

Safety During Classes, Programs, and Parties

This document covers safety during all My Gym programs (classes, camps, Parents' Night Out, Practice and Play, Birthday Parties, etc.). For simplicity, we have referred to all of the above as "programs."

I. General Safety Applicable to All Programs

- A. My Gymers should stay extremely alert and aware of all that is happening whenever children are on the floor. Anticipation is key. A good teacher is always watching for a possible accident.
- B. Coming-in or open play times have a higher risk for safety issues. Be hyper-vigilant. Running structured activities usually reduces the risk of an accident.
- C. There must be at least one teacher on the floor at all times during all programs and parties. The lead and assistant teachers may enter and exit the storage room with equipment throughout a class, but under no normal circumstance should both teachers be in the storage room at the same time. Transitions in classes should be coordinated and timed accordingly (see "Class Systems and Transitions" document).
- D. Safety announcements should be made throughout all programs. These announcements are detailed in our programs and curriculum. If at any time instructors feel an additional safety announcement is needed, they should stop the music immediately and make the announcement. The tone should remain friendly yet stern.
- E. During parent participation programs, parents are required to supervise their children at all times (except during Independent Time when applicable).
 - 1. If a mom, for instance, is not supervising her child, is speaking to other parents, is on her phone, or simply not watching her child, one of the teachers should speak to that mom and kindly ask that she supervise her child. An instructor cannot be expected to take too much time with any one child, as that would take away from the safety of the entire program.
 - 2. Children should never be left alone on any equipment. Parents must be asked to always supervise their children.
- F. A child should never be left unsupervised on hanging or gymnastics equipment.
- G. All hanging and tumbling skills, including Skill Stations, require adequate mats underneath.
- H. When it is necessary to remove a mat from its location within a setup to be used in curriculum, either:
 - 1. Choose an "extra" mat that is not used for safety reasons in the setup.

2. Replace the mat with one that adequately protects the area where the mat had been located.
- I. My Gyms are all different shapes and sizes. If you find that your gym does not have an adequate number of mats to keep all areas protected, additional mats should be purchased.
- J. If an instructor does not fully understand and know how to spot something in the program (especially hanging or tumbling skills), that instructor must speak up and inform the supervisor or shift lead. The instructor must not spot the skill. Have that instructor lead/spot a more basic skill.
- K. An instructor must feel completely confident in his/her ability to safely execute a trick or gymnastics skill before performing/demonstrating it in class. Please note that instructors are not required to demonstrate all tricks and skills. A child can demonstrate a skill that an instructor is unable to do.
- L. Siblings of participating members should not be allowed on the floor during class unless they are enrolled or doing a trial.
 1. Babies in chest or back-mounted carriers are allowed as long as they remain in the carrier.
 2. Parents/adults are not allowed to carry babies in their arms because that would prevent their having both arms available to fully spot their participating children.
- M. Car seats and strollers
 1. Babies/children in car seats must not be left unattended at any time because there have been instances where children have died while sleeping in car seats.
 2. Babies sleeping in strollers (as long as approved by stroller manufacturer) may be placed on the play space side of the front desk as long as there is no (1) equipment around them, (2) items that may fall onto the infant, or (3) danger of a participating child's jumping/falling onto the sleeping baby. Wheels on the stroller should be locked.
- N. Adults attending programs are NOT allowed on ANY My Gym equipment. This includes but is not limited to Space Flight and all trampolines in the gym. If any parents are seen on the equipment, you must inform them of this policy immediately.
 1. This rule must be announced at the beginning of every birthday party. Repeat the announcement as necessary.
- O. Instructors should limit their conversations with parents and other teachers when children are on the floor playing. If you are speaking to a parent, make sure the parent continues to follow his/her child around the gym.
- P. Give extra assistance to pregnant moms, parents with twins, older grandparents, parents with disabilities, and parents who are temporarily unable to help their children adequately. Parents of twins should be encouraged to bring help (a friend, caregiver, family member, etc.) to provide safety assistance in case the parent is unable to help both children properly.

