

What Are the Benefits of Gymnastics for Kids?

Children benefit from an active lifestyle and participating in any sport. The American Academy of Pediatrics believes that partaking in organized sports provides a chance for young people to increase their activity and develop socially and physically. Gym.Net adds that gymnastics is one of the most comprehensive lifestyle exercise programs available to children, incorporating strength, flexibility, speed, balance, coordination, power, and discipline. Whether they are involved in recreational gymnastics or with a competition squad, skills learned in gymnastics can benefit a child's overall development.

General Health

Participation in gymnastics helps children become physically active, and stay fit and healthy. Taking part in any exercise significantly reduces the risk of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes in adulthood. As of 2010, one in three children in the United States was overweight, and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports states that "encouraging moderate and vigorous physical activity among youth is important," as the habits learned as a child are often carried through to adulthood. Regular participation in gymnastics can teach children how to live a healthy lifestyle, and remain involved in the sport as they grow up.

Social Benefits

Partaking in gymnastics can help children sleep better, and equip them with skills to better handle physical and emotional challenges in life. Attending a regular gymnastics class provides young children with the opportunity to communicate with people their own age, work within a team, and engage with adults. The Gymnastics Academy of Boston also believes that gymnastics gives children an opportunity to learn about social skills like listening, following directions, taking turns, being quiet, and respecting others. Children also have fun, meet new friends, and learn independence.

Commitment and Discipline

The challenging nature of gymnastics requires commitment and concentration. The structure of gymnastics lessons teaches children how hard work and dedication pays off. Positive experiences in gymnastics can build confidence through achievement, and illustrates to children that commitment to sport benefits them. Rules and codes of conduct in gymnastics help children learn the importance of rules for safety, and teach respect toward others.

Motor Skills, Coordination and Balance

Gymnastics helps children build a range of motor and coordination skills, and assists in developing a good sense of body awareness. A young gymnast will learn how to use different parts of her body in different ways. English Gymnastics claims that participation in gymnastics develops body awareness, control, and coordination, which can be beneficial to other physical activities, sports, and in everyday life.

Strength

Gymnasts are renowned for their excellent strength-to-weight ratio. Taking part in gymnastics at a young age can help build the foundations of good all-around muscle strength, endurance, and power. According to the International Gymnastics School, gymnasts get stronger through regular training, which aids in the development of lean, toned muscles, improved balance, and better posture.