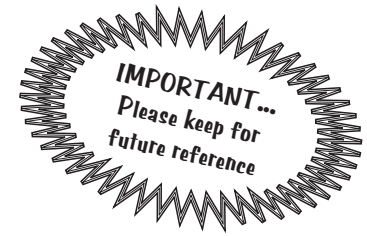


Parent Handbook 2011-2012



To our most awesome Spirits Parents,

Welcome to our gym! You are here at such an exciting time.

We are not only celebrating our 35th year in business, we are celebrating the first anniversary of our character education program. As you know we are dedicated to educating the entire child both physically and mentally.

This is our Parent Handbook. It not only provides detailed registration information, but also includes general information about what athletes should wear during class and answers to so many of the most commonly asked questions by parents. This handbook also proves some basic safety information for behavior at our gymnastics club. Please read this over for your own understanding, but also share it with your child. If you see your child doing something unsafe, the coach will catch it, but a quick reminder from you on the way to class the next time might help our young athletes remember how they can stay safe in the gym.

Last July we hired Dr. Robyn Silverman, a child development expert, seen on such shows as the Today Show and Good Morning America, who created a wonderful character education program. Each month we have a special word that we talk about during our “mat chat” times as well as use during class. This gives us a time to really talk to the students and learn what they have to say about how this word affects their lives. The kids have a very brief project they get to do each month using their word of the month and after each three projects they get to go to the treasure chest and pick out a prize!

This program also has handouts for the parents, so parents that want to can continue the discussion at home or in the car on their way home. As a parent of 2 children (ages 4 & 7) in the program I couldn't be more pleased with the results. Even my 4 year old will tell me things like, “Mommy, the word of the month is perseverance. It means when things get tough, I don't give up!” and then she proceeds to tell me of a time she used perseverance to do something. Wow! What an incredible value we added to an already outstanding program here at Spirits!

While we are always looking for ways to better our programs we also have bettered our facility over the past year. The front office got a fresh new coat of paint as well as both of our downstairs bathrooms. One of the downstairs bathrooms was also turned into a pre-school bathroom to make life easier for all of our littlest students. They love it and so do the parents. Some parents swear that the little potty has helped potty train their child, who can't wait to get to the gym and use it. Yay! We love it that we can help! This year we hope to get the retaining wall fixed and turn the upstairs bathroom/changing room into 2 unisex bathrooms and a little kids play area. We can hardly wait!

The following is a listing of the classes that parents have requested and we have added for this season:

- Aerial Class, Mondays, 4:30 pm
- Beginning-Intermediate Tumbling, Wednesday, 5:00 pm
- Tumbling Tigers Classes, Thursday early evening (1 Playful Paws, 1 Silly Stripes)
- EnerTiger Class, Thursdays, 11:00 am (boys only ages 4 & 5)
- Tiger Pounce Class, Thursdays, 11:00 am (cheerleading ages 4 & 5)
- Family & Friends Class, Wednesdays, mid-afternoon (combined class ages 3-5)
- Home School Class, still taking additional requests
- Wee and Go Go Classes, Friday mornings (Busy Bodies classes ages 6-24 months)

Samples of what you'll find inside:

How can I save money on my child's tuition?
What should my child wear?
Where can I find out about happenings and deadlines?

Newer programs we will continue to offer:

- Pre-school Open Gym, Friday mornings 9:30-11:30 am, start after Labor Day
- Lunch Bunch, 2nd Thursdays and Fridays of each month during the school year
- Stranger Danger Clinic, October
- Performance, Thursdays (Students learn and perform a cheer dance/routine)

In the works for next summer:

- Magic with Miss Dana
- More camp offerings. We would like to have a camp where the kids do art, music, theater and dance among other things. If you know of anyone who specializes in these areas have them contact us as we are trying to get details worked out now.

Thank you very much for your continued support and loyalty to our program. We have worked hard to ensure that even with our growth you continue to feel like part of our extended gymnastics family. We hope you and your children have made special relationships through our gym. We continue to enjoy the friendships we have made with you.

