

Gymnastics- Developing the athlete

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Date: June 18th 2015

Overviews

- Schedule
- Selection criteria
- Periodization*
- Types of conditioning
- Skill Development*
- Growth/Development*
- Motivation
- Parents
- Staff/Teamwork

My Goal:
For you to leave here today
thinking.

YOU ARE THE EXPERT IN YOUR
FIELD...NOT ME!!!!

Schedule/Training hours

Age/Level	Program	Training hours/week (Alta)	Training hours/week (elsewhere)
4 & Under	Rec	1	up to 6 hours (some pre-comp programs start at 4)
5 (Kindergarten)	Advanced Rec (mini-invite)	2	4-6 hours (Pre-Comp)
6-7	Developmental	6	6-12
7-8 (sometimes 9)	Developmental	9	9-16 (some start competitive at age 8)
Level 6 & under	Competitive/ compulsory	12	9-16 (sometimes 20)
Level 7 & up	Competitive/ Provincial	16	16-25
National/HP	Competitive/ Nationals	20-25*	20-30+

Selection Criteria - The ideal gymnast:

- Short
- Light
- Powerful
- Strong
- Flexible (active and passive)
- Fast twitch
- Anatomical preferences
- Smart
- Daring
- Hard working
- Passionate
- Coachable
- Pleasant/positive

Periodization (when to do what)

Phase	Time of year	Gains	maintained/secondary gains
Competitive	Jan-May Dec-June	Technical Tactical psychological	Fitness skill level Flexibility
Pre-competitive	Oct-Dec Sept-Nov	Technical Psychological Fitness Skill level	Tactical Flexibility
Preparation	June-Oct July-August	Fitness Skill level Psychological Flexibility	Technical
Recovery	~ 2 weeks during summer	Loss	Loss

This table is not for National team athletes, they have their own periodization specific to the individual athlete

Periodization

Cont'd

Phase	Technical training	physical training
Competitive	-Full routines + -cleaning up parts	-Plyometric -Specific -General
Pre-competitive	-1/2 to full routines -Parts -Endurance routines -New skills	-Specific -Plyometric -General
Preparation	-New skills -Combinations -Endurance routines	-General -specific -plyometric
Recovery	None	Light Cardio Light General

General Conditioning

Purpose:

To get the body in the shape/condition needed to train

Important:

We do not want big dumb muscles!!!



Specific Conditioning

Purpose:

Mimic specific skills or desired actions to improve those skills and/or improve routine endurance

Important:

