

# AcroSquad Communication at Skylark Sports



Slack is a fantastic communication tool that ensures we can provide regular, targeted updates about your child's training, without clogging up your inbox.

Please read these guidelines carefully and reach out for help if you aren't sure how to navigate the system.

All Squad communication is sent via Slack so it's important that you are checking in regularly.

When joining the squad program you will be sent a link to join.

**SKYLARK**  
sports

# What is Slack?

Slack is an app that lets us communicate as a team. It's faster, better organised and more secure than email and it also allows us to connect families to each other in a way that email doesn't. Slack allows us to quickly provide you with the information that you need to feel in control of your child's squad participation, without clogging up your inbox or sharing your personal information with others.

When all our AcroSquad families are engaging with Slack regularly, it helps us to create a stronger sense of community. Regular communication helps strengthen the parent-coach-athlete triangle which supports athletes as they work towards achieving their acrobatic gymnastics goals.

For athletes who are starting to take control of their own training, using Slack as a secure communication tool helps to foster independence, and helps them take control of their own training, while keeping parents and guardians involved in the conversation.

## Child Safeguarding

As with all online communication tools, Child Safeguarding must be front of mind. Child safeguarding means how we keep everyone safe and happy and establishes rules of behaviour.

The Gymnastics Australia integrity framework includes a line that we really like – it's not how we talk about child safeguarding that is important, but that we talk about child safeguarding.

Remember that coaches must not have direct communication with athletes outside of training and must not or friend them on social media. Parents or guardians must be included in all communication.



# How Slack is organised

Communication in Slack is organised in channels. Each channel has a purpose, and communication should be put in the appropriate channel to ensure it goes to the relevant people.

When joining Slack, all members will automatically be added to the following channels:

- General (used for club announcements)
- Achievements (this is where coaches will post about achievements that happen in the gym)
- Uniform buy swap and sell (this is where you make posts indicating you have some uniform to sell, or asking if anyone has what you need to buy)

Our administrators will then add each member to the appropriate channel, which will include:

- Your squad channel (used for communication directly with each squad)
- Your group channel as applicable (used for communication with each pair/trio)

The squad channel is where coaches will post information relevant to each squad. This might include the weeks training plan, updated competition times, videos that they want them to watch or to check in with an athlete after a session.

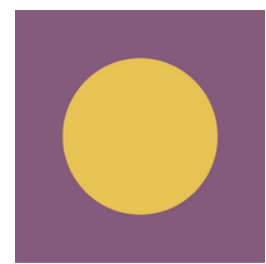
As groups (pairs and trios) are established, we will create a channel for each group that will include at least two coaches, the parents/guardians and (if old enough) the athletes. This can be used for communicating with the group.

You can reply to a post in slack, turning it into a conversation. This is great for keeping information organised and relevant. You can tag people who need to see the post, or tag the whole channel. You can use Slack to organise lift shares or to organise activities outside of the gym.

You can also react to comments using emojis. This is a great way to let us know that you've seen a post and helps keep engagement strong.

As we use Slack to build a community, the way we use it will evolve. These guidelines will be updated as required and we may edit permissions on certain channels to ensure that people aren't being notified unnecessarily.

You can leave channels or turn off notifications if the information isn't relevant to you. You can turn on email notifications so you receive the information directly to your inbox if you prefer.



# How Slack works

Slack is an app that can be used on your phone, computer or tablet. It can be used through a web browser or through an installed app.

Once you join AcroSquad, you will be sent a link to join the Slack account. You will be prompted to set up a profile. We have put display name guidelines in the account.

- Parent's: Your name (child's name). For example, Kate Smith (Emma's mum)
- Child: Your name. For example, Emma Smith
- Coach: Coach your name. For example, Coach Jasmin

You can add a photo to your profile as well.

Squad Coaches and Squad Parents should be included in the Slack account, as well as our older athletes.

Our recommendation is that athletes aged 15 and over have their own account. For athletes aged 11-14, parents/guardians should consider whether it is appropriate for their child. For athletes aged 10 and below, it is unlikely that there will be a benefit to having their own account. Athletes aged 18+ can manage their own enrolment and account, but we encourage parents/guardians to be involved where practicable.

Slack should be downloaded with notifications turned on to ensure you can engage in the conversation. You can manage notifications from the settings.



# Private messaging on Slack

In order to make sure the rules are clear and consistent, coaches will not be using the direct chat function to talk with athletes on Slack. While we prefer communication between the coach and parent/guardian to be done via email when the topic is sensitive, coaches will respond to private message from parents/guardians in most circumstances. If a chat isn't appropriate, they will email instead. Slack messages are only kept for 3 months, so if information is needed to be retained, email is more appropriate.

If an athlete sends a direct chat (private message) to a coach without the parent/guardian being included, they will not reply and will let the parent/guardian know that it has been sent. Teaching children about safe online communication is essential, and we must set a good example.

Parents/guardians, you are welcome to use the private chat function to communicate with other parents. You must not use the private chat function to communicate with athletes unless their parent/guardian is included in the message.

## Other ways to communicate

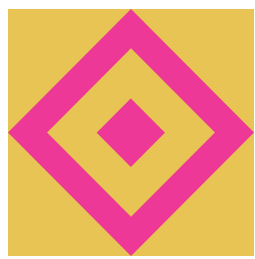
Slack will replace all WhatsApp and text messaging with coaches. Using Slack for all communication will ensure that we can manage and maintain appropriate methods of communication, protecting our athletes and our coaches.

For private or sensitive communication, please email your coach or [admin@skylarksports.com.au](mailto:admin@skylarksports.com.au) (attention to the program manager). For account queries, continue to use the club email address, [admin@skylarksports.com.au](mailto:admin@skylarksports.com.au).

You can also use email or slack to arrange a time to meet with your coach, either on zoom or face-to-face.

Coaches are available before and after class for a quick chat as well.

To notify us that your child will be away you can use the iClassPro app, or email [admin@skylarksports.com.au](mailto:admin@skylarksports.com.au) and the message will be passed along.



# Coach/Athletes

Many of our squad coaches are also athletes in the program. If this is you, set up your account as Coach (Your Name), rather than as an athlete.

If you are over 18 you must follow the direct message guidelines for coaches. Over 18's must never engage in a private chat with an athlete under 18. We know that this is challenging for athletes around this age, however we need to ensure that the rules are clear and consistent. We ask that you adopt a two-deep model of communication. Ensure there is always a parent/guardian included in all communication.

## Athletes over 18 years

If you are an athlete over 18 years old you must follow the same rules as coaches and not use the direct message function to communicate with athletes under the age of 18. We ask that you adopt a two-deep model of communication. Ensure there is always a parent/guardian included in all communication.