Warmly,

Rod, Kris, Grace & Cordi Rogers and the entire Spirits Staff

Registration Highlights:

(Since there are not any changes in our registration policies, we would like to recommend you make note of the following policies.)

1. Open Gym, Pre-school Open Gym and Lunch Bunches are back for the school year!
2. The need for written medical notice to receive credit for dropping a class (page 3).
3. Once we have received payment for the next session, you will receive your attendance card the last class of the current session. A child will only be admitted to class with this card. If you forget the card, you may obtain a temporary card from the front desk, but may have to wait in line to do so. A child will only be admitted to class once he/she has the card. Replacement cards are available for purchase for \$1.00.



(314) 843-3322 www.SpiritsGym.com

Overview & Calendar: 2011-2012

Six Sessions per year.....

Gymnastics is a year round sport. However, we divide the year into *six* sessions (approximately 8 weeks in length, depending on certain holidays) for your payment convenience. It is important to understand that the greatest benefits of our programs are realized over the long haul. Your tuition dollars pay for the emotional, social and physical education that your child receives and not for a specified number of lessons in a particular session in a particular year. Therefore the tuition is *averaged out* over a year, which actually reduces total tuition costs. Preparing, printing, and mailing different schedule/pricing packets six times per year would significantly increase our marketing and administrative costs which would necessarily be reflected in tuition.

Priority Due Date (PDD).....

Priority Due Date is the date by which Current Students must pay tuition to maintain ‘priority’ and guarantee their class spot. Spots must be reserved in classes to maintain safety ratios of student to teacher. After the PDD, OUR COMPUTER SYSTEM ELECTRONICALLY DELETES UNPAID STUDENTS FROM THE ROSTER and New Students are placed in class vacancies. The PDD occurs on the Saturday, two weeks in advance of each session except Session I, which is Saturday, four weeks in advance of the session’s start date. There is a \$20.00 fee charged for Returned Checks.

Calendar of Sessions: 2011-2012.....

Sessions: 2011-2012		PDD	Closed for Holiday
I	Aug. 15-Oct. 9	11:00 AM, Sat., July 30	Labor Day, Sat.-Mon., 9/3-5
II	Oct. 10-Dec. 4	12:00 PM, Sat., Sept. 24	Halloween, Mon., 10/31 Thanksgiving, Thurs.-Fri., 11/24-25
III	Dec. 5-20 & Jan. 4-Feb. 12	12:00 PM, Sat., Nov. 19	No classes Dec. 21-Jan. 3. Camps and Teams practice only.
IV	Feb. 13-Apr. 15	12:00 PM, Sat., Jan. 28	This is a 9-week session.
V	Apr. 16-Jun. 10	12:00 PM, Sat., March 31	Memorial Day, Sat.-Mon., 5/26-28
VI	Jun. 11-Aug. 12	12:00 PM, Sat., May 19	Independence Day, Wed., 7/4
I	Aug. 20-Oct. 14	11:00 AM, Sat., July 28	Labor Day, Sat.-Mon., 9/1-3

*Session VI is our SUMMER FLEX-SCHEDULE...register only for the weeks you’ll be in town!

**Holidays may be made up if within the same session. Students with classes on these days will be offered a make up or 2 FREE OPEN GYM CLASSES.

Student Status: Definitions

New Students.....

Full payment is required with registration. In the event your first class choice is not available your entire payment is, of course, 100% refundable.

Register as early as possible. As received, New Students’ registrations are dated and placed in a ‘holding file’ until the Priority Due Date (PDD). On the PDD, the holding file is opened and we begin placing New Students into classes based on the order in which we received the registrations. (Note, this process is time consuming, and your patience is greatly appreciated.) **ASSUME YOUR FIRST CLASS CHOICE HAS BEEN ACCEPTED:** We will NOT contact you unless a conflict arises.

Current Students: to *keep* your class spot.....

YOU MUST PAY TUITION BY THE PDD in order to maintain priority status and guarantee your class spot. The PDD for each term is posted in our Calendar of Terms above.