- Q. Watch for and remove any small items on the floor that youngsters might swallow (e.g., pennies, small parts of toys, deflated/popped balloons, etc.).
- R. In order to prevent possible choking, children are not allowed to eat, chew gum, or have candy in their mouths while on the gym floor.
- S. The gate onto the gym play space must have a childproof latch and be latched during programs.
- T. Storage room doors must remain closed at all times (unless an instructor is entering/exiting) and must be closely monitored because children may try to enter. Children are never allowed in the storage room. Childproof latches can be used if this is a problem in your gym.
- U. All outlets, with the exception of those in the storage room or office, must have a child safety outlet plug/cover. Properly functioning outlets with built-in child safety protection are also acceptable.
- V. Important: A My Gym instructor must *never* be with a child behind closed doors in the storage room, restroom, or office unless another adult (parent, caregiver, or instructor) is in the room with them or has a clear view of them. As stated in this document, operational security cameras must also be installed in these rooms (except restrooms).
 - 1. For ancillary rooms where Preschool Prep, Karate, or Dance is held and run with 1 instructor, if another adult is not present or able to view the activities, the room must have operational security cameras installed and monitoring the activities.
- W. Program Size Parameters: Adhering to the size parameters ensures a safe experience for all children present.
 - 1. Listed below are the program size parameters to follow for each program.
 - a. Parent Participation Classes: 20 children
 - b. All Independent Classes: 16 children
 - c. Preschool Prep: 6:1 ratio (check your local regulations)
 - d. Camps and Parents' Night Out Events (check your local regulations)
 - i. 20 children or fewer: 2 teachers
 - ii. 20-30 children: 3-4 teachers
 - iii. 30-40 children: 4-5 teachers
 - e. Birthday Parties
 - i. 25 children or fewer: 2 teachers
 - ii. 26-30 children: 3 teachers

II. Trampolines: (6-7 foot)

- A. It is required that all trampolines be semi-enclosed. Methods include:
 - 1. A factory-issued net with no tears or damage
 - 2. The custom-made safety surround by Artistic Coverings – Be certain to use the provided straps to secure the pad to the frame.
 - 3. A black line mat – Be certain to use straps or bungee cords to secure the mat to the frame.

(Note: The use of the rainbow mat and/or the 6'x4' panel mats is prohibited.)

B. General Safety:

1. Allow only one child at a time on the trampoline. This applies to all ages and all programs, parties, camps, etc.
2. Adults are not allowed on this trampoline. This applies to instructors as well as parents, caregivers, etc.
3. A mat or stairs should be positioned at the entrance/exit of the trampoline so children can enter/exit safely.
4. No items should be placed on the trampoline. This includes but is not limited to mats, balls, toys, etc. If a child brings such an item onto the trampoline, immediately ask the child to stop jumping and remove the item.
5. Be certain to spot carefully, as children tend to think they can jump into the mats without their tipping over.
6. The "Trampoline Safety Rules" sign must be secured to the trampoline netting near the entrance. Make announcements and, if necessary, speak to the children/parents directly to ensure these rules are followed.

C. Maintenance:

1. If at any time the padding that covers the springs tears or wears in a way that the springs are exposed, either the padding or the entire trampoline must be replaced.
2. If at any time the netting tears or wears in such a way that it can no longer secure a child inside the trampoline, either the netting or the entire trampoline must be replaced.

D. "Jogger" Style Trampoline

1. This trampoline is commonly sold at sporting goods stores (pictured below). It is about 3 feet wide and about 12 inches off the ground.
(Note: This is only an example. The actual item may differ slightly.)

