

THE GYMNAST'S BODY AND SAFETY SKILLS



Changing the culture in sports: Towards
a more open culture in gymnastics

Voimistelu liikuttaa!

THE GOAL IS TO

- Offer information and new skills to gymnasts and instructors and coaches working with children
- Highlight children's rights in gymnastics
- Strengthen a healthy attitude to working with children among coaches

CHILD'S BODY

Task of the coach

- Teach gymnasts the right words for body parts
- Explain that not everyone has to be the same size or look the same (even in a team)

The gymnast's skills

- Is able to use the correct, approved names for body parts.
- Is able to respect his or her own body and understands that bodies are different but all equally good.

TRAINING OUTFIT RULES AND SKILLS

Task of the coach

- Explain to the gymnast that body parts underneath the training clothes are private.

The gymnast's skills

- Knows the training outfit rule and is able to say no if somebody breaches the rule.
- Understands that some areas of the body are private and is able to cover them.

RULES ON TOUCHING AND ASSISTING

Task of the coach

- Explain to the gymnast how the coach may touch the gymnast.
 - A touch should not feel physically or mentally bad.
- Explain that it is ok to say no if touching hurts or feels scary but also explain that **for safety reasons assistance by touching is required for some of the moves.**

The gymnast's skills

- Recognises own feelings and is able to say no if does not want to be touched.
 - Listens if another child says no to touching.
- Understands that no one is allowed to say negative things about someone else's body.

EVERYDAY INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINING HALL

For the coach

- Respect the child's right to decline to be touched.
- NOTE! Assisting in moves and correcting posture may require the coach to touch the gymnast to ensure safety and to prevent injuries and this must be explained to the gymnast
- Consider whether you want to be part of the problem or part of the solution: leave out unnecessary comments and jokes about someone's body or gender or sexual identity

For the gymnast

- If you feel scared or bad, find the courage to talk to a safe adult
 - Have the courage to say NO if something feels bad
- Remember to show respect for others at the training hall and outside it, also on social media. Nasty looks and comments intended as jokes can also be hurtful.

WHAT IS SAFETY SKILL EDUCATION?

- Safety skill education teaches gymnasts skills that help them protect themselves and set limits.
- The goal is to support growth and development and promote self-confidence.
- The main thing is to understand the significance of interaction and to encourage children and adolescents to talk about difficult matters.
- Having knowledge on children's rights and talking about safety skills enhance safety and improve self-esteem.

Sources: Family Federation of Finland, You're not alone service and National Institute for Health and Welfare of Finland