

# Small Business OPPORTUNITIES

MARCH 2011

**MONEY-MAKING IDEAS FOR ENTREPRENEURS**

**FRESH APPROACH**

## RICHES IN RECREATION

*Making money is child's play thanks to new gym concept that makes parents & franchisors very happy!*



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*see full article, next page*

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Jyl and Keith Camhi, an entrepreneurial couple with a strong understanding of kids' fitness, began developing Great Play in 2003 and the concept was officially launched in 2006. From its inception, Great Play has significantly upgraded the traditional "tumbling gym" with a curriculum that helps children ages six months through 12 years old develop motor skills, sports skills and fitness to foster a healthy, confident, active life.

Instruction is supported by Great Play's Interactive Arena™ that uses patent-pending computer technology—half a dozen computers, eight projectors and more than a dozen sensing systems—that bring blank walls and 3,000 square feet of space to life in an instant.

According to the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), youth fitness is the second-fastest growing segment in the fitness industry. "The trend is accelerating," IHRSA—the global trade association for the fitness industry—said in its current report. The association also recently recognized Great Play by naming it one of two innovative brands in youth fitness worldwide that is forcing the fitness industry to "rethink what we know about kids' fitness."

"With Great Play, you get the security of being in a proven category with the competi-



If you enjoy sports and gymnastics and love kids, this might be the perfect franchise for you to own or operate. An entrepreneurial couple with a concern for kids and fitness developed the concept. Great Play is an upgraded tumbling gym that uses computer technology and projectors to enhance the fun of fitness.

tive benefits of having a revamped, dramatically improved and differentiated offering in the category," Keith Camhi said. "We go way beyond developmental gymnastics for younger children, expand into sports and phys ed for older children and add a unique patent-pending technology component that engages children to enroll and stay enrolled."

Keith and Jyl Camhi combined past business success with a passion for fitness and athletics to create Great Play. Keith, a force in the fitness industry for more than 15 years, is the founder of FitLinxx, a leading provider of easy-to-use activity sensors, wireless technology and other products that motivate people to be more active while monitoring their health.

Jyl Camhi spent nearly a decade in management and marketing positions at Microsoft, where she was recognized by Bill Gates as national manager of the year. Later, Jyl became proficient in youth fitness and motor skill development after one of her sons was diagnosed with fine and gross motor deficits at a young age. Jyl not only brought her son to occupational therapy sessions, but also frequently consulted with various experts and dug into research on the topic. She quickly realized occupational therapy was making an impact on her son's development and that same treatment—developing balance, fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, etc.—would be incredibly valuable for any child looking to reach his/her full physical potential. Yet at that time, comprehensive programs were very expensive and mainly offered one-on-one.

Avid runners, exercisers and athletes, Keith and Jyl began developing the Great Play concept with the intention of combining the more comprehensive approach to motor skill development with the class structure that existed in kids' gyms on the market.



"I think the other models were innovative a couple of decades ago by simplifying gymnastics for younger children," Keith Camhi said. "But they are incomplete and the world has changed a lot since they were first introduced. Kids are growing up in an interactive world. Unfortunately, it's too often encouraging them to sit still and be couch potatoes. We've turned the tables and used the engagement of new technology to get them moving."

Hidden behind the fun at Great Play is a carefully crafted business model in a recession-resistant category. One example of the concept's innovativeness is the design of its gyms, which allow for quick, flexible "set changes" as opposed to using the static gymnastics equipment utilized by many other gyms.

When combined with Great Play's Interactive Arena technology, it allows franchisees to instantly alter a gym's look and feel, transforming it from a cute and cuddly two-year-old motor skills class into an open-space basketball class for nine-year-olds, complete with a cheering stadium and giant scoreboards on the walls.

The flexibility allows Great Play to "extend the day" and continually generate revenue by easily accommodating different age groups that are available during different day parts such as babies and toddlers in the morning and schoolchildren in the afternoon and evening.

Similarly, weekends are ideal for birthday parties, another strong revenue producer that also provide an inexpensive, but extremely beneficial marketing opportunity for attracting new customers. ■

For more information visit:  
[www.greatplay.com/franchise](http://www.greatplay.com/franchise)