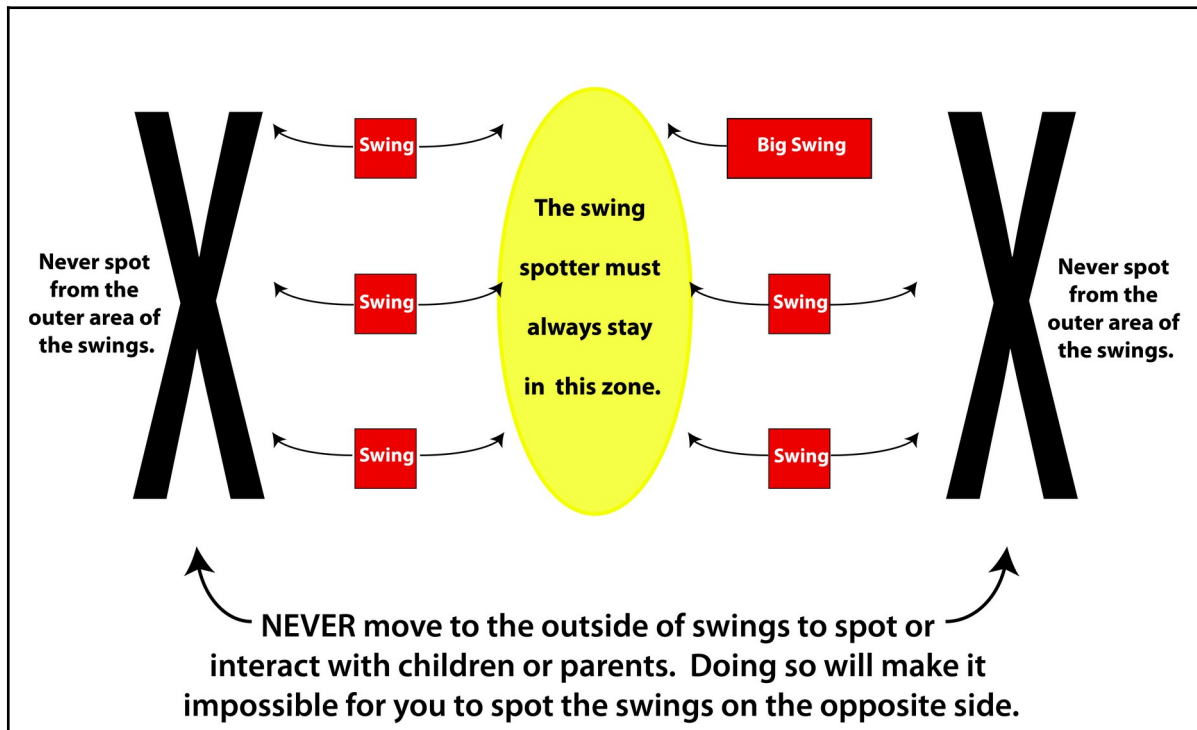


2. It is OK for instructors to jump on this trampoline when it is necessary to demonstrate a skill.

3. Parents/caregivers should not be allowed to jump on this trampoline in the gym. Politely ask them to please refrain from jumping because the equipment is designed for children only.
4. No items should be placed on the trampoline. This includes but is not limited to mats, balls, toys, etc.
5. Do not place hard equipment right next to the trampoline because children can lose control when jumping and strike the hard object.
6. Maintenance:
 - a. If at any time the padding covering the springs tears or wears in a way that the springs are exposed, either the padding or the entire trampoline must be replaced.
 - b. Routinely check the legs to be sure they are securely screwed in.

III. Swing Time in Parent Participation Classes

- A. During Swing Time, there is an increased risk of injury to children not in swings. Follow these rules to help prevent accidents.
 1. Only age-appropriate swings must be used in each class. Follow the swing manufacturer's advisement for ages and see the "Age-Appropriate Swing List" as well.
 2. A clear safety announcement (see curriculum) with the music off must be made within a few seconds of swings being hung.
 3. Parents must swing their children slowly. The instructor spotting the swings should slow down any swings that are swinging high or too fast. If it happens repeatedly, speak to the parent/caregiver so the importance of this safety precaution is understood.
 4. To prevent the possibility of a child's being struck by a swing, all swings except the big swing must be hung at a height of approximately 30" from the bottom of the swing to the floor (not including Big Swings). You may need to occasionally help shorter parents/caretakers load their children in/out of swings.
 5. so the bottom of the swing is approximately 3-4 feet off the ground. At this height, the swings will be above most of the children's heads (should a child run into the swing area). This is not a replacement for a swing spotter, effective spotting, or having parents always supervise their children.
 6. During Swing Time, it is the responsibility of 1 of the 2 instructors to be the "swing spotter" and watch the swing area at all times. That teacher must remain vigilant to anticipate and prevent a child's running though the swing area and accidentally being struck by a swing.
 7. The instructor must remain between the two rows of swings the entire time. Parents should stand on the perimeter of the swings. The instructor should never be positioned or standing on the perimeter of the swings. See diagram:



