

6-8 CHILDREN CATEGORY SHORT PROGRAM RULES

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Preamble

As of the beginning of 2024, the International Federation of Aesthetic Group Gymnastics has published rules for age categories beginning with the age of 8. In an effort to expand the sport of Aesthetic Group Gymnastics within the United States, AGGUSA has added two additional age categories to be recognized at the national level: Ages 4-6 and Ages 6-8. Teams that will be competing in these age categories may not be able to compete internationally, however they are free to compete within the United States at AGGUSA competitions, as well as participate in exhibitions and other events.

The main idea behind the rules of both the 4-6 and 6-8 age categories is to ensure the existence of AGG technique, physical capabilities, and bilateral muscle development in all participating gymnasts. IFAGG requirements of older age categories were taken into consideration when creating these rules. In order to guarantee AGG technique, physical capabilities, healthy aspects, and bilateral muscle development, there will be required elements that must be included in the AGG program, all of which will be included below. When the routines are shown to the public at either a competition or showcase, the routines may be evaluated by an AGGUSA judge or AGGUSA judge panel at the request of the team. Participation awards and/or gifts will be given to the teams in the 4-6 age category at AGGUSA events. AGGUSA competition placements, such as first, second, or third, etc., begins with the 6-8 age category.

Short Program Generalities

Age and Number of Gymnasts

A 6-8 Short Program group consists of anywhere between 3-15 gymnasts. The standard accepted ages for gymnasts in this age category are 6, 7, and 8. Exceptions can be made (for groups larger than three gymnasts) in order to allow the formation of teams that would otherwise not be able to exist. These exceptions must abide by the following criteria:

Number of Gymnasts in the Group	Exceptions and Explanation
4 gymnasts	There may be up to two exceptions in this group.
	One may differ from the standard ages by two years
	(either a 4-year-old or a 10-year-old), and the other
	by one year (either a 5-year-old or a 9-year-old).
5 gymnasts	There may be up to two exceptions in this group.
	One may differ from the standard ages by two years
	(either a 4-year-old or a 10-year-old), and the other
	by one year (either a 5-year-old or a 9-year-old).
6 gymnasts or more	There may be up to three exceptions in these groups.
	If there are only two exceptions, one may differ from
	the standard ages by two years (either a 4-year-old
	or a 10-year-old), and the other by one year (either a
	5-year-old or a 9-year-old).
	If there are three exceptions, two of the exceptions
	may differ from the standard ages by two years
	(either a 4-year-old or a 10-year-old), as long as the
	third exception only differs from the standard ages
	by one year and is on the other side of the age
	category limitations (either a 5-year-old or a 9-year-
	old). In this situation both gymnasts that have a two-
	year difference must be the same age, either two 4-
	year-olds or two 10-year-olds, not one of each.
	If two of the exceptions differ from the standard ages

by one year, the third exception may differ from the
standard ages by at most two years. It is also
acceptable if all exceptions only differ from the
standard ages by one year.
No team 6-8 team is permitted to have both a 4-
year-old and a 10-year-old.

∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from EXE score: -0.5 for each missing or additional gymnast

Length of Program

The permitted length of the program is anywhere between **1 minute 25 seconds and 1 minute 45 seconds**. This timing starts with the beginning of the first movement of the program after the group takes its starting position, and ends when all gymnasts are motionless.

- Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: -0.1 for each additional or missing full second (proposed by time judges)
- Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: -0.3 for an entrance that is too long, is accompanied by music, or includes extra movements

Music

There is no set musical theme for the 6-8 short program. Please ensure that the music choice is appropriate for the age category. Voice(s) and words are permitted in the music selection, as long as it remains appropriate for the age category. A short signal or beep may be included prior to the beginning of the music. A short musical introduction that is not more than five seconds and that is also not accompanied by movement from the gymnasts is permitted and will not be included in the time considered for the length of the program. Gymnasts are not permitted to make vocal sounds during their program, with the exception of single claps (or another equivalent).