We are aware that deadlines seem harsh to those who forget to or are unable to pay on time. However, the alternative to rigid deadlines is poorly run, overbooked classes. If you are concerned about forgetting the PDD please consider our Multiple Term Payment Option.

Previous Students.....

Previous Student status is reserved for any member of a family who has paid the Annual Family Registration Fee within the last 12 months. Siblings of a Current Student are considered Previous Students. Current Students and Previous Students have registration priority over someone who has not yet paid for a class.

Joining, Dropping, Changing Classes

Joining a class after the first class of the term.....

You may join a class at any time as long as there is a vacancy. Tuition will be prorated relative to your start date.

Dropping a class/missed classes.....

There are no prorated refunds or credits for missed classes or for dropping a class. ONCE THE TERM HAS BEGUN YOU ARE IN THE CLASS FOR THE ENTIRE TERM, regardless of your attendance (except for 'medical reasons': see below).

Medical reasons for dropping a class.....

Medical situations supported by a *written acknowledgment* from a licensed medical practitioner will be extended a credit on your account, prorated from the DATE WE RECEIVE the written medical acknowledgment. Retroactive requests for medical credit will not be granted.

Changing schedules mid-term.....

We will accommodate schedule changes as long as we have a vacancy in your desired class.

Summer Flex-Schedule.....

During the summer term, to accommodate your family's vacation schedule we offer the *Summer Flex-schedule*, where you pay tuition based on the number of weeks you will be in town. It is not necessary to attend consecutive weeks to take advantage of the Flex-schedule.

Payment Information

Payment Specifics.....

Full payment is required with registration. In the event your first class choice is not available your money will be refunded 100%.

Check, MC, Visa, Discover, cash, over the counter, or mail-in payments (checks only) are accepted. When writing a check, please make it payable to "Spirits Gymnastics" and identify your child's name and class day and time in the memo section of your check. We do provide payment envelopes at the front desk for your convenience. If your last name is different than your child's please put your child's first and last name on the check.

Early Pay Discount (EPD).....

Early Pay Discount is the discount that is given for EACH child being enrolled as long as payment is received by the PDD.

Multiple Term Payment Option.....

Concerned about forgetting the PDD? Don't worry about it. Simply pay for multiple terms in advance and lock-in your priority status in your CURRENT class. If you desire to change classes, this can be done as long as there is availability in another class. Current students in the other classes have priority status over someone wanting to change classes. In the event your personal schedule changes and you cannot fulfill your obligation to attend future terms for which you have paid, Spirits will, of course, refund all tuition you have paid toward *future* terms. The Multiple Term Payment Option refund policy is not available for the Summer Flex-schedule. Refunds will not be given of the current term.

\$40 Annual Family Administration Fee.....

This is a flat, \$40 per family, fee which is due upon initial registration and on your anniversary date. This fee helps defray our administrative costs and, if current, it also entitles all family members to 'Previous Student Status'.

Family Discount & Multiple Class Discount (25% DISCOUNT!!!).....

Here at Spirits, ONLY the most expensive tuition in your immediate family pays full fare. ALL lesser tuitions from your immediate family are discounted a full 25%. Also, any child who signs up for two classes in the same 8-week (or 9-week) period receives 25% off the lesser tuition. Children learn much faster when they review the skills every few days. Also the increase in strength and flexibility is tremendous when they attend classes two times per week. These discounts also apply to camps.

100% Tuition-Back Guarantee.....

We are proud to offer a 100% Tuition-Back Guarantee for all first time families. If after your family's first term of classes you are not entirely happy with our program we will happily refund 100% of your tuition for that term (or apply it as a credit toward another child in the same family). Note that our money-back guarantee is intended for families brand new to Spirits. (Current families with students sampling a class for the first time will be extended credit toward future terms.)