8. The tire swing must be hung using two straps or ropes. This will help distribute the weight over two eyebolts and prevent unnecessary spinning.
9. The Big Deal must be as far away from the swings as possible. Think about where the child will **finish** the ride to ensure the youngster will not run into the swings. The assistant running the Big Deal must repeat to the child at the end of the ride, "Go with Mommy." Bolsters can be used to act as a barricade between the Big Deal and the swings if necessary.
10. When swing time is over:
 - a. Make a final "10 more swings" announcement and then count down from 10 to 1 in a fun way.
 - b. When the countdown is done, the "swing spotter" instructor must quickly stop all swings from swinging. This is very important and should be done quickly but safely. All swings must be brought to a complete stop within a few seconds. Parents will become trained to this format and will soon learn to stop the swings and take their children out.
 - c. You should not allow one or two children to swing freely after the countdown because it would pose a serious safety issue.

IV. Independent Time in Parent Participation Classes

- A. The 2 teachers can both get equipment, but there must be at least one instructor on the floor at all times.

- B. Watch for children who are not participating. Bring them back to the independent area/toys.
- C. Watch for aggressive behavior (e.g., hitting, biting, pulling hair, pulling toys away from others, etc.) and intercede immediately.

V. Safety During Parties

NOTE: All safety rules noted in this document apply to parties as well. These are additional safety precautions and policies during parties.

- A. Parents with children under 3 must remain on the floor with them at all times.
- B. Party attendees may not know the policies or safety rules of the gym. Make a safety announcement within the first 10-15 minutes of the party and throughout as needed. The announcement should include the trampoline rules, that adults attending programs are NOT allowed on ANY My Gym equipment, and that all children under 3 must be supervised on the floor by a parent or caregiver.
- C. Coming-in or open play times have a higher risk for safety issues. Be hyper-vigilant. Running structured activities usually reduces the risk of an accident.
- D. Parties with mixed ages or more than 20 children have a higher risk for safety issues.
 - 1. Make announcements more frequently as needed.
 - 2. Any children under 3 must be accompanied by an adult.
 - 3. Put away yoga balls and bouncers, since they can be kicked into younger children.
 - 4. During open times, avoid playing chase or running around exciting the older kids excessively. Avoid working them into a tizzy because it can create a higher potential for accidents. Instead, run fun structured activities; this usually reduces the risk of an accident.
- E. Party hats (sharp) and blowers (possibility of choking) are not allowed on the gym floor.
- F. During the Birthday March, the My Gym instructor should also take a parent/caregiver into the storage room to prep the child for the Birthday March ride. Important: The instructor must not be alone with the child in the storage room at *any* time.

VI. Lobby Safety/Safety Before and After a Program

- A. All My Gym doors should be childproof, which under typical construction code means they are heavy enough that a child cannot push them open alone. This is usually enough to ensure the safety of most small children. If your entrance/exit doors can be pushed open by a child under 5, you should consult with your landlord or a contractor to be sure it is up to code or correct the problem.
 - 1. NOTE: There are local codes, ADA regulations, and laws issued by the Fire Department specific to entry and exit doors. Please consult with

your landlord or contractor before making any modifications to your entry/exit.

B. Benches and Front Desk:

1. Children are not allowed to stand on the benches, as this is a falling hazard. If you see a child standing on the bench, immediately reach for the child's hand and ask that he/she sit down.
2. Under no circumstance should children be allowed to sit or stand on the front desk.
3. Children under 3 must be supervised by the parent/caregiver at all times. This includes when they are sitting on the benches because it is possible they can fall back. Kindly remind parents as needed.