Practice does not make perfect, perfect practice makes perfect



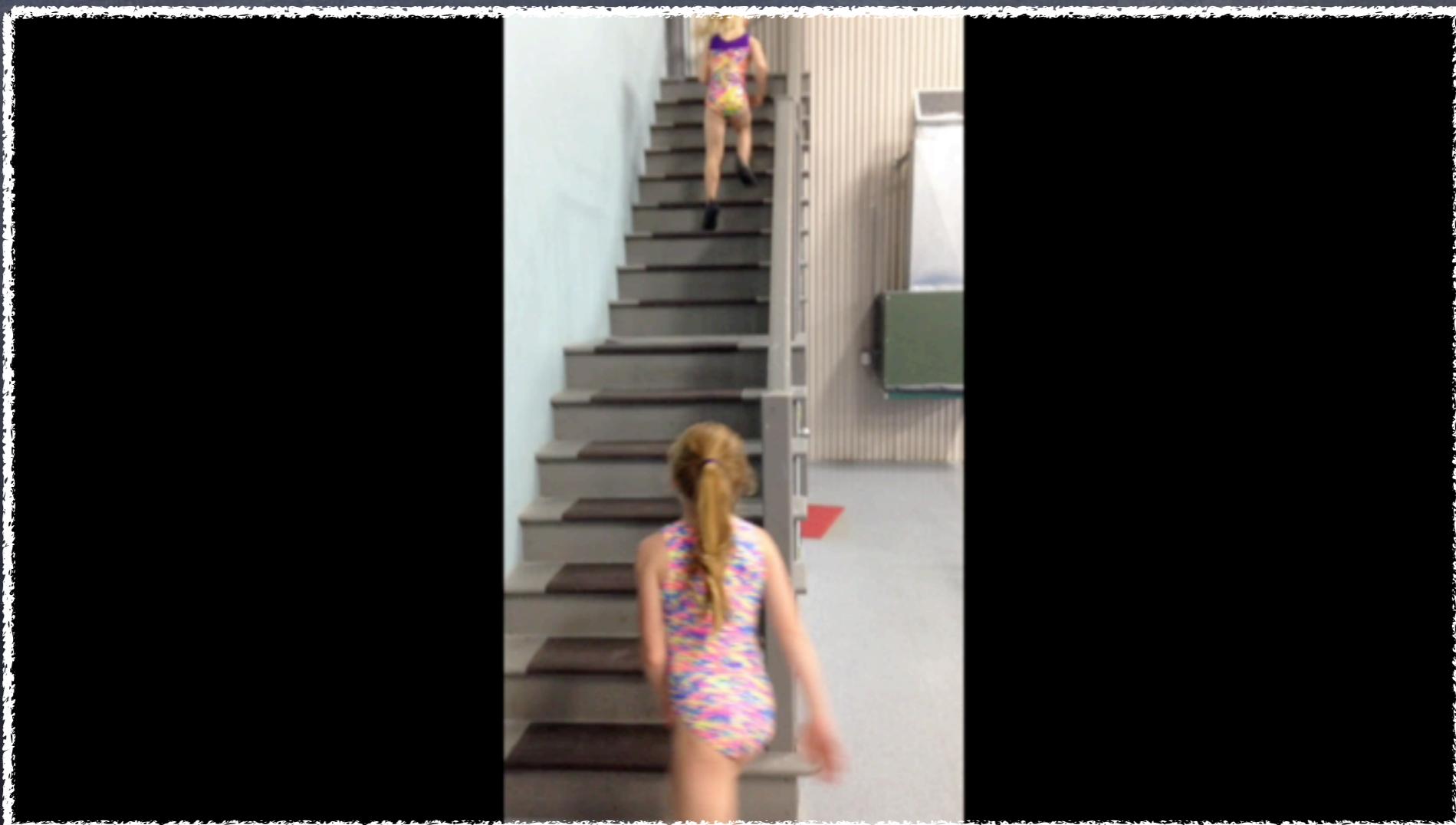
Plyometric

Purpose:

Train The stretch reflex, fast twitch, speed, and power

Important:

Stretching muscles to achieve gains, make sure body and joints can handle the load, demand and range of motion of the exercise



Developing skills

- Break the skill down into appropriate steps for each athlete
- Start at the end then work backwards
- Take your time
- Make it fun
- Don't be afraid to back track and seek help
- Look long term

Dont teach
technique
for the
skill they
are doing

Teach
Technique
for their
future
skills





Breaking down a conditioning
skill

Because trying harder isn't always the solution.

