

National Gymnastics Week Step by Step Action Plan



Gymnastics
Canada

Step-by-Step Action Plan

For those of you who are new to the world of gymnastics promotion, we have good news! Gymnastics promotion programs, such as National Gymnastics Week, don't have to be cost prohibitive or take a lot of time away from your other duties. Simply follow this step-by-step action plan to create your club's very own National Gymnastics Week celebration activity. Feel free to add or delete steps as needed, based on your own unique situation. Remember that flexibility and creativity are essential in getting started with your National Gymnastics Week celebration!

If you have some previous experience in gymnastics promotion, or have administered a National Gymnastics Week celebration activity in the past, then take a look at the ***“NGW – A Treasure Chest of Ideas”*** handbook for examples from other clubs who have organized a celebration activity to promote gymnastics. Some of their ideas may work for you.

Step # 1 – Get Help!

Start planning your activity now! The sooner you can get organized the smoother everything will run. Start by organizing your co-workers and volunteers to form a committee. We suggest that you form a National Gymnastics Week (NGW) team of 4 to 8 individuals who represent most of the departments or administrative levels within your club. The number of people you need will be determined by the magnitude of your activity. The people on your NGW team should be enthusiastic and solution-oriented individuals.

Positions for the committee members may include:

- *Chairperson* – choose a responsible chairperson, somebody with enthusiasm and experience to run such an activity. This person will manage the activity and NGW team.

- *Advertising & Sponsorship Coordinator* – this person is responsible for promoting the activity to possible sponsors and securing sponsorship/advertising revenues.
- *Media Coordinator* – this person is responsible for contacting and liaising with all possible media (radio, TV, newspaper, etc.) about the activity.
- *Equipment & Materials Coordinator* – this person is responsible for coordinating all activities involving equipment/materials needed for the activity (including transportation).
- *Volunteer Coordinator* – this person is responsible for organizing the other volunteers needed for this activity. Remember to keep the volunteers to a manageable number.
- *Reference contact* – this position should be held by a coach/expert in the field who can act as a reference, an aid in coordination and a liaison between the NGW team, athletes and parents.
- *Secretary* – this individual is responsible for keeping notes and lists of tasks.
- *Treasurer* – this individual is responsible for setting the budget and managing funds.

Ideally, your NGW team should plan to meet once every 4 to 6 weeks, and each meeting should last between 30 to 60 minutes. One way to achieve a pleasant setting at these meetings would be to hold them over lunch or dinner at a restaurant. Contributions from outside organizations, booster clubs, employees, schools, and fitness centres could also benefit your activity. Find a contact person for every organization you wish to include, and invite their organization to participate in your National Gymnastics Week activity.

Step #2 – Develop a Plan!

Good planning is an essential component of success. Plans are like road maps . . . the more detailed they are, the more likely you will be to get where you intend to go. Take notes at every meeting and begin developing a tentative timeline for the tasks you need to complete leading up to your National Gymnastics Week activity (see “*Sample Timelines*” section).

Consider the best location to attract the public to your activity, whether at the club’s facility, a community centre, shopping centre or school location, etc. You will need to get proper permission, licenses and insurance for your activity. Consider naming a spokesperson or inviting a special guest. Send out invitations to VIPs early so they can fit the activity into their schedule. Consider ways to attract people from outside your club to this activity. Decide on the methods of advertising to be used. Start the planning well in advance. National Gymnastics Week will be here sooner than you think!

Step #3 - Establish Outcome Objectives

In order to ensure that your activity is a success, you should develop specific and measurable objectives. Examples include: number of participants, number of exhibitors or displays, number of newspaper articles printed, etc. Ask participants and spectators for feedback via evaluation forms. These forms are a great way to get innovative ideas for future National Gymnastics Week celebrations, and can also be helpful in seeking out future NGW team members for your club.

Step #4 – Establish Your Operating Budget

You will want to develop a budget tailored to meet the specific needs of the activity as soon as possible. The NGW team's task is to implement a good project for the club without creating a deficit. It's okay to break even, although, you really do want to make a profit!