When submitting music to a competition or event organizer please have the following information on the music file (in English):

- Club name
- Team name
- Age Category
- Length of Music

The entire program's physical composition must have musical accompaniment (i.e if gymnasts are moving during the program, music must be playing). If the wrong music is played the group is responsible for stopping the program immediately (at this age it is permitted for the coach or club representative to step up and inform the proper individuals to stop the program).

Competition Area

The size of the competition carpet must be 13 meters by 13 meters including the borderline. This is the same for rhythmic gymnastics requirements. The borderline must be marked clearly (preferably in red tape) and must be at least 5 centimeters wide.

 Penalty by Head Judge, taken from EXE score: -0.1 for each gymnast each time the borderline is crossed (proposed by Line Judges)

Dress

The competition dress must be either a leotard or a unitard, with or without a skirt. The dress must be in the same in material, design, and color for all members of the group. Slight differences in order to conform to different body shapes and sizes are acceptable. Competition dress must not change during the program. It is preferred that gymnasts perform in skin-toned toe shoes.

The neckline of the dress must not be lower than the top of the breasts in the front or lower than the bottom of the shoulder blades in the back. Competition dress must not be distracting or hindering either the proper performance or viewing of the routine. Excessive decorations including hats, jewelry, lights, etc. are not permitted.

 Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: -0.3 for insulting or expressing a religion, taking a stand politically, or expressing hurting people

Hair and Make-Up

All hair, unless it does not reach the base of the neck, must be tied for the safety of gymnasts. Small decorations are allowed if all gymnasts have the same decorations, and if they are secured to the scalp (NOT the bun or updo). Hair dyes that may transfer to the carpet are not permitted.

Make-Up that is moderate and aesthetically pleasing is permitted. Theatrical make-up, including stones, sequins, glitter, colored contact lenses, dark/unnatural lipstick, etc. are not permitted. Artificial eyelashes are allowed.

- ∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: **-0.1** for one gymnast and -0.2 for two or more gymnasts not conforming to the dress, hair, or make-up rules
- ∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: **-0.1** for each destroyed hairdo
- ∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: **-0.1** for each lost item
- ∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from AV score: **-0.2** for each color spot left on the carpet

Discipline

For all AGGUSA doping policy please refer to the General Regulatory Manual. All teams and coaches must respect the competing team and must not disturb them in any way. Gymnasts are not allowed to warm up on the spot before entering the carpet. In no case may the coach, team leader, or any other official communicate with the competition team during their program. Gymnasts are not allowed to make any vocal sounds during the program, except single claps, taps, or similar effects. Any disrespectful behavior will be documented and sent to the Ethical Committee for further investigation and penalties such as membership suspension may ensue.

- ∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from EXE score: **-0.3** For Discipline of Coach
- ∞ Penalty by Head Judge, taken from EXE score: **-0.3** For discipline of Gymnasts
- Penalty by Head Judge, taken from EXE score: -0.3 For any perceived assistance to a team during their program
- Penalty by Head Judge, taken from EXE score: -0.1 For each time gymnasts make excessive noises during their program

Short Program Technical Value

Scoring of Technical Value

For elements to count, they must fulfill all of the requirements specified to that element. Elements that have more than **0.6** in execution deductions will not count.

MAXIMUM SCORE FOR TECHNICAL VALUE ELEMENTS: 4.0

Balances

All static balances must have a fixed and well-defined shape, and must show good body control before and after the balance. All pivots (also known as turn) must have a minimum rotation of 360° and are to be completed with a fixed shape. Tourlents (slow turns or promenades) must have a 360° rotation, with a maximum of four heel supports during the element. Illusions must have a rotation of 360° from the shoulder and hip line.

Leaps/Jumps

All jumps and leaps must show a fixed and well-defined shape in flight, show good elevation, show good body control before and after the element, and must show a safe and soft landing.

Body Movements

All body movements must be natural and show the hips as the primary movement center. All body movements starting with one part of the body must be reflected in the remainder of the body. Body movements may be performed using different arm movements and leg movements, which provide different variations to the same body movements. The same body movement using different variations will be counted as separate body movements depending on how many styles of variations are present in the program.

