Planning for Fundraiser Meet** 
  + January 18th @ 7:45p (Wednesday)
* **End of Season Check-in/Championship & Banquet Preparations** 
  + April 5th @ 7:45p (Wednesday)

\*\*All meetings will be offered via a live recording on Band. You can choose to watch virtually or be physically present when we offer in-person meetings. It is YOUR responsibility to get this information that we organize, distribute, and explain for you.

**TEAM BONDING NIGHTS/OUTINGS:**

Throughout the year, we try very hard to implement more opportunities for our team members to get to know each other outside of a practice/focused environment! We believe that gymnasts thrive the most when they feel socially connected in practices and hope that sense of friendship encourages them to be the best supportive teammates ever! Team Bonding Nights will be announced with our meet schedule for the year to make sure competition scheduling is considered first. These are not mandatory but certainly encouraged so your gymnast can have a wonderful competitive gymnastics experience throughout their season!

**COACH CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Madi Fueston: Team Director for Competitive Program, Contact for questions/concerns**

Email: asagymnastics@gmail.com

**Abby Jenkins/Olivia Curtis: Xcel Bronze Team Coach/Assistant Coach**

Email: [abbyjenkins0625@gmail.com](mailto:abbyjenkins0625@gmail.com)

**Madi Fueston/Abbey Foreman: Xcel Silver Team Coach/Assistant Coach**

**Madi Fueston/Abby Jenkins: Xcel Gold Team Coach/Assistant Coach**

***What to Expect at a Competition***

A typical gymnastics competition is divided into sessions; each session contains athletes of one or more levels. The gymnasts march out and are evaluated on vault bars, beam, and floor by judges. How the gymnasts are grouped into sessions depends on the number of competitors and the meet director; the USAG has rules which regulate the maximum number of competitors in a session.

**WARM UP**

The competition will begin with a warm up. Although it is called a "warm up" these periods closely resemble a workout. During the pre-competition warm up the gymnasts will begin stretching and other activities (no full floor tumbling allowed) and then move to their first event's apparatus for pre-competition skill and routine rehearsal. Time limits for each athlete or team are set so that everyone gets the same amount of time to practice.

**MARCH IN**

Following the warm up the athletes will assemble at some designated place. They will then march in. The judges for each event are also introduced. This is a long standing gymnastics tradition. Then the National Anthem will be played.

**COMPETITION**

Following the march in, the gymnasts will disperse to their first competition event. They always stop by the judging tables at each event to acknowledge the judges and to say hello. At some meets gymnasts warm up on all events and then compete on all events (Traditional format), and other meets the order is warm up compete, warm up compete (Modified traditional format). The hosting facility decides the format.

**V, UB, BB, & FX**

Gymnastics competitions for girls involve performances on four apparatuses called events: vault (VT), uneven parallel bars (UB), balance beam (BB), and floor exercise (FX). The gymnasts in a given session (level) are divided into roughly even squads who rotate among the four events (rotations), always proceeding in Olympic order: vault - bars - beam - floor. If your girl's squad happens to start on the balance beam, then her next event will be the floor exercise. At any given time someone is competing on each of the four events.

**VAULTING**

Vaulting consists of a run of about 70' - 80' followed by a jump to a small wooden springing device called a spring board, and a diving flight to an apparatus which looks like a "tongue" (vault table) held up on metal posts (called a horse). The gymnast lands on her hands on the vault table, usually somewhere around a handstand, and pushes off, performs some movement, and then lands on her feet. Vaulting requires extreme quickness, a fast run, a hard push from the horse, some cool flips and stuff in the air, and a landing that is stuck. Gymnasts typically perform two vaults; the best vault determines the score. At beginning compulsory levels (1-3) the athletes vault on a thick vault mat.

**UNEVEN BARS**

The uneven parallel bars (or bars) consist of two wood-covered, fiberglass rails held up by steel posts at different heights and a variable distance apart. Depending on the level of competition, routines consist of skills performed in a series. The gymnasts show large swing skills, kips, casts, handstands, a release and re-catch of the bars, a dismount to the floor, and a stuck landing. Gymnasts at beginning compulsory levels (1-3) use only the low bar.

**BALANCE BEAM**

The balance beam (beam) is an apparatus made of steel and padding that is 16.5 feet long, 4 inches wide, and approximately 4 feet high. The gymnast will show a variety of skills from dance and tumbling and combine them into a routine which lasts from 30 - 90 seconds. Basically they do the same moves executed on the floor except they are confined to a space that is four inches wide.

**FLOOR EXERCISE**

Floor exercise is performed on area that is about 40 ft x 40 ft. There is a platform under the pad and carpet called a spring floor. The spring floor can be comprised of either springs or foam blocks or both. There are approx. 1,600 blocks or springs under the floor. The girls perform to music; each level of compulsory gymnasts perform to the same music, optional levels choose their own music. The routine should cover most of the area of the carpet (inside the boundary lines), must include tumbling, and include lots of dance elements.

**AWARDS**

At the conclusion of a session, awards are conferred on all gymnasts. Medals and/or trophies are given for each of the four events (V, UB, BB, FX), as well as the all-around scores (AA). The girls are grouped by both level and age (such as Level 4 ages 8 and below, Level 5 age 10, etc.). This is to limit direct competition between older and younger girls so that all have a fair shot at a great placement and award! USAG mandates that at least 25% of the places receive awards; many competitions award 50% of the places. So, essentially the top 50% of gymnasts in each age group will receive awards for individual events, and then every gymnast is each age group receive an all-around award. No one is left out! You will be recognized for your hard work ☺

At many gymnastics meets there are team (level) competitions as well. In this case, for each team, the top three scoring gymnasts’ all-around on each team are added up, then top team scores are compared for awarding teams as a whole.

Putting it all together, there are four events plus the all-around for each age group in addition to team awards; this means that a lot of awards are doled out, so get comfy during this time! Fortunately, we use computerized scoring software which helps keep forever-long award sessions from becoming a reality and all our meet hosts do their best to run an efficient competition.

***Reminder: How well your daughter does in awards depends on both her score, which she controls, and who else is at the competition, which is out of her control. While the girls tend to focus on the awards, it is really far more important that they do their best and encourage their teammates to do the same.***