

Do you know why you are involved in Gymnastics?



Alison Lyons, Friday, 23 August 2013

As an athlete or parent, a coach or volunteer, a business owner, committee or staff member? Can you explain why you do what you do?

I recently watched a TED talk on How Great Leaders Inspire Action. The presenter, Simon Sinek, spoke about how some companies and leaders are able to capture consumers or an audience and others cannot. Sinek's answer to this was that the most successful businesses and leaders are able to communicate the 'why'! Why they do what they do, what their purpose is and why their organisation or cause exists. When these messages are communicated well, we the general public, literally buy into their belief.

This message resonated strongly with me. As the Youth Participation Coordinator (YPC) for Gymnastics Victoria I am constantly communicating why Gymnastics is so important and why I am so passionate about having more children moving and loving movement. I am very lucky to be in a position where I can communicate this to a variety of audiences.

Through Gymnastics Australia's LaunchPad initiative I, and a team of YPC's around Australia, have been able to spread the message as to why learning Gymnastics equals learning to move. For example, the LaunchPad: Zoom! workshop communicates to coaches and club administrators why a child performing skills involving rotation can improve their coordination. Through the LaunchPad: Ignite! workshop we inform teachers and schools why the monkey bars are so vital to a child's ability to read and write. It has been incredibly rewarding to see coaches realise just how valuable their role in teaching a child a forward roll really is. I have witnessed coaches become energised after understanding the importance of their responsibility in helping the future generation's moving and learning abilities.

As a YPC I have also had the opportunity to be included in the Sporting Success research project Gymnastics Australia is conducting in conjunction with Victoria University. This research will provide us with data crucial to explaining why Gymnastics is the best fundamental movement program to ensure children continue to participate in sport and lead healthy lifestyles. My role has been to facilitate the LaunchPad program in two of the four schools participating in the study. Seeing the improvement in the children's abilities each week and the confidence they leave with at the end of each session is definitely why I do what I do.

I encourage everyone in Gymnastics to consider 'why gymnastics'? Have a look at the TED talk [here](#) for more inspiration and if you need help communicating or understanding why Gymnastics is so important to a child's development then please contact your states Youth Participation Coordinator.

Gymnastics is the Nursery of Australian Sport. Let's work together to tell the rest of the world why!