Waves

All waves are expected to show a movement stemming from the tilting or moving of the hips, which creates a wave or ripple effect throughout the entire upper body. All waves are also expected to gather speed throughout the movement, and as a result end in an extension of the upper body, as in arm(s) are reaching upwards and the gymnast is on relevé. A relaxation of the upper body is also expected either at the beginning of the wave (such as for forward and side waves) or at the end (for backwards waves).

A proper forward wave, which counts as a total body wave, begins by relaxing the upper body and tilting the hips slightly forward. By continuing to push the hips forward, a wave pattern continues all the way up the spine. The wave must end with an extension and in relevé.

A proper backwards wave, which counts as a total body wave, begins with the body in an extended position, on relevé. As the body's hips move forwards, the neck and upper body begins to naturally arch backwards. As the hips begin to move backwards again, the spine curves so that the upper body bends forwards, with the head following last. The wave is not counted until the body exits this relaxed position to end in an extension.

A proper side wave, which counts as a total body wave, begins with feet apart and all weight on one leg, with the upper body slightly relaxed. As the hips move towards the leg carrying the body weight, the other leg begins to possess a transfer of weight. The hips continue to naturally move until all weight is transferred to the second leg. As this is occurring, the upper body and head relax and follow the movement pattern created by the hips. A wave-like pattern is then clearly visible in the upper body, and the head follows last. The wave must end with an extension.

Swings

A swing must possess a gathering of speed throughout the movement, a swinging motion when the upper body is relaxed, and must end in an extension.

Leans and Lunges

All leans and lunges require the leaning of the upper body while maintaining a straight spine. In a traditional standing lean, weight is equally distributed on both legs, and the lean with a straight spine must be between 45° and 90°. In a traditional lunge, weight is distributed mostly on one leg, and the lean with a straight spine must be a minimum of 45°.

Bending

Bending can be done forwards, backwards, or to the side. A bend to the left is classified the same as a bend to the right and does not count as different variations, unless there are different arm or leg positions. A bending must demonstrate a rounded shape in the spine while maintaining square shoulders.

Relaxation

Relaxation must start with a small extension, no extended arms are necessary, but an extended posture must be clear. During the relaxation the bottom of the hips must tilt forward while the back rounds and the neck follows. A clear 'exhale' must be visible in the relaxation.

Twisting

A twisting must include a minimum difference in direction of 75° between the shoulders and hips line with a clear and well controlled shape.

Contraction

In a contraction, the upper body muscles contract actively, and the rest of the body responds naturally. In the basic front/abdominal contraction, hips are tilted forwards while the chest is pulled in, the shoulders roll forward and the back rounds. Contractions may also be performed to one side.

A-Body Movement Series

All A-Body Movement Series require two consecutive body movements. All A-body movement series must be demonstrated as if the first movement creates the second. There is no pause permitted, and no more than one step may be taken in between the two body movements.

B-Body Movement Series

All B-Body Movement Series require three consecutive body movements. All B-body movement series must be demonstrated as if the first movement creates the second, and the second creates the third. There is no pause permitted, and no more than one step may be taken between the body movements in the series.

C-Body Movement Series

All B-Body Movement Series require four consecutive body movements. All C-body movement series must be demonstrated as if the first movement creates the second, the second creates the third, and the third creates the fourth. There is no pause permitted, and no more than one step may be taken between the body movements in the series.

Dance Steps, Skips, and Hops

These additional rhythmic steps in the program are meant to demonstrate the agility of gymnasts. They must show good technique and coordination. One series of dance steps, skips, and hops must last a minimum of six counts.

This age category includes a requirement to have a dance steps, skips, and hops series combined with another element. This element may be a balance, leap, or a body movement series, but not a singular body movement.

Arm Movement Series

Arm movement series must contain at least three distinct types of movements, and both arms are to be equally involved. They must clearly show variance in planes, directions, relaxations, or strengthening via the entire length of the arm. These may be accomplished at the same time as dance steps, skips, or hops, or during any other connected series in the program.