Referral Program

Any student who refers someone new to Spirits and the new customer registers for an 8-week session, the student currently enrolled will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Spirits. Just tell your friend to enter your name where the enrollment form asks, "How did you hear about us?" and you will receive it. If they are hesitant, remind them of our 100% tuition-back guarantee for new families. If during the first three weeks of their first pay period they're not happy, they can request a refund of their full 8-week tuition.

Remember...If you like us, tell others. If you don't, tell us!

Absences & Make ups

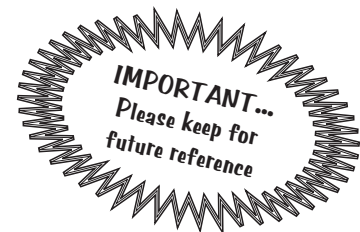
Tuition pays for your child's spot in your child's class. However, as a courtesy, Spirits desires to offer make-ups when and where it does not interrupt the safety or the quality of class for those children registered in the class. Our make-up procedure is set up taking into account safety concerns, space, equipment and teaching ratios.

It is your responsibility to request and schedule a make-up with our front office. Missed classes cannot be deducted from tuition.

Note: Spirits reserves the right to refuse a make-up class if it will degrade the experience of those children who have registered for and paid for that class.

Spirits Make Up Schedule

PROGRAM	MAKE-UPS	PROCEDURES/NOTES
Minds in Motion	LIMIT: 0	No make-ups can be done for personal absences. Classes cancelled by Spirits will be credited to the next session.,
Busy Bodies	LIMIT: 2 make-ups per session.*	Make-ups are LIMITED. You must schedule make-ups through the program director.
Tumbling Tigers Instructional Gymnastics	LIMIT: 2 make-ups per session.*	Make-ups are LIMITED. You MUST CALL THE OFFICE IN ADVANCE to avoid over-booking.
Tumbling Classes Cheerleading Classes Boys Junior Hot Shots	LIMIT: 2 make-ups per session.* If there is only 1 class of a level offered, you will be offered 2 FREE OPEN GYM passes for each class missed.	Make-ups are LIMITED. You MUST CALL THE OFFICE IN ADVANCE to avoid over-booking.
Hot Shots Little Cyclones	LIMIT: 4 make-ups per session.* Make-ups will be offered in classes of similar ability based on coach's recommendation. Up to 4 FREE OPEN Gym passes per session.	Make-ups are LIMITED. You MUST CALL THE OFFICE IN ADVANCE to avoid over-booking. You MUST CONTACT THE OFFICE to receive the FREE OPEN GYM passes.
Gymnastics Team Phase II Colleen's Class	No pro-rating. No make-ups.	



*Absences must be made up in the same session. In the event of an absence the last week of the term, a make-up may be permitted in the first week of the subsequent session.

Holidays may be made-up if within the same session.

Other Important Information

Attire

Please make sure your child is properly dressed. Pre-school and beginner level girls may wear athletic shorts and a t-shirt, but typically wear a body leotard (without exposed stomach) with no skirt attached. Tights may be worn, but they must be FOOT-LESS. All other gymnasts should wear a body leotard. Cheerleaders may wear a body leotard or shorts and a t-shirt. Sports bras must be covered up. No exposed stomachs. Boys should wear a t-shirt tucked into stretch pants or shorts. Please do not wear any buckles, belts, or zippers.

For numerous safety reasons we cannot allow high ear **piercing**, exposed belly button rings, eyebrow rings or any **jewelry**.

Hair should be pulled away from the face into a pony tail with an elastic band. Elastic bands are sold in the front office by the booster club for your convenience. We do not suggest hair clips, barrettes or other hair accessories. Please do not put any glitter, gel, spray-on hair color or excessive oily products in your child's hair. Again, this is for your child's safety. These products tend to get on our mats when tumbling and could cause someone to slip and fall. It can also become a real issue in maintaining our mats and keeping them clean. We focus on safety and cleanliness.