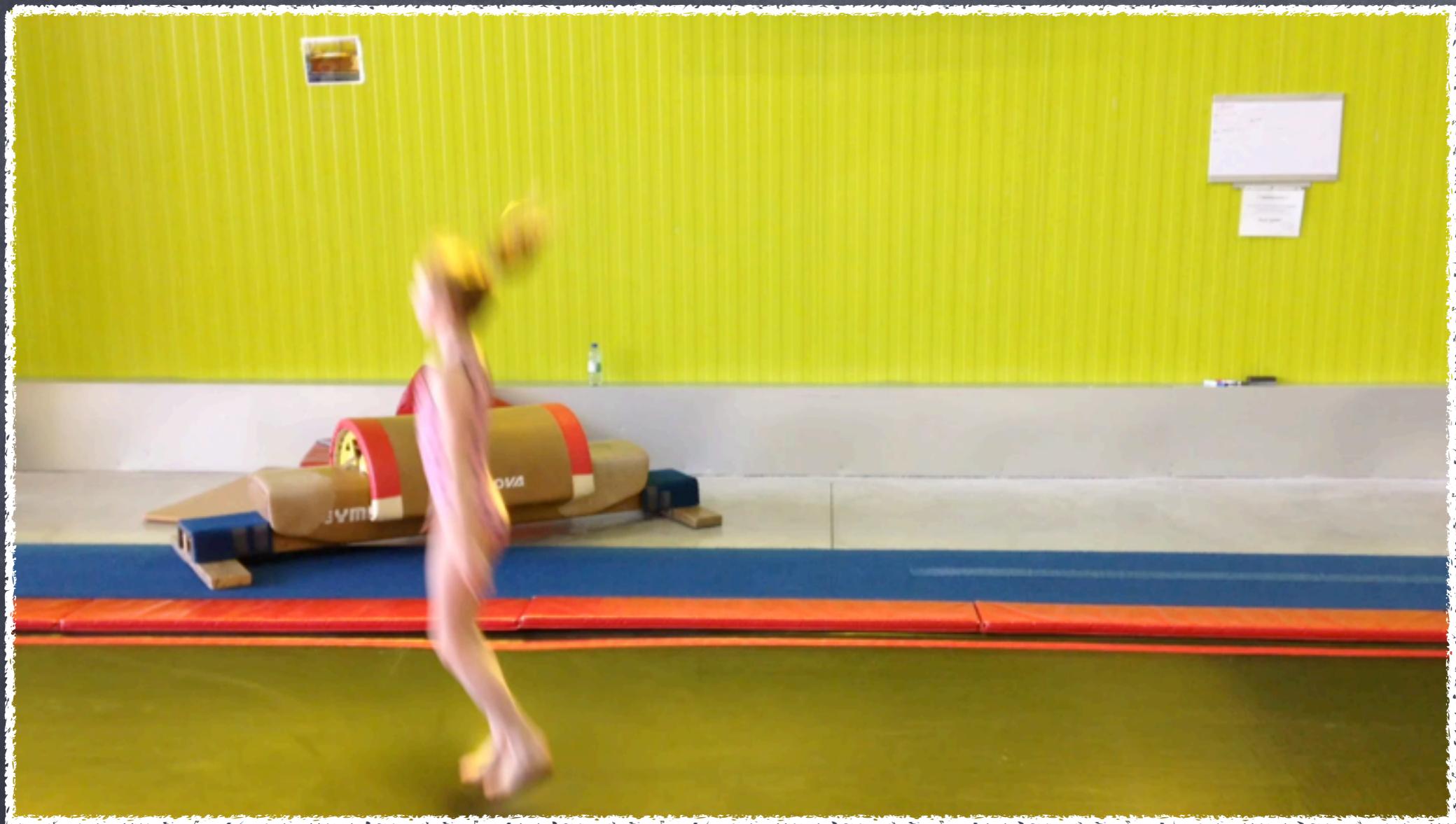


If you don't have time to teach good technique at the beginning, when will you find the time to re-teach it?

Take the time to build a strong foundation



Back Layout 1 1/2 punch front
Layout



The more complex the skill, the
more steps that are involved

Planning ahead is crucial

What else needs to be done when teaching a skill?

- Physical and psychological prep!!!!
- Is your athlete physically and psychologically ready to do the skill???
- If Yes get started!!!
- If Not, get working!!!!!!

How to create skill specific physical prep

- Analyze the biomechanics of the skill/technique
- Assess the athlete and equipment
- Make a plan

Example of psychological Prep

- Visualization
- positive self-talk (we talk to ourselves more than anyone else, so make it positive)
- Breathing techniques

Growth



It's individual from birth!

Growth/Development (some quick facts/averages)

- After 2 years of age growth is steady until puberty
- 1 year after peak height velocity girls usually get their 1st period
- Peak weight velocity is usually 3 months after peak height velocity
- Peak strength velocity follows peak height velocity by 8 months (girls) and 1 year (boys)
- After puberty girls will have 50% more fat than boys
- During these growing years dense, strong bones are formed

Growth/Development; what to do with the facts

- Monitor Growth
- Adjust their training
- Make nutrition a priority
- Educate

Great idea, but how do I get it all done??

- Foot outlines every 3 months
- Increase impact training at the end of pubertal growth
- Educate athletes and parents about Nutrition*
- Remember it's an individual thing, be ready to adapt and be flexible!!!

*Get a nutrition expert who understands the training demands of your sport!

RED-S/Female Athlete Triad

what is it??

- Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport
- A lot of female gymnasts and other athletes live on the negative end of energy availability (they are expending more than they are taking in) which can cause injuries and health problems.
- Stress fractures are often caused by disordered eating.
- Losing/not getting a period is not normal—even for an athlete

What should I do about RED-S? Get Educated!!!!

- Who has information about this?
 - Dieticians with a sport nutrition background
 - Sports doctors
- Who may not have the correct and up to date information?
 - General physician
 - Nutritionist
 - Dietician without a sport nutrition background



These girls range from 9-17
years old

Can you place them in order from oldest to youngest?

Motivation

- Repetition can be boring...so make it fun!!!!

- stickers
- contests
- improvement charts
- games
- coach or group swap
- group work
- group reward (popsicles)
- Training camps
- Mock-meets
- Out of gym activities

As coaches we must remember to leave our ego at the door!!!!



Parents

- Be Honest
- Listen
- Set boundaries
- Give some information
- Maintain roles
- The parent is the Parent to Coach is the coach

Staff/Teamwork

- Everyone should have a role at the club.
- Find your role. Where do you excel, what are you passionate about?
- The kindergarten teacher rarely aspires to be a University Prof, Coaching is the same!!!