The NGW team is also accountable for all the financial and material resources received from public institutions and private companies, and therefore must use these resources efficiently and effectively. The budget must be carefully monitored to avoid any overspending. The possibility of reducing costs wherever possible should be constantly considered. By making unforeseen "economies" it may be possible to offset unexpected expenses. A basic principle of budget supervision is to always ask if expenses can be borne by a third party. You will be surprised by how often the answer is affirmative.

Make use of goods and services available from the community. Consider club members and business connections to obtain donations in kind (food, publicity, prizes, awards, sound systems, audiovisual equipment, etc.). Remember to ask the local high school or college if they have students studying recreational/sport administration, business, and graphic arts, etc. who might be willing to help out to gain practical experience. Use any resources available to you as a bartering tool for businesses. For example, you might trade a free gymnastics class for a service the company can provide you at no cost.

Some of the items you might need to consider when drawing up your budget include:

- ✓ *Permit, license, insurance costs*
- ✓ *Site costs (rental, cleaning, security, etc.)*
- ✓ *Equipment costs (rental, purchase, transportation, set-up/tear down, etc.)*
- ✓ *Participant costs (travel, accommodation, meals, costumes, etc.)*
- ✓ *Spectator costs (refreshments, etc.)*
- ✓ *Award/certificate costs*

- ✓ *Guest speakers/clinician costs (travel, accommodation, per diem, honoraria, etc.)*
- ✓ *Promotion activities prior to Gymnastics Week*
- ✓ *Administration costs (telephone, mailing, office supplies, printing, etc.)*
- ✓ *Staffing costs (salary, expenses, etc.)*
- ✓ *Volunteer costs (travel, parking, telephone, mail, uniform, reward, etc.)*
- ✓ *Merchandise/gifts costs*
- ✓ *Etc.*

Step #5 – Promote, Promote, Promote!

Using the materials provided by GCG and your Provincial/Territorial Federation will greatly help you in this step. Send news releases to local newspapers and TV stations in advance to advertise your upcoming activity. Send public service announcements to your area radio stations. Use teasers for in-house promotion on your club's bulletin board, newsletters, emails and web site. Put special ads in local publications. Collaborate and coordinate your celebration activity with other clubs, schools or organizations in your community. Promotion efforts should start early and occur frequently in the time leading up to your activity. Personally invite reporters from local newspapers and television stations to attend your National Gymnastics Week activity and cover it for their news organization or even participate in it.

Step #6 - Be Prepared

Plan for the unexpected. For example, if your activities are outdoors, do you have rain dates determined, or a plan to move the activities indoors in the event of bad weather? Do you have a back-up plan if an exhibitor or speaker cancels at the last minute?

Make sure your NGW team members roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for the days and hours leading up to the celebration. Unify your NGW team and make sure that everyone understands each other's roles by meeting more frequently during the weeks and days leading up to the activity. Decide on the use of nametags or T-shirts, etc. to identify activity organizers to the participants and public. Don't forget to decide who is in charge of setting up the display with information about your club at the activity site and who is in charge of videotaping or taking pictures during the activity.

Step #7 - Celebrate National Gymnastics Week

The big day has finally arrived! Prudent supervision and management of your activity is vital. Never leave equipment unattended. Only allow authorized personnel to use the equipment. During the activity itself, take time to enjoy and appreciate the hard-working efforts of your NGW team. Be sure to take plenty of pictures, as these can be very useful in a variety of ways: submitting them to local newspapers for publication, placing them in club newsletters, and serving as a friendly reminder for next year's celebration! Pictures are also a great informal award and thank you acknowledgement for volunteers, participants, sponsors, and exhibitors alike.

Step #8 - Evaluate the Activity!

Ask for feedback on what went well and what didn't go so well from participants, exhibitors, and speakers, etc. Your NGW team should meet as soon as possible after the activity in order to enjoy and acknowledge the success and hard work of the team, and to review the evaluations and participation numbers. This is also a good time to determine which avenues you will choose to tell everyone in the club and community about the success of your activity.

Step #9 – Wrap-Up and Share Your Story!

Now that your activity is over, you have a great story to share. Write some brief articles, memos, or news releases to share with local newspapers.

You can also send out your celebration review to upper management within your club or to us here at the national office, and be sure to include some photos! Employees, parents, and their children want to hear about the success of the activity, so post your articles and photos on your club's web site, bulletin boards, or newsletter. Don't forget to send out thank you cards and/or letters to everyone who helped (VIPs, volunteers and sponsors).

