WELCOME TO THE SOMERSET VALLEY YMCA GYMNASTICS TEAM!
We are so pleased that you have chosen to be part of this amazing team of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers and families. This handbook was created to help inform our gymnasts and their families about some important aspects of the Team and Somerset County YMCA, so please keep it handy as a reference. Somerset Valley YMCA is a branch of Somerset County YMCA.

We look forward to working with your child and your family to help them reach their highest potential through the YMCA’s four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. Our Gymnastics Program is dedicated to the total development of each gymnast, with proper learning progressions and teaching the correct form and techniques of all gymnastic skills. The development of self-confidence, as a result of successful, fun, learning experiences, is as much a part of our goal as is the development of real gymnastics skills.

Our goal for this program is to create great gymnasts in a fun, stress-free environment. With an emphasis on safety, our philosophy is that well-trained coaches that genuinely care, can help an athlete become exceptional without over practicing and giving up other things in life that are important. Our Gymnastics Team has always said athletes first, winning second, and with a family-feel, we are proud of this mantra and our program.

We look forward to working with your child and your family this year! Have a great 2016-2017 Gymnastics Competition Season!

Rachel Covert
Gymnastics Coordinator
rcovert@somersetcountyymca.org

Financial Assistance
Thanks to funds raised through our Annual Campaign, we are able to ensure Y programs are accessible to everyone. To apply for our confidential Financial Assistance Program, please contact Irene Calabrese at 908 722 4567 x605 or visit our website at www.somersetcountyymca.org/fa.
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CONTACT INFORMATION

Head Coach
The Gymnastics Team is extremely fortunate to have Rachel Covert Gymnastics Coordinator and Head Coach. Rachel is a safety certified Gymnastics Coach, CPR and First Aid certified, and has had Rutgers safety training. She has 19 years of experience in coaching and 32 years of experience in the sport of Gymnastics. Coach Rachel was a competitive gymnast for 8 years, and has been with Somerset County YMCA since 2001.

Staff
All of our Gymnastics Team Staff are USA Gymnastics (USAG) safety certified, CPR, First Aid and Child Abuse Prevention certified to ensure that your child is safe while they are under our care.

If you need to contact a staff member, please see them after class or contact Coach Rachel at rcovert@somersetcountyymca.org.

TEAM REQUIREMENTS
As a member of our Gymnastics Team, each gymnast is required to be a full-privilege member of Somerset County YMCA. The reason for this is most predominantly for liability purposes, but also as a member of our Gymnastics Team, the gymnasts are representatives of Somerset County YMCA, inside and outside our doors. As a member, your child will have access to the pool, gymnasium and Welcome Center (when they are over 11 years of age), as well as reduced prices for all Y programs. Team members are committed to Somerset County YMCA and may not participate in outside gymnastics programs. Membership pricing is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Type</th>
<th>Monthly Draft*</th>
<th>One-Time Joiner Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth (Up to age 12)</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen (Ages 13 to 18)</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family**</td>
<td>$92</td>
<td>$65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Membership Fees are subject to change without notice, and are non-refundable.
**A Family Membership is two adults and all children 18 and under, plus college students 19-22 years of age living in the household.

Every Gymnastics Team member must fill out and sign off on the following documentation:
Child Protection – Parent Release Form
Gymnastics Team Handbook Acknowledgment and Acknowledgment of Risk and Waiver of Liability

All Gymnastics Team members must be registered for each league in which they compete and pay the league annual fee at the time of registration.
Meet fees are as follows:
Girl’s Y League - $115
Girl’s USAIGC League - $335
Boy’s League - $225
TEAM PRACTICES

Team practices are year-round and attendance is required September through June. During the months of July and August there are no Saturday practices, but members have the option of registering for team practices offered during the week. Your child’s practice schedule is dependent on your child’s gender and competitive level.

BOYS TEAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level/Ages</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys level 4+</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>6:00 pm-9:15 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6:00 pm-9:15 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>3:00 pm-5:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Competition Season: January through March

GIRLS TEAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level/Ages</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>4:30 pm-7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4:30 pm-7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>4:30 pm-7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4:30 pm-7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>3:00 pm-6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver+</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>6:00 pm-9:15 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6:00 pm-9:15 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>12:00 pm-3:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Competition Season: January through May

