

Fitness & Sports

Sports line

Softball playoffs: As of press time Wednesday, softball playoffs were continuing. See next week's Airlift Dispatch for coverage.

Riverdogs: Celebrate Independence Day early with the Charleston Riverdogs Saturday. Gates open at 3:30 p.m. and the game starts at 6:05 p.m. The first 1,000 fans through the gate will receive 2000 Team Sets and a fireworks display will take place after the game. Tickets are \$6, \$7, \$8 and \$10. Vouchers from the Outdoor Recreation Center may NOT be used for this game.

For tickets or more information, call 577-DOGS (3647).

Women's softball: Female softball players who are interested in forming a league for play on base can sign up at the Fitness and Sports Center now. A meeting is scheduled for July 6 at 6 p.m. in the Fitness Center classroom. This will be the deadline for entry. The amount of participants will determine the number of teams the league will have to start the program in July. Eligible women will be active duty, dependant spouses, reservists, and civilian employees assigned to Charleston AFB.

For more information, call 963-4321.

Aerobics: An aqua aerobics class is held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to noon at the base pool. The instructors are Anthony Milunas and Frankie Cox. For more information, call the Health and Wellness Center at 963-4007.

HAWC news: A tobacco cessation class begins July 25. The class is a five-week program using the "QuitSmart" Tobacco Cessation Program. Classes are held every two weeks over a five-week period (three classes total). Zyban® and nicotine replacement therapy (21mg, 14mg, and 7 mg patch) will be available for anyone actively enrolled and remaining tobacco free. Classes will be held on Tuesdays at 5 p.m.

Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 963-4007 to sign up.

Adolescent fitness: should children work out?

By Jason J. Ham
Exercise Physiologist

Recent research shows that in the United States at least one child in five is overweight and the number of overweight children continues to grow.

Over the last two decades, this number has increased by more than 50 percent, and the number of "extremely" overweight children has nearly doubled.

Although children have less weight-related health problems, they have a greater chance of being overweight adults which in turn exposes them to the risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and some forms of cancer.

Although we know that physical activity reduces the risk of developing weight-related health problems, the burning question is whether or not it is dangerous to have children (11 to 21 years old) partake in cardiovascular, resistance, and flexibility training.

Aside from a few safety guidelines, there are no apparent underlying physiological factors that have been identified that make adolescents less suitable than adults for prolonged, continuous activities.

In fact, adolescents use oxygen more efficiently than adults do. The problem that children face when exercising is poor thermoregulation and sweating capacity, or the inability to adequately cool and warm the body. To avoid heat related stress, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends wearing lightweight clothing (limited to one layer of absorbent material) and exposing skin to facilitate evaporation of sweat. The AAP emphasizes that "heat related disorders are particularly pronounced in activities that exceed 30 minutes in duration."

Some helpful hints:

- Ensure proper clothing is worn for colder temperatures
- During continuous activity of 30 minutes or more, fluid should be replaced at a rate of 100-150 ml every 15-30 minutes, regardless whether the child is thirsty
- When PCSing, allow 10-14 days for acclimatization (adjustment to climate changes) with intensity and duration initially lower and gradually increased

The second challenge fitness professional's face when developing a physical activity routine for children is coming up with unique and creative techniques that keep the activity fun and enjoyable. Psychologically, children spontaneously prefer short-term intermittent activities with a high recreational component. Therefore children



Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe

Tiffany Noel, daughter Master Sgt. Kevin Noel, practices gymnastics, which is good for flexibility.

should be allowed to be naturally active, have control over the intensity and duration of the activity, and always be free to choose the activity that best suits their interests. The last challenge in a cardiovascular program is preventing overuse injuries due to inflexibility, imbalance of strength, incorrect biomechanics (poor posture and gait), and excessive loading of the back during growth spurts. With this in mind, the cardiovascular portion of an exercise program should follow these guidelines:

- Frequency should be daily
- Moderate to high-intensity
- Combined time of 30-60 minutes
- Plenty of rest between activities
- Activities aimed to increase musculoskeletal fitness and sports-specific skills

Here are some guidelines to strength and endurance training in

adolescents:

- Must always be a supervised activity
- Ensure proper warm-up
- High repetition sets (no less than 6-8 reps)
- No more than 2 to 3 days per week to allow for recovery
- Maximal exertion should be avoided
- Emphasis on proper form
- Flexibility program should always accompany resistance training program
- Strength training equipment should be adaptable to body size
- Early stages, children can use body weight as resistance
- Overload is initially achieved by increasing repetition, followed by increase in resistance

Resistance training should always be one component of any exercise program but never the sole component.

When putting together an exercise program for children, the primary goal is to introduce physical activity on a daily basis that is enjoyable. Parents and professionals in the health and wellness field need to take into account the possible psychological effects that children face when they are made to exercise. Through creativity, we can help facilitate healthy choices from adolescents that will benefit them as they approach adulthood. (Sources: *The Daily Apple, American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Sports Medicine, American College of Sports Medicine, ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription*)



Soccer playoffs

Monti Cutlip (#4) of 437th Medical Group kicks the ball downfield as 437th Comm's Delmar McKinley closes in. Comm won the semi-final game, 5-1, and advanced to the championship game against the Flyers. See next week's Airlift Dispatch for coverage.

Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe