

How Gymnastics Helps Your Child Succeed in School

Backed by Harvard Research

by Anne Josephson

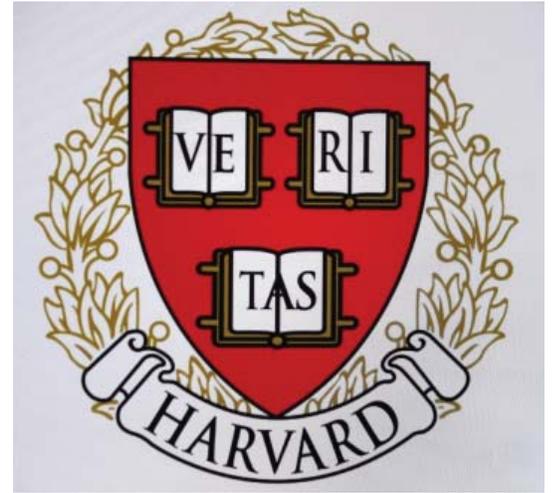


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Harvard School of Education released their findings on their latest research project; and, they could have simply titled it “Why Your Kid Should do Gymnastics if You Want Them to Develop the Kind of Character That Helps Them Succeed at School.”

Okay, it doesn't exactly roll off the tongue...but it cuts to the core of what kids need to succeed in school and why gymnastics is the perfect place to develop it.

You see, the good folks at Harvard in conjunction with 4,000 UK teenagers undertook a study that examined the characteristics that best predicted a student's future academic success and that characteristic is...

Grit.¹

Grit, which was defined as having determination, courage, persistence, a 'growth mindset' and the ability to maintain a balanced lifestyle, was a better predictor than intelligence in predicting which kids succeeded in the classroom.¹

Gymnastics
develops determination

Determination is that quality that makes you continue trying to do or achieve something that is difficult.

Simply watch a beginning gymnast learn a cartwheel or a pommel horse, and you are seeing determination in action.

Gymnastics
cultivates courage

Tumbling across a 4 inch wide beam? Running full speed at a standing object and then jumping (or flipping!) over it? Swinging on a bar 7 feet in the air? Defying gravity on a regular basis? Gymnasts routinely make the

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choice to confront discomfort, fear and to do the right thing even when it costs more than they want to pay. All hallmarks of courage.

Gymnastics
plans persistence

Fall down seven times, get up eight is a Japanese proverb turned gymnasts' motto. Developing that quality that allows someone to continue doing something or trying to do something even though it is difficult...that is not only the definition of persistence but is practically the definition of gymnastics practice.

Gymnastics
garners a growth mindset

It's practically impossible to not have a growth mindset, the belief that our most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, and be a gymnast. Otherwise, why would a gymnast even bother with practice? Turns out that a growth mindset helps create a love of learning and a resilience essential to great accomplishments. Ever met a gymnast who didn't love to learn new things or who accomplished something without having to rise in the face of difficulty or after a set back? Me neither.

Gymnastics
demands a balanced lifestyle

Dr. Christina Hinton, a neuroscientist and faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, said: “Our results suggest that grit does not

require pushing yourself at all costs, but rather cultivating healthy emotional regulation skills and effective learning strategies.”¹ Gymnasts understand this. The importance of getting sufficient sleep, nutrition, making time for gymnastics, school, family, faith, and other extracurriculars are all things even our youngest athletes learn.

Still not convinced? Then consider this: an NCAA study was conducted that showed over 35% of gymnasts at the college level achieved a GPA of 3.5 or better. Over 90% of college students involved in NCAA gymnastics graduated, a much higher rate than students who didn't participate in gymnastics. More academic awards were given to gymnasts than to any other college sport by as much as two to three times. Additionally, more gymnasts received NCAA post-grad scholarships in the past 5 years than any other female sport.²

Like I said: “Why Your Kid Should do Gymnastics if You Want Them to Develop the Kind of Character That Helps Them Succeed at School.”

¹ The Institute of Commercial Management. (n.d.). Researchers Discover Key to Academic Success. Retrieved from <http://blog.icm.education/study-tip/key-to-academic-success/>

² Bay State Gymnastics Academy. (January 12, 2013). The Positive Effect of Gymnastics on Academics – Dartmouth and New Bedford Parents Read This.... Retrieved from <http://baystategymnasticsacademy.com/2013/01/the-positive-effect-of-gymnastics-on-academics-dartmouth-new-bedford-parents-read/>



Anne Josephson is President and CEO of JAG Gym in Los Angeles. Among the largest gymnastics schools in the country, over 2,000 kids attend JAG weekly. JAG's mission is simple: We do good things for kids.

Anne holds a B.A. from Barnard College, Columbia University and a M.S.

Ed. in Educational Psychology from USC, where her focus was on how children and adolescents learn best. She is the parent of four daughters ages 17 to 22.

In addition to serving on USA Gymnastics Board of Business Advisors and the USAIGC Business and Education Committee, Anne also is a member of the Athena Leadership Board at Barnard College and is a former board member of an independent all-girls school in Los Angeles. Anne blogs about JAG Gym, parenting, operating a small business, college admissions among other topics at: annejosephson.wordpress.com.



For over 10 years, JAG Gym has been doing good things for LA's kids by strengthening minds and bodies and building character through gymnastics. JAG Gym offers programs in competitive, school-age, tumbling, preschool, & parent/mommy and me gymnastics, in addition to a wide range of camps, parties, and other events to Los Angeles families.

We're open 7 days a week with classes of every type and level offered throughout the week at different times, making it easy to find the perfect class to fit your child's skill level **and** your schedule. Whatever it is you're looking for, at JAG Gym, "We've got a class for that!" Visit our website at www.jaggym.com for more information and download our new mobile app at www.jaggym.com/app!

Students at JAG learn gymnastics in a safe and fun environment, where safety-certified instructors work with each child to increase flexibility, strength, and fitness level while at the same time teaching good character in the context of CHARACTER COUNTS!®, the nation's most successful character development program.

Our jaw-dropping nearly 25,000 square-foot facility features state-of-the-art equipment including: three sprung floors, multiple trampolines, two large foam pits, and specialty gymnastics and playground equipment for our preschool gymnasts. Whatever you're looking for, you'll find it at JAG where, "We do good things for kids!"