

SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS

Educational Gymnastics includes activities that are designed to develop movement concepts and body control. Educational gymnastics is not the same type of gymnastics seen on TV during the Olympics. It focuses on teaching introductory skills and concepts in a safe way related to traveling, balancing, rolling, and the transfer of weight. High level skills that require advanced spotting techniques (e.g., back handsprings) are not included as a part of this educational gymnastics module. Our focus remains on safe movement exploration versus competitive gymnastics proficiency. Activities in this module provide fun challenges to students of all ability levels with safety always the priority.

The table below offers safety considerations that all teachers should review prior to beginning instruction in educational gymnastics. This is not an all-inclusive list, as each teacher has different opportunities and challenges based on their student population, equipment availability, and teaching space. However, the checklist below provides a good start to the planning process to ensure safety is addressed prior to instruction.

Safety Considerations Checklist for Educational Gymnastics

Equipment	Planning	Rolling/Inverted Positions	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use gymnastics or yoga mats that provide a soft, safe surface for skill exploration Mats can sometimes slide if any sand, dirt, etc. is on the floor under them. Work with custodial staff to sweep or blow off sand from teaching space each day Provide visual cues and safety reminders throughout activity area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that teacher comfort level and maturity of students are factored into planning process for all activities and tasks Plan lessons that include opportunities for students to choose movements during lessons/activities that they feel comfortable with Provide modifications that are appropriate for all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review IEP's and/or 504 Plans to ensure it is medically safe for students to participate in rolling actions or inverted balance positions (this is especially important for students with Down Syndrome) Use incline mats when available to introduce forward and backward rolls Emphasize cues of looking towards belly button and chin on chest to protect head/neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on movements and body positions not skill proficiency Use video or live demonstrations of body positions and activities when possible Allow for student choice during lessons if they are uncomfortable or feel unsafe with a skill/task Set up activity stations in various challenge levels and allow students to choose their level of challenge