

Training vs. Technology

Tweens to teens fitness



By David L. James

Issue

As our children turn into “tweens” and then grow into “teens”, their social and school calendars usually become busier. Technology is usually at the forefront of the schedule-social networking sites, video games, wireless texting, instant messaging, TV, DVDs. In the end, they are often “stuck” sitting while their fingers and thumbs get all the movement – 80% are on-line daily and have at least one, if not several, PlayStations, Wiis, and XBOXs. It’s no surprise that kids’ fitness time starts to plummet in adolescence.

Concern

Between 2000-2006, researchers recorded the movements of more than 1,000 kids using a special device attached to their belts for one week a year at ages 9, 11, 12, and 15. Turns out, not even a third of 15-year-olds are getting the recommended bare minimum of physical activity during the week (at least an hour of “moderate-to vigorous” exercise per day). Even for the aspiring young

Ideas

Successful recommendations for helping our children capitalize on precious time include purposeful conditioning and training programs which foster a basis for a healthy lifestyle as she or he grows up. Seek out positive, enduring opportunities – be they classes, cross-training programs, seasonal sports, or walks in the park – which improve activity levels with an eye on the critical areas for their development. Ultimately, our children are impressionable, and as parents we must model the behavior we expect from our kids and teens and find value in the teachers, trainers and coaches who are there to inspire, motivate, guide, and educate them.

athlete, a teen is not impervious to the potential for “technology takeover” as they attempt to move from their computers to the soccer field, gymnasium, dance room, or hockey rink with the same ease they once did when they were younger.

Consequence.

We have seen a drastic rise in injuries to these “athletes under construction” resulting in setbacks, both physical and emotional. Injuries naturally mean down time which leads to a loss of aerobic capacity, muscle loss and ultimately, human performance. What’s more, two out of every three kids who are playing sports of some kind today through age twelve will stop playing those sports when they become teens, and will never play them again – we call this “techno-burn” whereby young adolescents are pulled toward technology-driven devices and lose the ability to focus on the very sport or activity they once played with a passion, or at least with consistency.

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