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Flexibility in CrossFit Kids

Flexibility is “the ability to maximize the range of motion at a given joint” (Glassman). It is achieved through training that, once again, results in “measurable” changes in the body. To improve flexibility means to “increase range of motion, as well as increasing bone, ligament and joint stability” (Sefcik). Flexibility is an oft-overlooked aspect of physical fitness. However, a lack thereof can hinder performance in every other general physical skill. CrossFit stresses flexibility both in relation to multiple modalities and in terms of overall fitness.

A comprehensive CrossFit Kids program addresses flexibility training in each and every workout. In some cases the application will be a product of the movement, i.e. elbows up in a thruster or hips back in a squat. Other times we emphasize a specific area of flexibility, i.e. active stretching or various gymnastics movements.

Jump to Support on the rings, Tuck sits, L sits and progressions from parallettes, headstands, handstands, muscle ups, bear crawls, crab and seal walks are all incorporated to improve flexibility.

Flexibility, as much as any general physical skill, is an ongoing process rather than a static point of achievement. Consistent training offers marked improvement that is continuously countered by aging joints. We are helping our kids embark on a path that will allow them to bend and stretch beyond the years of those “freakishly” flexible (watch

the contortions your kids achieve while watching TV) joints of childhood.

Flexibility 101 for Kids

Flexibility is an important part of CrossFit workouts. Flexibility refers to your body's ability to effectively bend and move without injury. The best way to keep your body flexible is to use it. Some of our favorite CrossFit exercises that help keep the body flexible are: work on the rings, headstands and handstands, and animal movements. Here's a workout that can help you gain more flexibility.

3 rounds

Bear Crawl 50 M

5 Skin the Cats

20 Squats (Scale as necessary)

If you've already done your workout, how about playing a game with friends? Animal races are a great way to improve flexibility while having a lot of fun. Everyone line up, side-by-side. The first player in line calls out an animal and demonstrates how to move like one. After everyone has figured out how to move like that animal, the first player yells, "On your mark. Get set. Go." Everyone takes off in a mad dash to be the first one to the finish line. If you stop acting like the animal, you are disqualified. Now it's time for the 2nd player in line to choose an animal, and so on. Keep track of who wins the most races. If you just don't feel like racing, or your friends are busy, spend some time working on headstands and frog stands. This is a great way to work on flexibility while improving your balance.

Famously Flexible: Pokémon Character "Infernape"