Things to know about practice

- Practice schedule is subject to change at the Coach’s discretion.
- Please arrive 5-10 minutes before your scheduled practice time so that we may utilize the maximum amount of time allotted.
- Warm up and stretching is very important, so that injury is prevented. All practices start with this.
- Frequency of practices is important for a gymnast. Missing practices will heighten your child’s risk for injury and prevent them from improving their gymnastics skills and routines.
- You must inform Coach Rachel of any absences, late arrivals or need to leave early. More than 4 unexcused absences in one month will result in your forfeit of your spot on the team.
- Hair must be pulled away from face.
- For the gymnasts’ safety, no jewelry is to be worn.
- Girls’ attire: leotard, shorts are optional.
- Boys’ attire: Comfortable clothing, preferably a compression shirt that is tight to the body.
- If you feel your child is in need of hand grips, wrist braces, ankle supports, etc. please speak to the Coach for her recommendations prior to ordering.
- The Y and coaching staff are not responsible for your child’s belongings; leave any valuables not pertaining to gymnastics at home.
TEAM UNIFORMS
Gymnasts will be measured beginning in September of the competition year. Parent(s) are asked to consent to sizes, and since the uniforms are custom ordered all sales are final. If the wrong size is ordered and the parent(s) has given their consent to sizes either in writing or verbally, the cost of reordering will be the responsibility of the parent(s). Accessories are not permitted during the meet. Gymnasts may not wear jewelry, including, but not limited to necklaces, bracelets, or rings.

Girls’ uniforms are ordered every two years and consists of:
- Required Team leotards (est. $140.00 each)
- Optional Team warm-ups are optional, which consist of a jacket and pants (est. $85.00)
- Optional gym bag (est. $35.00)

Boys’ uniforms are ordered every two years and consist of:
- Required Team uniform (est. $110.00)
- Optional Team warm-up jackets and pants (est. $85.00)
- Optional gym bag (est. $35.00)
- Optional Black Socks to be worn at every competition (parents to provide)

For the Floor and Vault, boys must wear shorts with their competition outfit. They are to wear pants on the other events with socks.

Parents may purchase warm-ups, bags and other accessories at: http://www.embroidme-greenbrook.com/ymca

COMPETITION INFORMATION
For Girls
The Girls Team competes in two leagues: NJ YMCA Gymnastics and NJ USAIGC. Girls may decide to only compete in one of the two leagues. All gymnasts must compete in at least one league during the competition season.

The competitive season runs approximately from late December to early June. Most girls finish their season with the States Level Competition for both leagues. Girls who qualify for Regionals will continue to compete after States.

The YMCA competition dates are usually announced in early December. YMCA meets are held at either Fanwood/Scotch Plains YMCA (warm-up is usually 1:30pm), Madison YMCA (warm-up is usually 9:15am) or home at Somerville YMCA.

USAIGC meet information is usually posted in January, with the warm-up times announced the week of the meet.

In the NJ YMCA league, the gymnasts compete in A, B and C levels, with A being the most advanced group and C being the least experienced.

In the USAIGC league, the girls compete in Copper, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Premier Levels. The levels do not necessarily correspond between leagues and a gymnast competing in the A level at the NJYMCA meets may be competing at the Silver level for USAIGC meets. Please see the coaches for specific requirements for any of the levels.
Each gymnast competes with individual routines. The vault skills and the bar routines are similar within each level and the Team coaches will provide the gymnast with their competition routines. An experienced gymnastics choreographer usually choreographs the beam and floor routines; this requires the gymnast to purchase/acquire acceptable floor music. The floor music and choreography for the beam and floor routine are additional costs that range from $100-$250. It is also possible to use another teammate’s previously choreographed routine and music. For choreographers contact info, please contact Coach Rachel. Music purchased online estimates $60.00. Coach Rachel must approve all music prior to purchase.

On the day of competition, gymnasts need to arrive wearing the team uniform and if they have ordered a team warm up, please wear that as well. Girls who wear undergarments underneath the team leotard must have them in skin-color or leotard-matching hue. Score deductions are taken if the undergarments are not appropriate and can be seen. Shorts are permitted during warm-ups for each apparatus, but may not be worn during judging.

The gymnasts of a particular level compete against each other in age groups, which are determined by the number of girls and their ages on the day of competition. For example, a 7 year-old Bronze could be competing in the Under 9 age group one day and at another competition, the 6-8 age group. Awards are presented at the end of the meet. All gymnasts may not receive an award; the places are usually based on the numbers of girls competing.

The 2017 USAIGC States Competition required qualifying scores of 32 for level Bronze, 31 for levels Silver/Gold all-around or individual event scores of 7.5 for the Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels. You are only required to meet these goals once at any meet. Each gymnast must compete in a minimum of three sanctioned USAIGC meets to compete at States. All State requirements are subject to change each year. In the past, the USAIGC States Competition has been held either on Memorial Day Weekend or Mother’s Day weekend at the Wildwood Convention Center in Wildwood, NJ, but in 2015 it was in Sparta and 2013 it was at Rutgers. So please keep in mind location and date is subject to change. The schedule for the meet is not available until a few weeks prior; gymnasts can be scheduled to compete from Friday through Sunday of the weekend.