C. Recommend to parents that they leave purses and anything else of value locked out of view in their cars.

D. Sitting water around drinking fountains, entryways (during rain/snow), etc. must be wiped up immediately. Slip-proof mats should be used to avoid slips and falls in areas that repeatedly become wet.

E. Children are not allowed on the floor before or after a program unless an instructor is on the floor.

F. Main entrance doors should remain closed (not locked) at all times. Always be alert for the possibility that a child might wander out of the gym.

G. Watch for strangers who may enter the gym or who are loitering outside.

H. A child should be released to an extended family member or a caregiver only with the parent's/guardian's advance consent.

I. Keep an eye out for people entering the gym you do not recognize. My Gym is a private business, and our programs are private. No adult other than the parents of a child may observe the child in a program without specific permission from that child's parent.

1. There is no reason for anyone to "observe a class." Anyone interested in our programs or parties should sign up for a free trial class.
2. Be advised that, in the past, thieves have asked to "observe a class" in order to remain in the lobby and steal wallets and purses.

J. Surveillance/security cameras are required in all My Gyms. (See Surveillance Camera Directives file for more information.) There should be cameras with views of every room except restrooms. A minimum of 2 cameras should be used to record the gym floor.

VII. Other Safety Advisements, Notices, and Procedures

A. Equipment Safety

1. Bungee Cords

- a. Metal hooks are banned and should not be used to secure equipment.
- b. Plastic ended bungee hooks may still be necessary from time to time and are okay to use, but the best option is to use Velcro straps.

2. Pulling and Putting Away Equipment
 - a. One team member should use the Equipment Pull List (found in the Weekly Meeting Workbook from Curriculum Center in MGM) for pulling and organizing equipment needed for the week's programming.
 - b. Be sure to keep the toy closet organized and put things away in between classes and during closing to avoid tripping hazards and to quickly grab what's needed during classes for smooth transitions.
3. Gym Setup
 - a. Refer to the Gym Floor Map (found in the Weekly Meeting Workbook from Curriculum Center in MGM) for helpful suggestions on equipment setup as it coincides with the current weeks' curriculum.
 - b. Secure, fasten, and test out the setup, and assess the area for "hot spots" (i.e., cracks in between the connected pieces of equipment, misplacement of mats or lack thereof, potential falls, tripping, or anything that a teacher or parent cannot effectively spot, etc.).
 - c. Utilize the Weekly Safety Checklist (found in the Weekly Meeting Workbook from Curriculum Center in MGM) to conduct a final inspection after the setup is completed.
- B. Put away yoga balls and bouncers in older kids classes, as children can toss or kick them into other children. This applies to all older kids classes, siblings classes, camps, PNOs, and birthday parties.
- C. Always make sure to read the information under allergies/disabilities in a child's enrollment form and note anything relevant for that child. Input this information into the "Notes #1" section of the MGM. You want to know if a child has any illness, disability, or issue that may affect participation in activities in the gym.
- D. Children should not be allowed to play on the floor during setups or while cleaning is being performed.
- E. All My Gym personnel should know the precise procedures to follow in case of an emergency.
 1. Make sure emergency phone numbers are posted.
 2. Have an emergency plan in place for natural disasters that may occur in your region.
- F. A First Aid Kit should be kept on the premises at all times – labeled and mounted visibly on the wall for parents to see.
- G. Child-friendly, soft, gel-style ice packs (or similar) should be kept in the refrigerator/freezer at all times.
- H. The areas outside your gym (exit, stairs, parking lot, etc.) must be well lighted at night. If they are not, speak to your landlord and express your concern for your clientele's safety.

As stated, these are the general safety procedures and guidelines to follow under normal operating conditions. Other safety concerns may arise in your location. Use your best judgement and contact MGE for assistance and advice. If at any time you feel there is a threat or danger to you, your team, clients, children, or your property, immediately call 911.