

What Are the Benefits of Gymnastics for Kids?

By Victoria Thompson, eHow Contributor

Gymnastics is a sport that helps a child become well-rounded. It emphasizes teamwork, skill and dedication. Participating in gymnastics builds positive self-esteem in a child and helps him feel good when achieving goals. Gymnastics provides a way to exert energy and build physical fitness to last through adulthood.



Physical Fitness

A child who engages in physical fitness and eats healthful meals has less of a chance of developing childhood obesity, according to the Center for Disease Control. A physically fit child may be more willing to continue to maintain an active, healthy lifestyle throughout adulthood. Gymnastics is physically demanding sport that involves balance, coordination, speed and flexibility.

Strengthens Cognitive Skills

Gymnastics helps prepare young children for school. "Gymnastics and early childhood movement education is directly attributed to developing neurological pathways in students and promoting reading readiness," according to the United States Elite Coaches Association for Women's Gymnastics. Gymnastics also has been found to increase the attention span and communication skills in children. These are two skills necessary to succeed in school.

Teamwork

Children learn how to work cooperatively through being a member of a gymnastics team. Working together and understanding different personalities is an important skill for children to acquire. Teamwork creates motivation when peers learn to encourage and cheer one another. The team shares successes as well as failures. Gymnastics allows a child to make new friends, so he is becoming accepting and willing to learn about someone who may be unlike him.

Learn Positive Self-Worth

Gymnastics challenges a child and helps him to believe in himself. Once a child learns a skill and accomplishes a goal, he develops confidence in himself and likely will be emboldened to tackle future challenges. Positive self-worth gained through sports can carry over into other aspects of life. Children



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