



What Is the #1 Key To Success For A Young Gymnast?

What separates elite gymnasts from the rest? Talent? Athleticism? Technical skills? Confidence? Many elite gymnasts are physically gifted and technically skilled; however, they are not able to perform at a high level on a consistent basis. Why?

Gymnastics is a sport that demands continual growth both physically and mentally. Pressure and competition can take a huge toll on both the body and the mind of a young gymnast. Those who are not well prepared with the proper mindset will struggle. True success requires a gymnast to believe in their ability to grow, learn, and improve regardless of the circumstances. Teaching a young gymnast to value the process of learning and growing is the key to helping him/her unlock the belief in their own potential to succeed.

In a sport that often values perfection, MINDSET is the differentiator between an elite gymnast who struggles and one who succeeds.

The sport of gymnastics is full of challenges. Day in and day out in training, young competitive athletes experience multiple challenges, mistakes and failures. The difference between a successful gymnast and one who will plateau is a GROWTH MINDSET. Research on the mind-body connection is undeniable and extremely powerful. When a gymnast stays in the space of growth, they will unlock their potential for success by being willing to move forward and persevere when they make mistakes. They will develop a strong sense of resilience and get up when they fall, over and over again. They develop a sense of grit, and an attitude that mistakes are nothing more than opportunities to learn.



Sometimes, after multiple failures (whether it's a fall at a competition, facing challenges when learning a new skill, or comparing themselves to others) young gymnasts stop believing in the process. They stop believing that they have what it takes to succeed. They stop believing that resilience and hard work can lead to great results. Eventually they stop believing in themselves all together. They stop improving and give up because they have developed a "fixed mindset" (the belief that they are no longer able to develop talents and abilities beyond their current level). Let's stop this from happening and start teaching young gymnasts to develop a strong growth mindset at an early age.

What can YOU do?

The good news is that a GROWTH MINDSET CAN BE TAUGHT! And anyone can do it. As a parent or coach of a young gymnast, your language and actions matter. It's not enough to say things like "You can do this!" because it doesn't teach a young athlete what to do in the case of failure. It is crucial that the way you speak to a young gymnast, and the way you react to failures and mistakes, support a growth mindset at all times.

5 key ways you can help a child develop a growth mindset:

- **Use growth mindset language. ALL THE TIME!** The language a child hears is the most powerful way they learn to develop a growth mindset. Use phrases like "You just haven't learned it YET" or "mistakes are what help you learn" or "this may take some time"
- **Model growth mindset behaviour for a child by letting them see your failures and show them how you get back up and try again.** Talk to them about your experiences as well.
- **Correct a child EVERY TIME you hear a fixed mindset comment.** For example, if you hear a gymnast say, "I'll never get this" correct them by saying "you will learn to do this" or "let's try this a different way". EVERY TIME.



- **Teach a child how important it is to make mistakes and fail often.** Teach them that a mistake is nothing more than feedback. You **HAVE** to fail. You **HAVE** to make mistakes. Otherwise you will never reach a goal. Teach a child that the way to success is through mistakes – and that they will be successful because of their mistakes. Mistakes are not a reason to give up, they should be celebrated. They build the foundation for future success!
 - **Praise the Process, not just the outcome.** This is a tough one because competitive gymnastics often demands results and perfection. But it is crucial that we praise young gymnasts for their effort, hard work and willingness to keep going when they fall down. Of course, it's ok to be happy and celebrate when a gymnast wins a competition! However, ALWAYS be sure you attribute the win to their willingness to do the hard work and persevere through difficult times over the course of their journey.
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Beyond the Classroom Milton is a **HUGE** believer in **GROWTH MINDSET!** We offer quality, in-home, one-on-one tutoring for kids JK-Grade12 in Milton with certified teachers! We tutor many competitive athletes and focus on developing a growth mindset in **ALL** of the kids we tutor!

***** All Milton Springers Members will receive 5% OFF tutoring services from beyond the Classroom Milton *****

