

Strength Training for Children

The National Strength and Conditioning Association position on youth resistance training states that a properly designed and supervised resistance training program is relatively safe. Strength training can...

- Improve cardiovascular health
- Improve motor skill performance
- Increase young athletes resistance to sports related injuries
- Improve psychosocial well-being
- Help promote proper exercise habits
- Strengthen your bones
- Boost your metabolism



The goal of strength training is to improve strength, coordination and fitness in an enjoyable, safe and healthy environment.

Types of Strength Training: body weight exercises (ex: push-ups, pull-ups, squats, & lunges), weight machines and resistance training (ex: medicine balls and rubberized tubing) and suspension training systems



To reach balanced fitness, strength training should be done in a combination with aerobic activities, such as jogging and biking and proper diet and hydration.



Important Tips to Review:

- Your child should have a medical evaluation by his or her primary care physician before a strength training program has begun.
- Qualified adults should be providing supervision and instruction at all times.
- Children should wear appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Realistic goals, consistent with the physical abilities and emotional maturity of the child, should be established.
- Warm up by doing at least 10 minutes of light aerobic activity and stretching along with a similar cool down period at the end of strength training.
- Specific exercises should be learned initially with no load (resistance).
- Encourage success by choosing appropriate exercises & workloads for each individual.
- Focus on proper technique instead of the amount of weight lifted.
- A child should be able to successfully complete 8-15 repetitions using good form before being able to increase weight or resistance. Limiting the amount of a particular exercise to 1-3 sets is encouraged.
- Workouts should last 20-30 minutes, 2-3 times per week with rest periods in between.
- Any signs of illness or injury should be evaluated before continuing the exercise in question.

Consult your primary care physician for more serious injuries that do not respond to basic first aid. As an added resource, the staff at Nationwide Children's Sports Medicine is available to diagnose and treat sports-related injuries for youth or adolescent athletes. To make an appointment, call 614-355-6000.

Adapted from Nationwide Children's Sports Medicine