Acrobatic Movements

Acrobatic Movements in AGG are classified by movements in which the gymnast's body rotates over its vertical position upside down with the support of the gymnast's hands, head, chest, or elbows.* In acrobatic movements, gymnasts must show good muscle control, coordination, and agility. They must fit into the composition fluidly and must be reflective of the gymnasts' abilities.

*Somersaults without airtime (front and back rolls) are classified as body movements.

Flexibility

Demonstration of flexibility in the gymnasts must be displayed during the routine. This should be done with an emphasis on demonstrating good technical skills and healthy aspects, which includes

demonstrating strength that supports the gymnasts' flexibility. Flexibility may be demonstrated on its own, such as in a split, or in an element, such as a front leg balance. For right, left, and middle split, the goal is to achieve a line of amplitude between the legs of 180°.

Combined Series

This age category has a requirement of one combined series in its program. A combined series may be any of the following:

- Balance + Body Movement Series
- Balance + Jump/Leap
- Jump/Leap + Balance
- Jump/Leap + Body Movement Series
- Body Movement Series + Balance
- Body Movement Series + Jump/Leap

List of Required Elements

In the short program, all routines must include the same set of required elements as specified below. They may occur in any order in the program. 2/3 of the team must execute the required element correctly in order to have it counted.

TECHNICAL	Explanation	Value
ELEMENT		
1 A-BMS	Any A-BMS THAT INCLUDES A LEAN OR LUNGE.	0.3
1 B-BMS	Any B-BMS THAT INCLUDES BENDING.	0.4
1 C-BMS	Any C-BMS THAT INCLUDES TWISTING.	0.5
1 Isolated Jump	Cossack jump from assamble with or without a body movement.	0.2
1 Leap Series	A Stag leap with left leg in front + passé jump with or without a body	0.3
	movement and with right leg in front.	
1 Isolated Balance	Side balance, left leg up over 135° with hand support, with or without	0.2
	a lean to the right.	total
1 Balance Series	Right front arabesque balance with at least 90° amplitude with hand	0.3
	support + one step into T balance on the right leg.	
1 Dance steps, skips,	Any dance steps, skips, hops series that is at least six counts and	0.3
and Hops Series	INCLUDES TRAVELLING.	
1 Acrobatic Element	Any variation of a cartwheel.	0.2
1 Combined Series	Any combined series that MUST INCLUDE a BMS (any type).	0.5
	Options: Balance + BMS / BMS + Balance / Jump + BMS / BMS + Jump	total
2 Flexibility Elements	Any demonstration of 180° amplitude between the legs, once with	0.2
	the right leg in front and once with the left leg in front.	total
1 Total Body Wave	Any total FORWARD body wave, may be included inside of a BMS.	0.3
1 Total Body Swing	Any total FORWARD body swing, may be included inside of a BMS.	0.3

MAXIMUM SCORE IS 4.0!

Short Program Artistic Value

Score Totals

MAXIMUM SCORE FOR ARTISTIC VALUE IN ALL SHORT PROGRAM CATEGORIES IS 5.0

Categories

- ∞ AGG Quality: 1.5 points
- ∞ Structure: 1.7 points
- ∞ Expression and Music: 1.0 points
- ∞ Collaboration Elements: 0.8 points
- Penalties: subtracted from Final Judges' Score of AV

AGG Quality

AGG Technique

Healthy, harmonious, and rhythmic movements must be performed with a natural use of strength throughout the composition. All movements must also continue through the program fluently and without any clear or disruptive breaks.

- Present throughout none of the program: -0.5 points
- Present throughout only some of the program: -0.3 points

Fluency in Linking Movements and Movement Series

Movements must flow smoothly and naturally from one to another and there must not be any breaks in the program. The composition must not appear to be in separate parts.

- Present throughout none of the program: -0.5 points
- Present throughout only some of the program: -0.3 points

Continuity (MAX DEDUCTION: 0.5)

The program must have constant continuity from the beginning to the end of the program. Any part of the composition that breaks this continuity leads to deduction in this category. Errors in this category include poorly connected lifts/collaborations and illogical connecting elements.