Before Class

We recommend your child arrive 5-10 minutes before class. For your child's safety please have them arrive at the gym in time for warm-up. Students dropped off more than 15 minutes early will be subject to a babysitting fee (See *Parents Picking Up Kids Late*). Warm-up is a crucial element for a safe class. Upon arrival have the student store their outer clothing in a cubby and wait in the lobby for their class to be called. The cubbies downstairs are reserved for boys, pre-school and Busy Bodies students. All parents must watch their children before class and siblings during the lesson.

Child's Illness

Please inform us if your child has any physical problems or medical information that we should know about, including allergies. Tell your child's instructor if he or she has recently had an ear infection. It could hamper their balance. We need that information.

Class Levels

Our class levels are as follows:

- Busy Bodies: New Bodies, Wee Bodies, Go Go Bodies, Hot Go Go Bodies, Super Bodies
- Boys: Bounders
- Cheerleading: Foundations, Performance
- Instructional: Fly Away 1, Fly Away 2, Aerial 1, Aerial 2, Aerial 3
- Invitation-Only Groups: Junior Hot Shots, Hot Shots, Little Cyclones, Pre-Team, Advanced Aerials
- Pre-school: Cool Cubs, Twisty Tails, Playful Paws, Silly Stripes
- Teams: Artistic Gymnastics Team
- Tumbling: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, Tumbling4Cheerleading, Back handspring/tuck Class

Communication

We hope that when you watch your child's class, you look for overall improvement and that you are sure to compliment your child often. Our coaches are trained to praise the child's success of each little progressive step forward toward their goal, be it a skill issue or fear issue. We would love for your child to excel in gymnastics, but that is not our most important goal. Our goal is to make them feel good about themselves, appreciate physical fitness, learn gymnastics/cheerleading and have fun! Our instructors are trained to know when to introduce new material to our students. Children learn through repetition. Their muscles must also learn through repetition. When a child is prepared both physically and mentally, she will progress safely and happily. We thank you for your faith in our decisions.

Communication between the parent and the teacher is encouraged. We have purposely scheduled time before/after your class to allow you the chance to ask your child's teachers questions. Get to know your child's teachers and ask for their help. Suggestions from parents are directly responsible for changes at Spirits. You are the most important part of this business. We can only exceed your expectations when we know what they are.

Change of Address/Phone/Email

If you move to a new location or change your phone number, please inform us in the front office. If you get a new cell or email let us know that as well. These are important numbers in the event of an emergency.

Discipline

We expect good manners and a good attitude from the children, not gymnastics expertise. If a child is disruptive or disrespectful to a coach or other students they will be given time out to decide if they want to participate. They will always be given a second chance. We are committed to treating all children with respect, and in turn expect them to respect other students, our staff and our facility.

Evaluations

Gymnast evaluations will be sent home to periodically inform you of your child's progress. Evaluations are done for school age children, but not in the pre-school program. If you have questions regarding your child or the program, please check with your child's coach. Due to the scheduling of classes, the coaches may not always have time to talk between classes. If this is the case, leave your name and phone number at the front desk and the coach will get back to you at a less busy time.

Facility Cleanliness

We pride ourselves in our gym with it's bright colors, excellent equipment, and it's cleanliness. We pick it up everyday and have a professional cleaning crew come in three times a week. Please watch your children so we can work together to keep the gym a safe and clean place for you.

Firearms

Firearms may not be brought onto Spirits property.

Food/Drink Policy

Food and drinks may only be consumed in the upstairs balcony of our facility. Absolutely no food or drinks are to be in the big gym, the pre-school room or the lobby.

Free Trial Class

We offer one free trial class to any brand new student interested in sampling our program. Students that have taken a year or two off are not eligible for a free trial. After the trial class the instructor will place the student at the appropriate level.

Forgot Something

We strive to keep extra leotards, shorts, diapers and wipes available at the front desk. If you need to borrow a clothing item we ask that you wash it and return it on your next visit. If you use a spare diaper we ask that you replace it with a fresh one on your next visit if possible.

Group Events (Birthday Parties, Field Trips, Scout Trips, etc.)

Our staff will make sure this is a fun-filled experience for your child and his/her friends! We will set up, supervise and clean up. For information or to schedule an event, contact the Spirits' office.

