



Changing the Way, We Approach Education

By Kimberly Gantt

“Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.” ~ Albert Einstein

It's time to move away from traditional methods of learning. Traditional methods of learning were developed years ago, before the internet and mobile age. Many of these methods are still used today and hence the youth of today have the skills necessary to excel in the past- not the present, or the future.

The traditional (and current) process is not interactive. Students sit at their desks, listen to the teachers, and often struggle with a youthful attention span. The students have issues with retention at an early age and if not dealt with properly will lead to a lengthy game of catch-up. This creates a generation of followers in an era where we need leaders.

We cannot continue to teach the way we use to and expect different results. We know that children need physical activity to lead healthy lives, and that when physical activity is involved while learning it leads to increased retention of academic knowledge. So, why not use this knowledge to change the way we approach education, to help our children learn, and create leaders- not followers.

As a former Olympic Exhibition Gymnast and Math Specialist, who values mental and physical health, this was the essence that inspired me to create Kimnastics. It is my goal to innovate the education and sports world by providing a proven fun, interactive, experience for children where they learn, apply and reinforce math skills and concepts through gymnastics. Math concepts and connections are built into a series of activities that include gymnastics, games, and confidence building exercises that are fun and exciting.

Education in traditional settings are often approached in isolation where subjects are taught in a linear fashion and children struggle grasp the topics and develop the skills necessary to grow. Kimnastics supports the development of the whole child- including mind and body. Children develop social and emotional skills by interacting and working with other children. Fine and gross motor skills, balance and strength are developed through the gymnastics skills and activities children experience. Children learn vocabulary, develop number sense, engage in problem solving and critical thinking activities, all linked to success in later mathematics.

Approaching this shift in education means providing opportunities to engage in quality programs throughout the day and in various settings. This includes after-school programs. Nearly 20 million children would participate in an after-school program if a quality program



were available in their community. (Afterschool Alliance, 2009) What better way to address this need than with a proven program that engages children academically and physically.

Kimnastics is offered as an after-school program, an enrichment class during the school day, private sessions, weekend sessions, as a summer program, including camps, and for special events. Kimnastics' Summer Camp debuted in June of 2017, in Frederick, Baltimore, and Anne Arundel County Maryland, "Fun With Math, Science, & Fitness", an extension of its signature program that has and continues to help children discover the relationships among math, science and fitness.

A survey showed that three out of four parents say that it is important for their children to have summer activities that help them maintain academic skills and learn new things. (Afterschool Alliance, 2015) Kimnastics' Summer Camps are a great opportunity for families to provide their children with a physical outlet and maintain their academic knowledge in mathematics throughout the summer.

Kimnastics is not only about math and gymnastics, but also developing a healthy and positive mindset. The consistent feedback from parents demonstrates how confident their children feel not only about their physical ability to maneuver their bodies through space, but their ability to be successful in the area of mathematics as a result of participating in Kimnastics.

The results speak for themselves. A second-grade student was apprehensive about participating in the program because she struggled in math at school, and was afraid that other children would see that she lacked an understanding of numbers and would possibly ridicule her. However, after spending approximately eight weeks in Kimnastics that all changed. She went from struggling to identify geometric shapes and adding basic numbers to quickly identifying shapes, classifying them based on their attributes, and applying strategies to quickly add basic numbers. This student was also one who could barely support her own weight as she learned forward rolls and handstands, to gaining the body strength and spatial awareness to independently perform these skills with confidence. Furthermore, her mother was proud to say that her daughter's teacher commented on her report card that she had noticed an improvement in her attitude, confidence, and performance level in math at school.

An application of knowledge, and confidence to take on challenges we may face is ultimately what we would like to see from our youth. When a child is capable of that, their opportunities are endless.

As we move forward in educating our children and helping them build a foundation for success in the world we live in today, develop their minds, build their confidence, and strengthen their bodies the Kimnastics way. You never know what a child is capable of until you give them an opportunity to try.

A Healthy Mind + A Healthy Body = A Healthy Child.

For more information visit: Kimnastics12.com

