

Kehler's Gymnastics 15-35 Month Tumble Tykes

What will my child learn?

Kehler's Tumble Tykes learn real gymnastics on real gymnastics equipment just like you see on T.V. but they do it in a fun game playing atmosphere. They learn basic rolls, tumbling, non-flipping trampoline, bar and ring skills. We also spend a lot of time developing balance and coordination, climbing and safe landing skills. We usually group the children by age within the class.

That sounds like a lot for such a young child!

It is. We have very high expectations for our Tumble Tykes but after so many years educating young children we also have both feet planted firmly on the ground. We do much more with these young gymnasts than most parents expect BUT! It does not all happen the first week!

What if my child won't participate the first week?

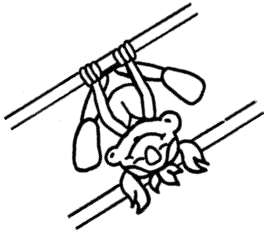
Don't be surprised. You may find that much of your first lesson is spent chasing your little athlete around the gym trying to get them to stay with the group. They may seem to have very little interest in following directions as they wander about trying to explore their new environment. It will usually take 3-4 weeks for your child to feel comfortable with their new surroundings and new faces.

How can I help?

Your reaction is very important these first few weeks. Do not be embarrassed that children who have already been with us for awhile are following along and your child is wandering. Give your child a chance to explore for a minute and then gently bring him/her back to the group. The instructor will be happy to let you know the few places that you should not explore without their help (high beams, rings, high bars, trampolines, etc.). Ask other parents and they will tell you not only about the improved motor skills their children have developed but also about improved ability to follow verbal instructions over the months. Please keep belongings in balcony or coat room, never in the gym or seating area, even if you come in late. Always leave valuables in your car or at home. The adult who comes onto the floor with the student MUST NOT GET ONTO EQUIPMENT OR JUMP INTO THE PIT!! Coaches do not want to rescue adults and take away time from the students and our insurance company will not allow adults on the equipment.

Let's work together!

Your child's success in our program is largely dependent on your patience. If you give your child time you will share a wonderful learning experience. Because your child needs your help in class please leave siblings at home, bring a sitter to watch the sibling in our lobby, sign them up for a simultaneous class, or purchase admission to the Kids Fun Factory. (Instructors are required to give you a makeup lesson if you forget and bring a sibling since you will not be allowed to participate.). Sometimes parents forget that using the class as a time to catch up on the latest news with the other parents is not only unfair to their own child but makes it harder for others who are trying to get the most out of the class. Please be considerate and wait until after class to catch up with your friends. This is your special time once a week when your child gets 100% of your attention without distractions. Don't be afraid to get down on your hands and knees and be a kid again. Make some memories together!



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Do Kehler's Tumble Tykes Learn Real Gymnastics?

Tumble Tykes do learn real gymnastics. The old fashioned way of teaching gymnastics was to line the kids up and have them sit or stand at attention while the instructor taught the children one at a time. About 25 years ago we realized that this resulted in about 15% of gymnastics and 85% of sitting for the average preschool class. Today those who are experts in preschool gymnastics know that there is a great deal that the children can practice on their own. By setting up learning stations we can create an atmosphere where the children are kept active for the whole class. This gives the children time to rehearse basic skills on their own while waiting for the instructor to give them individual attention. The children stay more alert, they have more fun, and so they actually learn more.

Our Learning stations are set up so that the child may walk across a beam, go through a tunnel, swing on the rings, roll down a wedge and then do a trick on the bars with the help of the instructor. This way as the children work their way around the station the instructor is able to teach them one at a time, according to their individual ability level. So if the first child is afraid, the instructor may just ask the child to swing or to touch their toes on the bar. If the next child is ready for more challenge the instructor can teach hip circles, sole circles, cast to handstand, or flyaways.

So you see that not only is Tumble Tykes more fun but it gives the instructor the freedom to teach an unlimited range of skills on an individual basis to each child according to readiness. Along the same lines, as the children work their way around the stations there are good educational reasons for all the activities they are practicing. Going across the low beam develops balance and coordination (if the child needs more challenge they are instructed to walk backwards, sideways, on their toes, or to hop, etc.), going through the tunnel mostly just gets the child to the next part of the station but it is real fun and fun is important to learning and keeps the child focused on the task. As they swing on the rings, rope or trapeze the children are developing the upper body strength they will need for more advanced skills (for more challenge they are asked to touch their toes to the rings to work on stomach and thigh strength).

Doing rolls on wedge mats makes it easier to learn those skills because the downhill momentum carries the child through the skill. These mats are used for children of all ages and even team kids use them. (If the child needs more challenge the instructor will ask them to practice back rolls straddle rolls, or back straddle rolls) In most classes we will have a tumbling station where the children learn to tumble on flat mats as well. There is no limit as to what children can learn in Tumble Tykes and it is unquestionably the best way to learn gymnastics. Many children who have started in our Tumble Tykes program have gone directly into our team program when they were old enough and they have even won awards at States & Regionals at very early ages.

In 1992 a little girl who was one of Mr. Kehler's first Tumble Tykes qualified for the US Olympic Team! Yes, our system does work. Yes, Tumble Tykes do learn real gymnastics.

Our Twentieth Season of Successful Service