

## Marketing the Benefits of Gymnastics

**Michael A. Taylor**  
Menlo Park Gymnastics  
650.330.2207  
coachT@gym.net

Michael A. Taylor      Gym.Net - The Gymnastics Professional's Network

## Marketing during the “Experience Economy” \* Economic Value – Transformational Experiences

### Our Evolution of Benefits Marketing

- Began with QUESTIONS
  - What are we doing?
  - What do we want to do?
  - Why do we want to do that?
  - Who are we doing that for?
  - How are we going to do it?

EVERYONE (all staff) involved in the questions and the answers.

### What Benefits Marketing did for us

- Increased enrollment from 465 to 1728 (372%) in 9 years.
- Allowed us to raise fees 224%
- Permitted staff salary increases that averaged 216%
- Parent satisfaction rating increased from 6.97 (on a 10 point scale) to 8.96
- Positioned us as “experts” in a market (BRANDING) that allows for continued growth.

### How we Marketed Benefits

- Identified the benefits
  - Substantiated by research
- Defined our market
- EVERYONE on board or off the ship
- Information blitz
  - Newsletters
  - Newspapers
  - Public appearances (Kiwanis, Rotary, etc.)
  - Daily reinforcement in classes by staff

### Healthy activities like gymnastics keep our kids off the couch and engaged in a healthy lifestyle.

**For every \$1.00 spent on early learning programs, society recoups \$7.14 in reduced crime, welfare and special education costs. (California First Five Commission, 2002)**

**With pediatric obesity at an epidemic level of 13% of children and adolescents in the United States, getting children away from the television or computer games and into the gym is a terrific first step toward a more active lifestyle.**

**The researchers at the Centers for Disease Control report that youth who undertake lifestyle exercise programs that increase physical activity, reduce the intake of high-caloric foods and involve parents have the best chance of preventing and reducing obesity over the long-term.**

**Gymnastics is perhaps one of the most comprehensive “lifestyle exercise programs” available to children, incorporating strength, flexibility, speed, balance, coordination, power and discipline.**

**Studies show that children learn cognitive skills more effectively in an environment that includes the body as well as the mind (Barrett, 1998).**

**40% of the nation's 16,000 school districts have reduced or eliminated physical education programs over the past 8 years. (AACRP, 2001).**

**Only TWO states mandate recess be included in the elementary school curriculum. (AACRP, 2001).**

**Gymnastics and early childhood movement education is directly attributed to developing neurological pathways in students and promoting reading readiness. (Raising-A-Reader, 1999)**

**Preschool gymnastics is preparing students for successful experiences in school; children who have participated in movement education activities have longer attention spans, increased communication skills, general problem solving skills and improved self-esteem.**

**Researchers at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School found a relationship between physical activity and children's self-esteem. The more time children ages 10 to 16 spent being active, the higher their self-efficacy and self-esteem were reported to be (Strauss RS, Rodzilsky D, Burack G, Colin M., 2001).**

**European researchers found that physical fitness in children related to a reduced risk of developing asthma during adolescence (Rasmussen, Lambrecht, Siersted, Hansen & Hansen, 2000).**

**Physical activity is instrumental in preventing certain cancers; from colon cancer and breast cancer to prostate cancer (Merrett, Theis & Ashbury, 2000). Increased exercise helped reduce the risk of developing diabetes by 58% (Yale University School of Medicine, 2001).**

**For every \$1.00 spent on children’s recreational activities, society saves \$4.78 in costs of remedial education, welfare and crime prevention.  
(Federal Committee for Economic Development, 1998)**

**Beginning a physical activity such as gymnastics at an early age is no guarantee but active children are more likely to grow up to be active and healthy adults.**

**The risk of substance abuse by adolescents is decreased by physical training programs that incorporate life skills. Better school attendance, lower anxiety and depression, and decreased use of tobacco and alcohol were all reported after a twelve week physical training program  
(Collingwood, Sunderlin, Reynolds & Kohl, 2000).**

**1 in 4 eighth graders has been drunk. Positive intervention programs such as after school sports has been proven to prevent drinking by 9 to 15 year olds. (Williams, 1994).**

**Recreational sports activities, including gymnastics is a key to balanced human development and has been proven to be a significant factor in reducing alcohol and drug use (Williams, 1994).**

**Statistics show that children actively engaged in organized “positive choice” extra-curricular activities such as youth sports are less likely to be involved in self-destructive and anti-social behavior and juvenile crime (Soenstrom, 1986).**

**Physical activity has been proven to delay the development of high blood pressure and helps reduce blood pressure in adolescents with hypertension (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999).**

**Many studies have reported the benefits of moderate impact activities such as gymnastics has on the development of bone density and the prevention of osteoporosis.**

**Plyometric exercises (also known as jump training) like tumbling and vaulting have been determined by the American College of Sports Medicine to be a safe, beneficial and fun activity for children.**

**Active children are more likely to grow to become active and healthier adults, reducing the burden on the health care system.**

**Napping improves visual skills, learning, a 34 percent improvement in performance and 54 percent improvement in alertness.**

**(Wall Street Journal, 2003)**

**Children who attend quality pre-school activities earn \$143,000 more over their lifetimes than those who don't. (California First Five Commission, 2002)**

**Sedentary lifestyles have been linked to the development of coronary heart disease, diabetes mellitus and numerous other chronic ailments, costing society approximately \$1900 per person per year in health care costs.**

**Nurturing the enjoyment of movement and motor skill development at an early age will help to promote continued participation in physical activity. Long range, these active and therefore healthier adults are more likely to be more productive at work, take less sick days, and have fewer “on the job” accidents (Paffenbarger, 1986).**

**Gymnastics contributes to the immediate economic vitality of your local community; gym owners pay rent, employ people, pay taxes and purchase goods.**

**In addition to all of the above, gymnastics provides children with an opportunity to meet with friends, make new friends and have fun!**