



***Division of Sports Medicine***

Clinics in Sports Medicine and Dance Medicine

319 Longwood Avenue

Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Phone: 617-355-3501

Fax: 617-730-0175

[www.childrenshospital.org/sportsmed](http://www.childrenshospital.org/sportsmed)

## ***PREVENTING INJURIES IN YOUTH SPORTS***

The following is a summary of the American College of Sports Medicine's guidelines on preventing sports injuries in children and adolescents:

- Fitness exercises should be included in children's and adolescents' training routines, rather than devoting all of each training session to the development of specific skills.
- Training sessions should include warm-up and cool-down periods.
- Flexibility exercises to stretch tight muscles should be mandatory for young athletes in rapid growth phases.
- Young people participating in organized sports should be supervised to ensure compliance with safety rules.
- Weight training to develop strength, done with ***knowledgeable instruction and adequate supervision***, should be done by child and adolescent athletes to prevent injury.
- Supervising adults must be knowledgeable about game rules, safety equipment and healthy sports behaviors (for both the adult supervisors and the young participants).
- The coach of the young athlete needs to monitor the intensity of training, the length of the daily training period and any changes in specific skill techniques.
- Coaches at all levels should be required to meet a minimum level of qualification necessary to meet the responsibilities of coaching, including basic knowledge of skills development, safety rules and equipment maintenance, competence in first aid, and an introduction to appropriate training methods and coaching behaviors for working with children and adolescents.
- Continuing education for coaches should be mandated.

## PREVENTING INJURIES IN YOUTH SPORTS (CONTINUED)

- Parents and community oversight groups should encourage local sports organizations to make coaching certification available and ensure each coach's successful completion of it.
- A certified athletic trainer should be employed by all high schools, at least part-time.
- Parents should show appropriately supportive, positive attitudes towards the children's athletic endeavors, without applying excessive pressure for the young participants to perform.

*The Sports Medicine Bible for Young Athletes (SourceBooks, 2002) by Dr. Lyle Micheli is a book filled with important information about how to make a young athlete's sports experience as safe and successful as possible. Visit [www.lylemichelimd.com](http://www.lylemichelimd.com).*

This fact sheet was created by Dr. Lyle Micheli and the faculty of the Division of Sports Medicine at Children's Hospital Boston.