Gym Address

Please keep our gym's phone number and address on record at home. Our address is 12975 Maurer Industrial Drive, St. Louis, MO 63127. Our phone numbers are 314.843.3322 and 314.843.8844 (24-hour fax). Our email is rsunsethills@aol.com. Our website is www.SpiritsGym.com. Check it out!

If An Injury Occurs

Please check with the front office periodically to make sure we have your most current information. Make sure your emergency numbers (cell and pager) are current. If your child is seriously injured we will make all attempts to contact you before sending the child to a hospital. Our coaches will speak with you when more minor injuries occur. If you have any questions about scrapes/injuries that may have occurred during class please call the office.

Illness

Please do not bring a sick or contagious child to class. This gets other children sick or the coaches sick. A child should be fever-free for at least 24 hours before being around others. If a child vomits during class, that child will not be allowed to continue class.

Inclement Weather

We almost never cancel class, but if you're in doubt please call the gym at 314.843.3322 and our 24-hour voicemail will give the updated information at least one hour before your scheduled class. The message for morning classes will be available by 8:00 AM and evening classes by 3:30 PM. These messages also go out through email, are posted on our gym blog, Facebook and Twitter.

Information

Where can you find out what's going on at Spirits?

- Our coaches
- Our website: www.SpiritsGym.com
- Our phone system: mailbox 2...Upcoming events and deadlines
- Class calendars that go home every other month
- Our Blog, Facebook Page, Twitter
- Big calendars up on the wall behind the front desk
- Bulletin boards
- Back of your class card

Invitation-Only Groups

We have a few invitation-only groups. These groups move at a more accelerated pace than the typical class. If your child is invited into one of these groups, you would receive a phone call at home or an official letter of invitation from the director of that group. All Spirits teachers keep an eye out for children that may qualify for an invitation-only group, but at least two teachers must recommend the child before the director will consider the recommendation. Only the director of the group can invite a student to join their group.

Lost and Found

We have two lost and founds. Both are located in the front office/lobby area under the bookcase portion of the front office desk by the bathroom doors. One lost and found is for lost and found grips and wrist bands. When these items are purchased we strongly encourage you to put your name on them. That way you can easily identify them in the lost and found box. All bar bags/grip bags will also be placed in this lost and found. All other items are placed in the main lost and found. At the end of each month we will take any leotards/workout wear and wash them to be used by clients that forgot them or have had an accident. All other items will be donated to a local charity. Spirits is not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.

Moving Up

If your child is moving into a different class or age division we **STRONGLY** suggest you come and watch the class **BEFORE** you're scheduled to start. This way both the parents and the child know what to expect. The more significant moves are from Busy Bodies to Tumbling Tigers or the Instructional Program, Fly Away to Aerial, Aerial to Pre-Team, or any class level to Hot Shots, Little Cyclones, Pre-Team or Team. Our classes are designed so a move within the Fly Away levels or a move within the Aerial levels do not require a class change.

No Smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the gym. Smoking is only allowed outside of the building. Please be considerate when smoking outside so that parents and children do not have to walk through your smoke to enter or leave the building. There is a butt receptacle outside the front door for your convenience. Please dispose of your butts in this receptacle before entering the building. Please only put butts in this waste receptacle.

Office Staff

Our office staff is always here to help you.

Open Gym

Open gym is a supervised, but not structured, time that allows extra practice and fun for Spirits' gymnasts and their friends. A coach will be in the gym to supervise, but strict class instruction will not be given. **For insurance reasons, only Spirits staff are allowed to coach or spot at Open Gym.** You do not need to be enrolled in a class at Spirits to attend open gym. Children under 6 are welcome, but must be accompanied by a parent. Non-members must have an emergency release form filled out and signed by their

Let's Talk Safety in the Gym

Here at Spirits we strive to teach your children gymnastics in a fun and safe environment. But, there are some things that you can help with too. We'll talk to the children daily about staying safe, but we also would like you to talk to them if you see things they are doing that look unsafe. Children are our world's greatest asset. We all should work to keep them safe.

