

Youth resistance training

The most important thing to remember when planning and implementing training programmes for young athletes is that they are not just tiny adults. Although the training plans of adolescent and senior competitors can resemble that of more traditional resistance training methods, it is important that the training of younger athletes such as prepubescent's, and those going through puberty, be modified according to the developmental age of the participant.

Despite a growing body of scientific literature advocating the use of resistance training methods in youth populations, a general consensus still exists amongst the public that resistance training is unsafe or detrimental to the growth or development of youngsters. Despite the prevalence of this belief, no scientific evidence to date documents such findings using a supervised strength and conditioning programme. If anything, the benefits associated with regular exercise of such an intensity that initiates adaptive processes, in combination with a properly supervised nutritional intake, has the potential to fully optimise the growth and developmental gains that genetics permit ⁽¹⁾.

Additional Reading

1. Faigenbaum, A., L. D. Zaichowsky, W. L. Westcott, C. J. Long, R. LaRosa-Loud, L. J. Micheli and R. Outerbridge (1997). "Effects of strength training on children." Journal of Sport Behavior **20**.