

FUNDAMENTALS OF PHYSICAL FITNESS IN GROWING ADOLESCENCE

by:

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Physical fitness is a vital aspect of overall health and well-being, especially during the growing years of adolescence. This stage of development is characterized by significant physical, emotional, and cognitive changes, making it crucial for adolescents to establish healthy habits that can last a lifetime. This work aims to delve into the fundamentals of physical fitness in growing adolescence and its significance.

Adolescents experience rapid growth and development, and regular physical activity is essential for building strong bones and muscles, maintaining a healthy weight, and reducing the risk of chronic diseases later in life. Physical fitness also has a profound impact on mental health. Regular exercise releases endorphins, which can reduce stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression, common challenges for adolescents. Engaging in physical activities such as team sports can help adolescents build social skills, establish friendships, and develop a sense of belonging.

Key Components of Physical Fitness:

To understand physical fitness in adolescence, it is important to recognize its key components:

1. **Cardiovascular Endurance:** The ability of the heart and lungs to deliver oxygen to muscles during sustained physical activity. Activities like running, swimming, or cycling can improve cardiovascular endurance.

2. Muscular Strength and Endurance: Building muscle strength through resistance training exercises and increasing muscular endurance through repetitive movements are essential components of fitness.

3. Flexibility: Adequate flexibility allows for a full range of motion in joints and helps prevent injuries. Stretching exercises like yoga or static stretching are valuable for adolescents.

4. Body Composition: Maintaining a healthy balance between muscle and body fat is crucial. Encouraging a balanced diet and regular exercise can help adolescents achieve and maintain a healthy body composition.

Benefits of Physical Fitness in Adolescence:

Physical fitness offers numerous benefits to adolescents, including:

1. Improved Academic Performance: Regular physical activity is associated with better concentration, cognitive function, and academic achievement.

2. Enhanced Self-esteem: Achieving physical fitness goals can boost self-confidence and self-esteem in adolescents.

3. Healthy Habits for Life: Establishing a routine of physical activity during adolescence increases the likelihood of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle throughout adulthood.

4. Stress Management: Physical activity is an effective way to manage stress, a common issue among adolescents.

Promoting Physical Fitness in Adolescents:

Parents, schools, and communities play a crucial role in promoting physical fitness among adolescents:

1. Parental Support: Encourage and model a physically active lifestyle, provide opportunities for physical activity, and limit screen time.
2. School Programs: Schools should offer a well-rounded physical education curriculum, access to sports teams or clubs, and opportunities for physical activity during the school day.
3. Community Engagement: Communities can provide safe and accessible spaces for physical activity, such as parks and recreation centers, and organize youth sports leagues and events.

Physical fitness is of paramount importance during the growing years of adolescence. Understanding its fundamentals, including cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition, can help adolescents develop lifelong healthy habits. The benefits of physical fitness extend beyond physical health, impacting mental well-being, self-esteem, and academic performance. To ensure that adolescents have the opportunity to achieve physical fitness, parents, schools, and communities must work together to create an environment that encourages and supports an active lifestyle.

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