

Contact: Brooke Kneebush  
Development Manager Oceania  
Gymnastics Australia  
+61 417 145 218  
[bkneebush@gymnastics.org.au](mailto:bkneebush@gymnastics.org.au)

Contact: Teina Taulu  
Secretary  
Cook Islands Gymnastics Federation  
+682 51249  
[cookislandsgymnastics@gmail.com](mailto:cookislandsgymnastics@gmail.com)



**For Immediate Release: Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**“Ministry of Health Funded Gymnastics Holiday Program”**

The speed at which the Ministry of Health funded **“Gymnastics - The sport for every BODY – Holiday Program”** booked out could be compared with that of a rock concert! That’s how popular the sport of gymnastics has become in Cook Islands. Activities for primary school aged children will take place each morning at the Princess Ann Hall from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April. The activities aim to encourage healthy behaviour changes in children and to **encourage children to have positive attitudes to healthy lifestyle choices**. The program has the additional benefits of providing a fun activity to occupy children during the school break, and a childcare option for working parents.

The vision of the Cook Islands Gymnastics Federation (CIGF) is **Leading the way to healthy living for our people and encouraging easy movement through gymnastics**. Through this holiday program, CIGF will make progress toward one of their primary Strategic Initiatives to “Build the Gymnastics profile” and provide potential opportunities for every child on Rarotonga to experience gymnastics.

To compliment the physical activities, instructors will lead the children in activities such as planting vegetable seeds and making a fridge magnet of a healthy food plate. The children will be involved in the preparation of healthy morning tea snacks using locally sourced food including fruit and vegetables. Throughout each day’s activities, instructors will communicate health messages in ways that are engaging and will help the children to remember, such as using puppets, music and visual cues.

Brooke Kneebush, Oceania Gymnastics Development Manager for Gymnastics Australia will visit Rarotonga for the week and work alongside local coaches to conduct the program, stating: “Research tells us that children who have good fundamental skills such as those developed through gymnastics are far more likely to participate in sport and recreation throughout life. So by communicating these health messages to children while they are young, we have a great opportunity to promote lifelong change. And the hope is that the children will take these messages home to their parents and siblings too!

To find out more email Teina Taulu [cookislandsgymnastics@gmail.com](mailto:cookislandsgymnastics@gmail.com)