- Illogical connections in the program: -0.1 each time
- Gymnasts are static at any point during the program: -0.1 each time

Structure

Unity (MAX DEDUCTION 0.1)

The structure of the composition must be a total unity from beginning to end, even while varied. Solos or canons must not be excessive.

- Composition does not form a total unity: -0.1 points

Variety of the Composition

There must be a constant variety in all of the following aspects:

- ∞ Composition
- ∞ Directions
- ∞ Planes and Levels
- ∞ Variety in Use of Space and Formations
- ∞ Variety in Travelling
- ∞ Variety of Body Movements
- Diversity of different movements throughout the routine (there is no part of the routine that has only one type of movement group repeated, for example all balances being at the beginning of the routine)

Variety in planes, directions, and levels deductions (MAX DEDUCTION 0.3):

- Staying too long (more than 10 seconds) in one direction, plane, or level: -0.1 each time
- Not showing all the required criteria (direction, plane, and level): -0.1 each time

Variety in use of space and formations (MAX DEDUCTION 0.5):

- Staying too long (more than 10 seconds) in the same space or same formation: -0.1 each time
- Same formation and/or same location of the formation is overused (used more than three times): -0.1 each time
- Some parts of the competition area are not used: -0.1 points
- Less than 6 different formations: -0.1 points

Variety in travelling (MAX DEDUCTION 0.3):

- Not fulfilling all required criteria: -0.1 points
- Similar body movements are overused: -0.1 points

Tempo and Dynamics (MAX DEDUCTION 0.4)

The composition must also show variety in tempo and dynamics, which must be demonstrated through both the music and the performance of the program.

- Missing at least one clearly **fast** part: **-0.1 points**

- Missing at least one clearly **slow** part: **-0.1 points**
- Missing at least one clearly **strong** part: **-0.1 points**
- Missing at least one clearly **soft** part: **-0.1 points**

Expression and Music

Character and style of the composition

The composition must have a clear style to it, that must remain consistent throughout the routine. The idea, concepts, and atmosphere of the composition must also be consistent.

Character and style of the composition is not developed:

- Throughout **some** of the program: **-0.1 points**
- Throughout the entire program: -0.2 points

Expressive Body Language

The composition must be expressive from start to finish and expressiveness should be demonstrated in the entire body. Expression should be developed throughout all movements and movement series, not just shown on the face. Expressive body language must be appropriate for the gymnasts' age category. Over-dramatic facial expressions are not considered appropriate for AGG technique and will not apply to this category.

Body language is not expressive and/or appropriate for AGG:

- Throughout some of the program: -0.1 points
- Throughout the entire program: -0.2 points

Music (MAX DEDUCTION 0.6)

Music must correspond with the ideas and expressions presented throughout the program. The music and the choreography must correspond fluidly so that the final competition program is an entire unit. The tempo and dynamics present in the music must be reflected in the composition. The composition must be varied in tempo and dynamics, including at least one part in each of the following: a **slow** part, a **fast** part, a **strong** part, and a **soft** part.

The theme and style of the music must be appropriate for the gymnasts' age category. The music must form a complete unity without excess breaks, pauses, or gaps. The music may contain additional sound effects, but they must be neither irritating nor disconnected. The music must not end before or after the last movement of the gymnasts.

- Music does not support the composition (background music): -0.1 points for some of the program, -0.2 for all of the program
- Music is not variable: -0.1 points
- Music is not appropriate for the team (skills, age, etc.): -0.1 points
- Music stops before or after the last movement: -0.1 points
- Disconnected music (illogical combination, music is poorly linked, excessive additional effects, music ends abruptly, etc.): -0.1 points each time

Collaboration Elements

Team Collaboration (0.2 points)

An instance in the program in which all gymnasts are in some way performing a physical connection between themselves. THIS IS NOT A LIFT. Examples may include linking arms, hugs, high-fives, passing under or over each other, etc. All gymnasts must participate in the collaboration, at the **same time**. There cannot be a single gymnast left alone on the carpet during the team collaboration.