Listed below are some particular things we want the children to think about. Three or four times during the year we set aside a few minutes to remind them of these rules. Please read these to your children.

Proper Attire (Having the correct clothing is part of safety.)

- All girls must have their hair tied away from their face and no jewelry or earrings.
- All girls should wear a body leotard that covers their stomach and is without attached skirts. Bike shorts are allowed with a leotard.
- Older girls in only tumbling and cheerleading may wear shorts with a t-shirt tucked in. Girls are not allowed to practice in only sports bras.
- Boys should wear a t-shirt tucked into stretch shorts or pants. No belts, zippers, or snaps.
- Sneakers may be worn only by cheerleaders in a cheer class or on special occasions when working tumbling for cheer.

Before Class

- Talk to your child at home about staying in line, not talking in class and listening carefully to the instructor.
- Arrive for class 5-10 minutes early to dress the child properly and to "calm" the anxious child and get them in the mood for learning.
- Keep all brothers and sisters off of the equipment and watch for other students running or "playing" on the equipment.
- With the exception of 2-year-old parents and Busy Body parents, all other parents are required to stay in the observation areas. Parents are not allowed in the gyms.
- Tell your child to tell the teacher if they have to go to the bathroom. Parents should accompany the child to the bathroom if possible. MOMS and DADS...Take your child to the bathroom before class.

During Class

- There must be an instructor present to be on the equipment.
- Absolutely no horseplay or running-around the equipment.
- Only one person on the equipment at a time, unless designated by the instructor.
- Look around before you cross in front of other groups.
- Have your child tell the teacher if they are feeling sick or faint.

Special Equipment Precautions

- Bars
 - o No hanging on supports.
 - o Swing in the middle of the rails, not the ends, unless designated by the instructor.
 - o Never touch the spin locks or cables.
 - o Remember, "You won't fall off unless you let go!"
- Beam
 - o Remember, "If you feel like falling...jump off."
 - o Bend knees when landing.
 - o Tell the instructor if you're afraid of the high beam.

- Trampoline
 - o Always sit or stand where the instructor asks you to.
 - o Never step on or near the springs.
 - o Only one person on the tramp at a time.
 - o Always jump on two feet and stay in the middle.
- Power Track
 - o Don't follow too closely to the person ahead of you.
 - o Tumble down the middle of the trampoline bed.
 - o Never go on it without a teacher present.
- Pit
 - o Always land on your bottom in the pit. NEVER your stomach or head.

Warning of Risk to Participant & Insurance

Spirits is not responsible for providing medical accident injury insurance on students. Parents are advised to provide adequate accident and medical insurance for the child enrolled in classes at Spirits. This company shall not be held responsible for treatment or losses due to participation in activities before during or after class or due to activity connected with the center.

Please be advised that any activity involving motion or height creates the possibility of accidental injury. Parents and participants should be aware that injury is possible in connection with this or any athletic activity.

Parents assume all responsibility for any injury due to participation in this activity.

St. Louis Spirits Gymnastics Club History

In the summer of 1976 St. Louis County Gymnastics Club opened in St. John's Church gymnasium. Rod's initial investment bought a vault, two sets of bars, two beams and a floor exercise mat that could be folded up if necessary. The coaches and gymnasts had to set the equipment up and take it down daily. Classes ran in the afternoon for four hours, while Rod continued to teach physical education at Bernard Elementary School.

By the fall of 1976, Rod moved the gym moved to 872 Horan in the Fenton industrial area across from the Chrysler/Daimler plant and very close to what is now Riverchase Recreational Complex. This gym was 6,000 square feet, lacked air-conditioning and had very low ceilings. When the gymnasts started learning giants on bars, Rod had to cut one of the support beams out of the ceiling so the kids wouldn't hit their feet on the ceiling! He taught his first giants in this building on one of his two sets of Nissen bars (almost all of the equipment was made by Nissen back then). The set of Nissen bars that the instructional gymnasts use today is one of the two original sets.

