



Nolan: Designing a safe resistance training program for youth

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Craig Nolan is a Maricopa resident and a member of the Exercise Science faculty at Mesa Community College.

By Craig Nolan

This is the second part of a two-part article discussing youth resistance training.

The first article discussed the importance of kids engaging in a safe, effective, and supervised resistance training program. I want to re-emphasize that regardless of what you hear on the Internet, television and from other people, it is safe for kids to engage in resistance training as long as it supervised by a fitness professional.

This article will focus on how you can design a safe and effective program for your child. I am primarily directing this article to parents due to the fact they are the ones who are most likely to be reading this article. If there are younger kids reading this article, great! First off I am glad you are reading instead of playing video

games or watching television and secondly make sure you tell your parents you want to start a resistance training program and attain their approval.



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Before outlining the program I would like to make two important points regarding resistance training program design.

Point #1: Resistance training does not necessarily mean working out with heavy weights or weights at all. A person's body is considered resistance. Examples of body weight exercises include push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges, rows, etc.

Point #2: I or any other fitness professional can design the most effective program on the planet but without motivation and consistency on the client's part results will be minimal at best. Motivation and consistency are keys to success.

Program variables

There is a well-known acronym in the fitness profession referred to as FITT implemented in just about any program design. F= Frequency I=Intensity T=Time T=Type. These four variables need to be addressed when designing a program. The sample program that I will design will be for a novice client with no previous weight training experience, no injuries, and can be completed at home. I will first apply the FITT principle to the program design.

F = 2 times per week to start. When ready increase to 3 times per week.

I = Intensity can be evaluated in several ways. In my opinion the easiest way to evaluate intensity for a beginner is to use a Ratings of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale. On this scale the #1 represents extremely easy/no effort #10 represents extremely hard/cannot continue. I recommend starting in the 5 range.

T = the time will depend on how much rest is needed. I would suggest spending anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes starting out.

T = the types of exercises will be mostly body weight since the program design will be completed at home.

Program

Muscle group	Exercise
Quadriceps	Bodyweight squats
Chest	Push-ups

Hamstrings	*Swiss ball curls
Back (lats)	Inverted rows
Core	Planks

I would suggest starting out with two sets of each exercise and aim for between 10 to 15 repetitions.

*A Swiss ball is also referred to as an exercise ball. They are very affordable and can be used for many exercises. Wise investment.

This is an extremely basic program that focuses on multi-joint movements. Videos for any of these exercises can be found on YouTube or instructional exercise websites. If you do have dumbbells at home you could include bicep/tricep/and shoulder exercises to this routine. This program will get you stronger if you stay motivated and commit to it.

If you have any questions or concerns with this program or more advanced programs please contact me at craig.nolan@mesacc.edu. I specialize in assisting clients with lower back disorders (weakness, recovering from surgery, recovering from injuries, etc.).

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