



What an exciting time of the year!

As a parent of a competitive gymnast, there is much to learn. Don't worry; you will get the hang of it! To get started, here are a few things that should help you successfully support your athlete's season:

MEET SESSIONS: Be clear in which "session" your athlete is competing. This information should be coming from your coach or administrator directly, and it should include guidance such as your expected arrival time, the official warm-up time, and when the competition begins. NOTE: Many meet schedules will be marked as "tentative" until a week or two before each meet. Meet directors sometimes need to change session times.

COMMUNICATIONS: Review the meet info provided to you **BEFORE** meet day! Ultimately, refer **ONLY** to the information provided by your coach or CSC representative *unless* they send you to the official meet site online for that info. Ask questions of the coach for clarifications if you have questions...we want you to feel comfortable knowing where and when you should be at the meet. If you do find discrepancies online or in writing or verbally, let your coach know right away.

ABSENCES: Not able to attend a meet because of other important plans? We enter all our athletes in every meet (often long before season begins) and bill families unless we hear otherwise. If you are unable to attend a meet, please notify the front desk and your coach in writing. If we have already charged you but it is early enough, we will attempt to get a refund of the meet fee, but it is not always possible. If you are missing a meet (or late) at the last minute, contact the coach via their cell phone (emergency communications only).

Absences from practices the week of a meet can affect meet performance and/or confidence. Missing too many can also become a safety issue. Making all practices means your athlete does all the things the coaches planned for the week. Your meet coach has the discretion and responsibility to make changes to what your athlete competes at a competition.

REST UP: Avoid a late night prior to competition. Stick to a normal routine (similar to a school night) OR give time for extra sleep the night(s) before a meet. Speak about the importance of physical and mental rest, and encourage it, but please know that some gymnasts may not sleep well the night before a meet. Not ideal, but fretting over it can make for a less successful meet.

FUEL UP: A good healthy dinner the night before and/or breakfast can make or break a meet. Energy needs: carbs! Remember, not only is a competition physically draining, but also emotionally. Keep the energy flowing with healthy snacks in your gymnast's gym bag, such as fruit, cheese, crackers, juices and water for hydration. Save the junk food for after the meet.

ON ARRIVAL: Arrive at least 15 minutes before your coach asks you to arrive, which is normally the open warm-up / open stretch time. This provides time for parking, finding the entrance, finding your coach, etc. We also know that many athletes appreciate having time to acclimate to their surroundings. Once they learn important things such as where their parents are sitting, where their teammates and coaches are, where the bathrooms are, and the layout of the gym and competitive events, they can then focus on gymnastics.

MEET STRUCTURE: A meet session typically lasts from 2-4 hours. Traditionally* each meet session includes an "open" warm-up, a timed warm-up, and then the competition begins with a formal march-in. Athletes will rotate in groups based on some variation of the Olympic Order (FX > PH > R > V > PB > HB). Awards follow the sixth and final event rotation. *There are other meet formats, such as "Capital Cup".

BOYS TEAMS: MEET PREP TIPS FOR PARENTS



UNIFORMS: Let's review uniform requirements: All gymnasts arrive dressed in their core uniform – “warm-ups” (jacket & pants), CSC team shirt, bodysuit/singlet, shorts, stirrups, socks. Pro Tip: keep an extra pair of socks in your gymnast’s bag. Gymnasts should wear their warm-ups entering the gym, during awards and exiting the gym. Make sure all uniform pieces – and grips and bags - are clearly marked with your child’s name. Hats or/or jewelry are not allowed on the competitive gym floor.

LET GO: The coaches are in charge of their athletes from the time they arrive at the meet facility and check in, until they are dismissed following awards. **Parents are not allowed on the competitive floor.** Your coach may ask for parent support for such things as bathroom trips, uniform issues, or taking photos. Your role is to be present with a light touch (except cheering). While the coaches and athletes and judges on the gym floor are highly focused on gymnastics, parent support should only involve non-performance, non-technical, non-rule aspects of participation in gymnastics competitions that do sometimes come up, and ***ONLY WHEN INVITED BY THE COACH***.

BE A MODEL SPECTATOR: To the best of your ability, let your athlete have their experience be their own, without you playing a central role. Be a fan of all the participants, while still being your son’s biggest supporter. Remember you have a very important role to play, and it does not involve coaching or even understanding what happens or why it happens. Gymnastics is quite complicated!

The ultimate parent statement is: “I love watching you do gymnastics.”

Coach	Athlete	Parent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the rules. Be the expert. • Have a plan for the day • Communicate expectations • Be professional at all times • Demonstrate sportsmanship • Monitor athlete emotions and adjust the “temperature” • Provide technical feedback • See where the athletes are “at” for the day and help them adjust • Allow the athletes to learn and feel – both positive and negative • Stay focused on effort, not outcome (scores) • Give honest, supporting feedback to your gymnasts • Take what you learn back to the gym 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice focus / get in the zone • Give your best effort • Communicate w/ your coaches • Support your teammates • Practice sportsmanship • Regulate your emotions • Follow all directions • Stay hydrated and fueled up • Take care of your uniform and personal equipment • Judge your success on personal effort and performance, not on scores or placement • Take what you learn about yourself and your gymnastics back to the gym 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting your child in the best position to have a good day • Letting the sport be theirs, and the meets part of their journey • Communicating w/ coach whenever there are non-gymnastics challenges to be aware of for the day • Supporting all athletes, coaches, and judges* • Being your child’s biggest fan • TIP: You are likely the ONLY person who will provide unconditional love and support on the day of a meet. <p>*you should expect proper sportsmanship from all the adults!</p>

POST-MEET: Celebrate successes with your gymnast. Success does not mean a ribbon or a medal was earned, necessarily. Know that the coaches will be reviewing both successes and areas of correction and focus back at the gym.

Athletes sometimes also need physical and emotional recovery time after meets. Coaches, too. Sometimes we will recommend or require our gymnasts to take a Monday off following a meet. Other times not. Help your athlete with their recovery by supporting their sleep and nutrition and physical recovery.