Partner Collaboration (0.2 points)

An instance in the program in which all gymnasts are in some way performing a physical connection between themselves in small groups, specifically pairs or trios. THIS IS NOT A LIFT. Examples may include linking arms, hugs, high-fives, passing over or under each other, etc. The movements in the separate groups may be different. Each child must participate in the collaboration, there cannot be a child left alone on the carpet during the partner collaboration.

Synchronized Movement (0.2 points)

A movement or a series of movements in which the entire team performs them at the same time in total synchronicity. The duration of the synchronized movement must be for at least eight counts/five seconds. The team can travel or change the formation during the element; however, all gymnasts must be facing the same direction and on the same level. Balances, jumps, or leaps are not included in the timing for a synchronized element.

Canon Element (0.2 points)

A movement or series of movements that are copied and replicated by the gymnasts in at least three intervals. The whole team must participate in this element, and the canon element must contain

identical movements that require the entire body. Each interval group must take the same amount of time as the others had to complete their interval in the element. All gymnasts must begin their role in the canon element within six counts from the beginning of the canon.

Short Program Execution

- 1. The execution of the program must aim to be unified and synchronized.
- 2. All team members must strive to perform elements either at the same time or within a few counts of one another.
- 3. AGG technique must be clearly attempted by all gymnasts.
- 4. The execution must show good posture, coordination, balance, and rhythm.
- 5. All elements must be executed while keeping in mind the ideals of healthy aspects: particularly with the shoulders and hips being in line with one another.

The maximum points for execution are 10.00.

 ∞ Penalty by Head Judge EXE: -0.5 for each missing or additional gymnast

Execution Value Scoring will follow the IFAGG Execution Evaluation diagram shown below (with the exception of lift fails, as there are no lifts allowed at this age):



International Federation of Aesthetic Group Gymnastics IFAGG

Requirements and types of	Deduction per mistake (each time/each element, unless otherwise specified)				
mistakes	Minor:		Medium: -0.2	Major: -0.3	
Posture and supporting line, healthy aspects	incorrect supporting line (e.g. position of the supporting leg (in balances) or shoulders and hips not in line) poor posture heavy ending of the lift		 body control lost during or in ending of the lift 	 landing from jump/leap while still in back bending in a lift, clearly poor posture/supporting line by lifting gymnasts 	
Basic gymnastics technique	insufficient extension difference in execution between gymnasts lack of fluency/continuity lack of lightness		¥	-	
Loss of balance (in any movement):	with unnecessary movement (each time/gymnast)		with unnecessary hop (each time/gymnast)	with one support on hand foot or other part of the boo (each time/gymnast)	
Unity	 lack of synchronization imprecise planes, levels or directions inaccuracy between movement and rhythm of the music inaccuracy in formations 		-	-	
Collision between gymnasts	 execution is not or is slightly disturbed 		 execution is clearly disturbed for 1 gymnast 	 execution is clearly disturbed for 2 or more gymnasts 	
Physical characteristics: - lack in some area (flexibility, coordination, strength, speed, muscle control or endurance) during the whole program	slight lack (team/each area)		clear lack (1-2 gymnasts/each area)	clear lack (team/each area)	
Requirements and types of	Deduction	per mistake (eac	h time/each element, unless	otherwise specified)	
mistakes	Minor: -0.1		Medium: -0.2	Major: -0.3	
Body movements: - incorrect technique - characteristics not shown for basic body movements Jumps and leaps: - incorrect technique - characteristics not shown (shape not fixed, low elevation, poor body control, heavy landing) Balances: - incorrect technique - characteristics not shown (shape not fixed, insufficient amplitude, poor body control, insufficient rotation)	Small mistakes in technique of an element		Partly incorrect technique of an element	Totally incorrect technique o an element	
Total fall (two or more supports)	in any movement		-0.4 each gymnast/ eac	h time	
Lift fails	 - lift fails: -0.5 each time - gymnast(s) fall to the floor from lift: -0.5 each time 				
AGG technique: - lack of total AGG technique		-0.3 whole program			
Bilateral work		-0.2 each missing element			

Competition Rules of AGG for Children

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¹ IFAGG Competition Rules Long Program, Children Categories, page 28. https://ifagg.com/v1/page.php?n=14&nn=1