Step #10 - Brainstorm for Future Celebrations!

Your final NGW team meeting should be used for brainstorming new ideas for future celebrations. Be sure to take plenty of notes, make good use of suggestions in your evaluation forms, and have fun in the process! Remember, quality comes from quantity.

Sample Timelines

No matter if a club has thousand of athletes, an onsite gymnastics centre, and an elaborate internal gymnastics promotion program, or if it is a small club with a few employees; every club can organize an effective and successful National Gymnastics Week activity. Size does not matter! The following pages include two examples of tentative timelines to help with your National Gymnastics Week celebration planning.

Example #1 – One Individual; Little or No Budget:

October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Order NGW resources from GCG. ❑ Seek out interested volunteers for NGW planning team – try to get 2-3 other people if possible.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Determine with management/administration if any funds are available to help promote a NGW celebration activity.
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Determine the games, activities, and which outside organizations and vendors will be participating. ❑ Use this time to extend invitations to other organizations. You can also approach local businesses to make small contributions in the way of gift certificates and coupons. ❑ Call the Mayor and try to get a local proclamation for the town/city.
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Confirm and finalize all activities, games and participating outside organizations & vendors. ❑ Assign “during activity” responsibilities for volunteers and the NGW team.

<p>February</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Get ready for a big celebration! ❑ Design & produce a simple feedback evaluation form to gather information on what worked or did not work regarding the activities. ❑ Get a camera and plenty of film. ❑ Assign someone to take pictures. ❑ Assign someone to count the number of participants/keep statistics.
<p>March</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Hold a final wrap-up meeting with the NGW team to review evaluation forms & determine methods of sharing information with employees (including management/administration), parents, gymnasts, and community! ❑ Brainstorm ideas for next year's celebration, and be sure to take detailed notes of these ideas. ❑ Send out thank you cards to VIPs, sponsors and special guests. ❑ Complete the NGW activity report form and return to Provincial/Territorial Federation.

Example #2 – Pre-existing gymnastics committee; Onsite gymnastics/fitness centre; dedicated work site gymnastics staff; Moderate to large budget:

October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Develop a theme for this year’s NGW activity. ❑ Approve a budget for NGW activity. ❑ Set goals for NGW activity, and include targets.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Invite upper-level management/administration to participate in NGW team’s planning of the activity. ❑ Determine incentive/promotional items to distribute to employees. ❑ Extend invitations to local vendors, schools, booster clubs, and fitness centres to participate in NGW activity.
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Explore possibility of placing club logo on incentive items such as pens, balloons, giveaways, etc. and place order for incentive items. ❑ Begin generating/updating list of local media contacts. ❑ Begin creating drafts of news releases for future distribution.
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Confirm delivery date on any incentive items ordered. ❑ Send media advisories to local media (print, television, radio, internet, on answering machine, etc.). ❑ Send club-wide email/newsletter/memo to all employees confirming the dates and times of NGW activity. ❑ Confirm attendance of all outside vendors (if applicable).

<p>February</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>A few days before the activity:</i> Call to verify delivery on any incentive items that have not yet arrived; Confirm assignment of responsibilities for all NGW team members; Assign a team member the responsibility of taking pictures and counting participants; Send another news release to local media. □ <i>One day before the activity:</i> Send another club-wide email/newsletter/ memo to all employees to encourage their participation; place phone calls to local media contacts to encourage/confirm attendance; begin set-up of activity area, gymnastics fair, etc. □ <i>On day of activity:</i> Take plenty of pictures and don't forget to count the number of participants! Also distribute a news release to local media. Be flexible and prepared for the unexpected. Distribute and collect evaluation forms from the participants, spectators, and vendors. □ <i>One day after the activity:</i> Distribute the final news release, which should include your total number of participants. Have NGW team members write brief thank you notes to all vendors, sponsors, volunteers, etc.
<p>March</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Hold final meeting with NGW team to review the evaluation forms and determine the most appropriate method of sharing this information with all employees, as well as management/administration. □ Brainstorm ideas for next year's celebration, and be sure to appoint someone to take detailed notes of all ideas.