

# Enjoying the Sport of

# Rhythmic Gymnastics



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The gentle swirl of a ribbon, the firm toss of a ball, and the hypnotizing spin of a hoop. These are only three of the many features of Rhythmic Gymnastics.

## What is Rhythmic Gymnastics?

Rhythmic Gymnastics is an Olympic Sport incorporating a beautiful blend of dance and gymnastics combined with vividly coloured hand-held apparatuses such as: ribbons, balls, hoops, ropes and flags. Canada's own Lori Fung of Vancouver, BC was awarded the first Olympic gold medal at the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Gymnasts within this sport can develop increased overall fitness as well as coordination, flexibility and poise, while enjoying choreography set to different types of music. The opportunities for the gymnast can be endless. Currently in Edmonton this sport takes on two forms, non-competitive and competitive.

## Non Competitive Program –

In a non-competitive environment gymnasts from young children to adults are encouraged to learn a variety of skills with various apparatuses. A passion for physical activity and personal achievement is emphasized in this type of program. Gymnasts also learn choreography in a fun environment; and based on their experience and training, have the opportunity to perform their routines at local, provincial, national and even international events. Non competitive rhythmic gymnastic programs include recreational classes once a week or performing teams that train once or twice a week. Most children begin their love of the sport in a recreational class.

## Competitive Program –

For children who find they have a passion for rhythmic gymnastics and are willing to put many long, hard hours into training, there is the option of enrolling in a competitive rhythmic gymnastics program. Athletes train to compete with individual routines using predetermined apparatuses at competitions in Edmonton, Alberta, other parts of Canada

and even other parts of the world, depending on the level of the gymnast.

## What to Look for in Choosing a Rhythmic Gymnastics Club for your Child?

Once you decide you would like to enrol your child in a rhythmic gymnastics program, you should ensure that the club is a member of Rhythmic Gymnastics Alberta. The coaches should all be certified through the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). Coaches should also have First Aid training. You should ensure that the club offers a variety of programs and different levels between which your child can move.

Ask instructors the elements involved within the programs. (For example do they have a performance for their gymnasts at the end of a session? Do they offer a written progress report? Do they have parent viewing days so that parents can observe what is being taught?)

It is most important that the club allows gymnasts from children to adults to be taught in a positive environment