By 1979, St. Louis County Gymnastics Club became St. Louis Spirits Gymnastics Club and adopted the logo still in use today. Also in 1979, Rod moved the gym onto Larkin Williams Road in Fenton, just a couple of blocks from the Horan location. Although this location did not have air-conditioning, it was a much larger facility at 9,000 square feet. Despite having more room, the gymnasts still had to practice under less than ideal conditions-they had to vault by running diagonally across the floor exercise mat. And the gym did not have a foam block floor, which was becoming a standard for the industry, so Rod made his own tumbling strip. The bounce came from the flex of 2X4 pieces of wood. It was about this time that the Class II team won its first state championship team trophy. Rod also developed a couple of individual Class II Regional Champions.

In the early 1980's Spirits moved to Truman Junior High. The club hosted numerous competitions, camps and clinics in this awesome facility. Two of Rod's most memorable clinicians were Bela Karoyli and Kelly Garrison. It was in this facility that Rod was able to purchase a 40-foot by 40-foot foam block floor. He still recalls how tedious it was to glue all of the foam blocks to the plywood panels. For this gym, Rod also purchased two new high beams, which are the high beams still used at the gym today. He purchased these from a Regional Competition he attended in Omaha, Nebraska, and he drove back to St. Louis with the beams in the back of his pick-up truck.

It was during this time that Rod developed his elite athletes. Kris Merlo and Gretchen Schmidt made it to the Elite National Level. They attended Elite Nationals in Atlanta, Philadelphia and Tucson. They were competing against future Olympians Kathy Johnson and Mary Lou Retton. Rod trained his elite gymnasts more than 30 hours a week. Alison Barber, who had won vault at Class I Nationals, was training elite with Krista Kapps and Heidi Markle.

In 1985, Spirits hosted the AAU National Championships at Washington University just after the university's field house had been completed. Alison won the All-around competition at that meet. Rod became the Elite Development Director for Region IV and hosted an Elite Zone meet at University of Missouri-St. Louis. This was their last zone meet as Heidi had competed in three zone meets and missed qualifying for Elite Nationals by .10. Overall, Rod had two Elite National gymnasts and three Elite Regional gymnasts.

Truman Junior High School was reopened as an elementary school in 1992, so Spirits was on the move to a new home again. The gym relocated to the Biltmore Industrial Complex, another Fenton location, off of Highway 30 near Chuck's Boots in Jefferson County. (This location still lacked air-conditioning.)

In 1996, Rod committed to a new gym location, its current home on Maurer Industrial Drive in Sunset Hills. Rod rented the space before the building was constructed, and he was able to have a say in the gym's design. Spirits' current 10,000-square-foot facility has an owner's office with a full private bathroom, a front office with restroom facilities and parent viewing windows, a pre-school room, and a balcony with bleachers for parent observation and with a large two-stall bathroom and changing area. All of the equipment is state-of-the-art and includes two vaults, one of which lands in an in-ground loose foam pit; wide-spread bars and a single bar over the loose foam pit; high and low beams; an Elite-size spring floor and spring tumbling strip that allows the gymnast to land in the pit; two in-ground trampolines; and a 50' long Power Track. Best of all, the gym is air-conditioned!

In 1999, Kris Cline (Kris Rogers as of November 2000), moved to St. Louis to become the business manager and pre-school program director. Rod and Kris attended Gym Club Owner's Boot Camp with the goal of creating a stronger and more diverse program maintaining the "mom and pop" relationships they had developed with their gymnasts and the gymnasts' parents. Together they have put systems into place, reworked programming and hired outstanding staff, all of which have enabled the business to grow. Kris and Rod have two daughters together, Grace and Cordi.

In the summer of 2011, Spirits celebrated its 35th Anniversary. This is an amazing milestone for any small business. Considering the fact that Spirits has been owned by one person, Rod, for its entire history, it is the oldest gymnastics club under the same management in the St. Louis area. Spirits has always been and will continue to be dedicated to nurturing "HealthJEsteem" in each and every child.

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