



THE ACADEMY OF  
GYMNASTICS

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Inspiring Children

### **FLEXIBILITY TRAINING FOR GYMNASTS POLICY**

Training flexibility is an essential part of gymnastics training but must be done in a safe, transparent way with the athlete in control.

At The Academy, we pride ourselves on the important factors that lead to a safe and successful gymnastics flexibility programme, we take a consistent flexibility approach from the onset, with select gymnasts taking a flexibility class each week with a specialist coach.

It is important that the gymnast and family develop an understanding of why flexibility is essential to succeed in Gymnastics. The gymnast must understand that if they do not improve / maintain their flexibility, it will limit their skill development, the quality of their work and make them much more susceptible to injury.

There are a variety of ways to stretch, situations where the gymnast takes control and autonomy are usually more effective and longer lasting.

- We maintain an important balance between passive and active stretch.
- Stretching will only be done in a suitably warm environment and only when the gymnast is thoroughly warmed up.
- Regular, gradual, and progressive stretching with a focus on achievable and measurable targets.
- Our expectations are consistent with all other factors related to gymnastic development i.e. age, potential, physiology and training situation.

We avoid:

- Situations where gymnasts may feel 'exposed'
- Coach stretching gymnast to the point of excessive pain or extreme discomfort
- Exercises that place the coach's and gymnast's bodies in "extremely close proximity" and could be considered inappropriate.

Our coaches will never:

- Touch a gymnast's inner thigh, groin area or buttocks during stretching exercises
- Use their full body weight to push down on a gymnast
- Work alone in a secluded or separated area in the gym where they cannot be observed by other adults.

**Reviewed August 2021**

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