For Boys
The Boys Team competes in the Boys USAG Gymnastics League. All boys must compete in the competition season in order to remain on the Boys Gymnastics Team.

The competitive season runs approximately from January through March, with the culmination being the States Level Competition. All boys must compete in a minimum of 3 competitions to qualify for States. On the day of competition, boys must come wearing their team leotard, pants and shorts, with their team warm-up jacket and pants over them if they have purchased them.

Awards are presented at the end of each meet.

For Boys and Girls
To ensue gymnast safety, it is required that each gymnast participate in at least two practices the week of an upcoming meet.

Accessories are not permitted during meets. Gymnasts may not wear nail polish or jewelry, including, but not limited to necklaces, bracelets, or rings.

All levels each gymnast competes at will be decided by the coaches. Gymnasts will be informed by the coaches of any level changes.
There is an admission fee for family members attending the meet, ranging from $3-$12 for adults and $2-$10 for children, depending on the meet. Competitions last anywhere between 3-6 hours, depending on the number of gymnasts, teams, and levels competing. Flash photography or videography using lighting is not permitted during competitions.

There are usually concession stands available for the purchase of snacks. However, the gymnast should come prepared with plenty of fluids and healthy snacks.

**ADDITIONAL TEAM ACTIVITIES**

As we grow each year, participation on our Gymnastics Team becomes a more well-rounded experience, with volunteer/fundraising opportunities for gymnasts and their families. Our fundraising efforts have brought in new equipment like our High Bar and the rest of our Spring Floor. Please email Coach Rachel at rcovert@somersetcountyymca.org with what you are interested in coordinating or volunteering at any of these events. Emails will go out to sign up to volunteer for specific events. In order to volunteer, you must go through the volunteer process for the safety of yourself and those that are in the YMCA. Instructions on how to become a volunteer will be sent out.

**Volunteer/Fundraising Opportunities**
- Team car wash (usually September and May)
- Dinners at restaurants that contribute to our fundraising efforts
- Monthly apparel sales at practice/lesson times (throughout the year)
- Hosted NJYMCA meets (usually February)
- And more! All suggestions are welcome.

**Additional Opportunities**
- Gymnastics Team holiday showcase/holiday party (usually December)
- Memorial Day showcase in downtown Somerville
- Gymnastics Team end-of-season party (usually at end of boys & girls meet season)
- Again, all suggestions are welcome!

**ADDITIONAL GYMNASTICS OPPORTUNITIES**

**Gymnastics Summer Camp**
Each summer, Somerville YMCA offers Summer Camp, with several weeks of Gymnastics Camps. With 25 hours of instruction per week, Gymnastics Camp is a great way for gymnasts to really improve their skills quickly. Gymnastics Camps are offered to gymnasts of all abilities, every other week of the summer. Each camp week ends with a performance for family, friends, and the rest of the camp. Learn more online at www.somersetcountyymca.org/camp.

**Private Lessons & Clinics**
Private lessons are available year-round for gymnasts who desire one-on-one instruction. Clinics and special open gym hours are available occasionally during children’s time off from school. Private lessons and clinics are optional and are available at an additional cost.
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
Social Media tools and technology are ever-evolving. Our Social Media Policy provides helpful, practical advice in an effort to protect the reputation and privacy of Somerset County YMCA and Gymnastics Team coaches, athletes and families. While this policy may seem comprehensive; it should be noted that our policy is general and is not limited to what is stated within this document.

Social Networks
Social networks are online communities typically comprised of people with the same interests and/or activities. Social networks provide a means of communication through email, instant messaging, video, blogs, etc. Social network sites include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, You Tube, Flickr, Wikipedia, and many more.

Privacy
Although some sites may offer privacy settings, you should be aware that the internet is a public domain. Everything written or displayed on the Web can be traced back to its author. You should be mindful that any comments, videos, pictures or other information you post on the internet may be seen by members of the YMCA community and could reflect poorly upon your character or upon the YMCA.

