

# TWISTER PSYCHOLOGY UPDATE



Fall 2008

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## FALL PSYCHOLOGY TOPICS

*"If you could sum up your style for handling stress, what would you say?"*

During the fall season we will be covering the important topic of stress and how to manage it. The girls will be taught to recognize signs of stress and we will discuss how stress affects their bodies and minds. We will identify common causes of stress. The girls will learn ways to prevent a stress reaction from occurring and will practice several different adaptive coping mechanisms to use when a stress reaction does occur. We will also set a few goals for the upcoming competitive season.

As parents, you can help your daughters generalize this knowledge and make it meaningful to their lives in school and at home by discussing the topics that are covered in group with them. Sharing some of your personal experiences with stress and the adaptive, effective ways that you use to cope with stress is a great way for

them to see firsthand how stress relates to their lives. As the competitive season approaches, asking your daughter about her goals for the season will help her to visualize and verbalize her hopes while allowing you to understand where she desires to be in her gymnastics. This knowledge will provide insight to her reactions to her performances during and after competitions.



## REMINDERS

All team girls in level Prep Optional, 7, 8, 9 and 10 who are participating in psychology groups need to have a 1 inch 3-ring binder (any color or style). Starting this month, we will use these binders to keep handouts and assignments. These binders will be kept in the bins on top of the team cubbies. Be sure to put your name somewhere on your binder.

## TWISTER SISTER SORORITY BASH

Twister Sister Sorority Bash to be held on Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup> from 5 pm to 7 pm. The Twister Sister Sororities will take the place of last season's Twister Sister Pair program. This event is open to all team girls from Levels II through Elite. The event will consist of interested team members forming a sisterhood for camaraderie and friendship. Girls will be placed in groups or sorority of approximately 10 gymnasts for the 2008-2009 season. Each sorority will bond with one another through games, crafts, and activities.



Each sorority will work together to come up with a name, theme, mascot, mantra, color, and sisterhood bracelet. This event should be lots of fun for the girls. Please RSVP to front desk by Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. Cost is \$5 and will include pizza, beverage, and sorority bracelet. Payment is appreciated at time of RSVP. We are in need of parent volunteers, so if you are interested in helping out with this event please email [chiler@bellsouth.net](mailto:chiler@bellsouth.net).

## GYMNAST SPOTLIGHT

Over the summer I had the opportunity to work with many new gymnasts, as there were quite a few girls who moved up to the Prep Optional level. It was a great experience and the gym gave each girl a bound book that contained all of our summer lessons, goal sheets, and sticker

*"The best teachers of humanity are the lives of great men" (or gymnasts!)*  
*Charles H. Fowler*

pages. All of the girls did a wonderful job in the groups and there were a few girls who did an outstanding job using their sports psychology skills over the summer.

**Gloria Turner** always comes to group with a very positive disposition. She is very responsible and completes her assignments, even when she is absent from a group. Gloria



serves as a wonderful role model to her teammates by always participating in group and offering a hand when needed to other gymnasts in her group.

**Gina Locigno** has a pleasant attitude in group and is always willing to share her personal experiences with her teammates. Over the summer, Gina

had set a goal of improving her fitness level and has worked closely with the team coaches and registered dietician



toward meeting her goal. She has used her goal setting skills and belief in her ability to succeed to make good progress toward her goal.

**Grace Warren** has shown a very enthusiastic outlook in group toward learning mental skills that can help her with gymnastics. Grace has made efforts to complete assignments for arranged absences and has successfully used



her goal setting skills and her ability to focus to enable her to display a great individual performance during TOPS testing this summer.



## TWISTER PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM & STAFF

My name is Christine Hiler and I conduct the



psychology program at Twisters. I have my doctorate degree in clinical psychology and am a licensed psychologist in the state of Florida. My post-doctoral training was

completed at a pediatric behavioral hospital. I have previously competed and coached gymnastics. Currently, I enjoy participating in 5K races and coach recreational soccer. I have two daughters on the gymnastics team at Twisters. Upon parent, gymnast, or coach request, I am available for individual sessions and anyone interested in learning more about this may email me at [chiler@bellsouth.net](mailto:chiler@bellsouth.net).

With the large growth in number of optional girls on our team at Twisters, it was going to be difficult to continue offering psychology to all optional level gymnasts. However, the team was fortunate enough to have a parent willing to volunteer her time to assist me with groups

so that we could continue to make this program available to as many girls as possible. Here is a short intro from our team's psychology parent volunteer:

My name is Kris Guerra and I am very excited and looking forward to help as a parent volunteer with the Sports Psychology program. My goal and hope is to assist Christine in making this program positive and effective in our kids/athletes lives. As a parent of two girls on the Twisters team and a previous gymnastics coach I am a strong believer in the Sport Psychology program and how it can have such a huge positive impact on our



kids and their performance. I am happy to have the privilege to help and I hope we all will see some great benefits this year with our kids.

The psychology program at Twisters has the primary purpose of assisting our gymnasts into becoming mentally sound athletes. Gymnastics involves a plethora of mental challenges, from coping with anxiety to doubting one's self-identity after an injury. Psychology has a huge role in the field of athletics and specifically within the realm of gymnastics. Mentally strong athletes are better prepared to set and achieve goals, cope with obstacles and set backs gracefully, and build a strong self-worth.

Group psychology sessions are made available bi-monthly to all optional team gymnasts. Topics covered are specific to gymnastics, but certainly are applicable to all areas of life. The psychology program also participates in team building experiences, such as the Twister Sorority Sister Program to help our gymnasts develop a strong sense of leadership and good sportsmanship among our team members.