

Myth and Facts of strength training for kids

Through my own personal experience working with children I have found that many parents have concerns in regards to children and strength training. Despite the common misconceptions, research found in the last 10 years has proven that regular involvement in youth strength training is in fact beneficial to boys and girls of all ages. The purpose of this blog is to shed light on the positive benefits and alleviate the negative connotation associated with youth and strength training.

MYTH: My child is not physically mature enough to benefit from Strength Training because of lack of testosterone

FACT: Research has proven that women and elderly individuals are able to benefit from strength training. These specific populations generally have lower levels of testosterone than the average male. Regardless of testosterone level significant gains have been seen in the incorporation of strength training into a regular exercise regimen. This proves the same for children of all ages.

MYTH: My child is too young to benefit from Strength Training

FACT: Strength training provides benefits to children of all ages and genders. Strength training may increase the bone mineral density in girls, lowering risk of osteoporosis. I have also found within my own experience that it increases physical activity in more inactive children. The idea of being able to do what their parents do in the fitness center gives them a sense of independence that many children need to

kick start their confidence with exercise. The great thing about incorporating strength training in physical activity is that it can be modified for children of all fitness levels.

MYTH: Strength Training will stunt my child's Growth

FACT: This is probably the most common misconception that I hear. There is no research that accurately proves strength training stunts the growth or causes growth plate damage. This is where education becomes key. It is very important that coaches, PE Teachers and fitness instructors/professionals are providing qualified and safe instruction to youth.

MYTH: Strength Training will injure or harm my child

FACT: The key to youth participating in strength training is to EDUCATE. It is important that children have a healthy "fear" in regards to this type of training. I use the term "fear" to place emphasis on the do's and don'ts associated with strength training. In a supervised environment with a qualified instructor this form of exercise is no more risk than any other sport or physical activity. There are many more instances of concussions on the football field and sprained ankles on the basketball court than injuries of youth participating in strength training.

In conclusion, youth strength training merely boils down to the types of training, education and safety of the instructor and participants. I hope this has helped to alleviate any myths in regards to strength training and the benefits it could have on youth.

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