Somerset County YMCA regards social networks as a new and noteworthy form of communication. As a member of Somerset Valley YMCA’s Gymnastics Team, we expect all who participate in social media to understand and follow these guidelines:

General Guidelines
- No photos or videos may be taken during practices without coaches’ approval.
- You are personally responsible for content published on blogs and other forms of user-generated media (e.g. YouTube). Make sure this content reflects you and the YMCA in a positive light.
- Identify yourself when possible and, if relevant, your role at Somerset County YMCA when you discuss YMCA related matters. Make it clear that you are speaking for yourself (by using first person) and not on behalf of Somerset County YMCA.
- When posting content to a personal social media site not related to Somerset County YMCA, please add a content disclaimer such as “Unless otherwise noted, the views expressed are mine alone and not those of Somerset County YMCA.”
- Respect content, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Do not provide any confidential or private information about Somerset County YMCA, its employees or its members and guests.
- Do not cite or reference members, guests, partners, employees or suppliers without their prior written approval. A child (i.e., anyone who has not reached legal age and cannot be considered an adult) cannot give their approval.
- Do not post pictures or videos of team members or guests enrolled in Somerset County YMCA events, programs or participating in activities at the YMCA, especially those of children.
- Do not use the YMCA or Gymnastics Team logo or any other pictures affiliated with Somerset County YMCA or the National YMCA. This includes images of the YMCA and Gymnastics Team logo on clothing in pictures or videos.
- Respect your audience. Do not use derogatory or obscene language, personal insults, or any language or behavior that would be otherwise unacceptable at the YMCA. Be respectful of other’s privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable (such as politics or religion).
- Use good judgment. There are always consequences to the content you post. Proofread everything you post and if it seems questionable or makes you feel uncomfortable, reread this policy or discuss it with your coach.
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Gymnastics Team, the “Team”, and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Team is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach or parent.

What is Bullying?
Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

How We Handle Bullying
If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we stop bullying on the spot using the following steps:
1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved
3. Make sure everyone is safe
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

Purpose
The Gymnastics Team (the “Team”) recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our gymnasts use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Team acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Team also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

General Content
All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Electronic communications should not contain or relate to any of the following:
- drugs or alcohol use;
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- the adult’s personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

Note: Any communication concerning an athlete’s personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff or other athletes?” With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with gymnasts is Transparent, Accessible and Professional.
Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Team’s records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Team. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member. If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

Facebook, Myspace, Blogs and Similar Sites
Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Team join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method. The Team has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

Twitter Best Practice
If the Team has an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are not permitted to follow athletes on Twitter. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

Texting
Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

Email
Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 9pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent or another coach must also be copied.

Photos
No photos or videos may be taken during practices without coaches’ approval.

Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications
The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

YOUTH SUPERVISION POLICY
Somerset Valley YMCA is a branch of Somerset County YMCA. Somerset County YMCA places a high priority on the safety of members and program participants. For the purposes of this policy “YOUTH” is defined as children ages 10 and younger.
• While present in all Somerset County YMCA facilities and program sites, all children ages 10 and younger must either be attending a YMCA program or accompanied by a parent or guardian at least 18 years of age.
• During open gym and open swim, parents/guardians of children ages 10 and younger must be present in the room and supervising their children. The parent/guardian must be in appropriate bathing attire in the natatorium with their children ages 7-10 during open and family swim. Parents (appropriately attired) must be in the water within arms-reach of children ages 6 and younger.
• All children ages 17 and younger must have current emergency contact telephone number(s) and name(s) on file with the Member Service Desk.
• Parents/guardians of children ages 10 and younger are responsible for delivery to the instructor (at the start) and pick up from the room (immediately at the end) of their child’s class/program.

PHOTOGRAPHIC AND AUDIO/VISUAL RELEASE
I, being 18 years of age or older and if not my Parent/Guardian has also signed below, hereby give permission and consent to YMCA & Affiliates to make incidental and occasional photographic, audio and video recordings in connection with participation in YMCA activities or programs and to utilize the same in any manner, and without any compensation to, and/or claim by me, my family or guests.
SOMERSET VALLEY YMCA GYMNASTICS TEAM
2016-2017 HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are happy to have you as a part of Somerset Valley YMCA’s Gymnastics Team! This handbook outlines important information for gymnasts and parents. Please familiarize yourself with the handbook in its entirety. Please acknowledge the following by checking each box and signing below:

- I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to read the handbook and I accept full responsibility for familiarizing myself with the entire contents of this handbook
- I acknowledge that it is my responsibility, as a parent/guardian, to share information in this handbook with my son or daughter at my discretion.
- I understand that signing this is only confirmation of reception of the document, and that I am able to ask any questions of Coach Rachel or Dana in regards to subjects covered in the handbook, or questions and concerns that may come up throughout my family’s time at the Y involved with the Gymnastics Team.
- I acknowledge and agree to the Social Media Policy
- I acknowledge and agree to the Anti-Bullying Policy
- I acknowledge and agree to the Electronic Communications Policy
- I acknowledge and agree to the Youth Supervision Policy
- I acknowledge and agree to the Photographic and Audio/Visual Release

Parent/Guardian Name (print) ___________________________ Date ______________________

Parent/Guardian Signature ______________________________________________________________________________________

Gymnast Name (print) ___________________________ Date ______________________

Gymnast Signature ______________________________________________________________________________________