

CrossFitKids



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Focus on Pushups

-Jeff Martin

The Pushup

The pushup is an integral part of our kids CrossFit program. Proponents of the pushup generally speak of its strengthening the chest and triceps. In our program we see its benefits in the shoulder girdle as a whole, but more importantly we see the pushup as a core strengthening exercise. Having our kids have the ability to hold their bodies in a fixed position is important to the proper execution of the pushup as well as any ongoing gymnastics training. So our first objective is to get the child to hold a proper plank position. Our secondary goal is to strengthen the arms and shoulders. Although it may be a staple of our kids program, getting kids to do pushups correctly can be a real challenge.

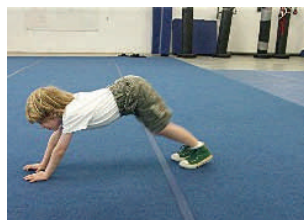


1. Body should be held straight, tummy tight, balanced on hands and toes. Head should be up, eyes looking at the horizon. This is the top plank position.
2. Keeping the body tight and straight the child should slowly lower themselves down until their chest is about an inch from the ground. This is the bottom plank position.

No inchworm butts No spaghetti backs

The Proper Pushup

Most people describe pushups starting in the bottom position. Kids however have trouble pushing themselves out of this position so we like to start them at the top.



Avoid Inchworm Butt

There are two very common problems with kids and pushups. The first is the inchworm butt, which happens when the child puts their rear in the air.

The second is the spaghetti back. Both of these common problems are the child's way of taking the stress off their core. To fix these two problems, our job is to strengthen the child's top and bottom plank position.



Avoid Spaghetti Back

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Team Training & Sports Conditioning

Here are two workouts we have used for our Boys U-12 Intra Club Soccer

3 Rounds:

Run one lap of the soccer field
30 Squats
20 Pushups
10 Ring Rows

**Usually 2-3 sets of rings will work, given the staggered running and squat pushup pace.

We hang Tyler's Power Rings from the soccer goal frame.

3 rounds:

One lap around the soccer field performing the following:
Sprint long side Lunge short side
10 squat penalty for stopping

The team we currently work with has a clear advantage in conditioning and often out lasts a more skilled opponent. They spend one half hour per week with a CrossFit Trainer and do CrossFit style conditioning two more times per week. In the off season they spend one hour per week on CrossFit Conditioning.



Props

The use of props has been really helpful to our kids classes. For example, parachutes can be used. Participants rotate and do exercises, squats, pushups, situps under the parachute while others continually lift (push & pull) the parachute up and down.

We have a soft rocket Nerf tube

that we use for our variation of a game introduced to us by Highland Gamer

Dan John (www.DanJohn.org) he calls "Predator & Prey" The kids line up on one side of the mat or an outdoor area

(at least 50 x50 ft) two kids are positioned on either side of the mat in a circular "territory" . (Use Jump rope or Hula Hoops to create the territory circle) Kids must stay in their territory and shoot "prey" as they Run, Lunge, Sprint, Rowing Pushup, Long jump, etc. to the other side of the mat or area. If "prey" is hit with rocket, he/she then switches with the predator in the circular territory. Great input from Dan John "Be sure the prey actually "think" a bit. You want a big area...and the goal is to mix as many physical challenges as you can to avoid or kill the other side. So, hiding in trees

is good, obstacles, feigns, the whole bit." Obstacle courses, using basic functional CrossFit exercises are a big hit with the kids. We use the paralettes to go over and under, stack bags for making tunnels to crawl through, use medicine balls to throw carry/run short distances, position dumbbells for push press, box jumps, sprints, the list is virtually endless. A set of cones is very helpful to delineate lanes, or areas in the course. Most of all, the kids are using varied, functional exercises with intensity and having fun.

Game of the Month

Dodgeball

A Brand X favorite. We found a great soft inexpensive dodgeball available from www.ssw.com (Gatorskin Foam Softisport Dodgeball)

Use the following rules.

Divide playing area with a rope.

Divide class into two equally numbered/equally sized teams.

When a player hits another player without the ball being caught, the

person hit by the ball is out. Person thrown out does 10 squats at the sideline and comes back in. If the opponent catches the ball –the thrower is out, does 10 squats at the sideline and comes back in.

Advise all players to stay in constant motion.

Play for an allotted amount of time. Count players who go out as "hits" keep count and total at end of time period.

At Brand X we disallow hits to the head/face– All other shots are OK.



Hall of Fame

Kids CrossFit Benchmark Exercises

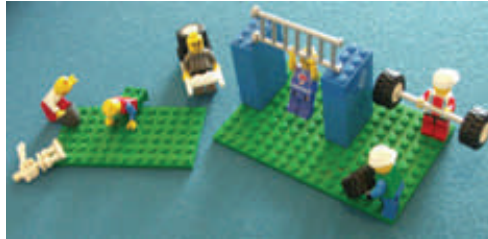
Exercises are max reps, count only those with good form.

Top 3 performers at Brand X

Squats Delaney T. 59 age 7
Kyle M. 33 age 9
Thomas O. 29 age 7

Consecutive Rope Climbs to 10 ft.

Erik H. 6 age 10
Darby T 4 age 10
Kyle M 3 age 9



200M Run

Darby T. age 10 34:50 seconds
Erik H. age 10 38:30 seconds
Morgan N. age 10 41:80 seconds

OHS with PVC

Hold at bottom for time
Watch for depth, propping, leaning
Call time when form degrades.

Duncan M. 3m 25s age 7
Erik H 2m 57s age 10
Delaney T 1m 06s age 7

Pistol Squat

Duncan M. 11 age 7
Erik H. 5 age 10
Delaney T. 4 age 7

[Please Email us your kids progress !](#)

Please give first name last initial, age, CrossFit Affiliate or home gym city.

Record the following exercises for upcoming issues

L sit or Tuck sit

Consecutive Pullups
(Kipped or not kipped)

Pushups in a row on toes

Wall Ball with a 4, 6 or 10 # ball

We will post the 3 highest scores from each.

Focus on the Pushup

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Good Forearm Plank:
Child balances on their toes and forearms.

Strengthening The Plank

We use four exercises to strengthen the plank position. It is essential when performing the plank that you help the child keep their back straight and tummy tight. As they weaken you will see them move towards the spaghetti back or inchworm butt. Have them stop and rest. Do something else for a minute. The four exercises are as follows:

Forearm Plank:

Child balances on their toes and forearms

Top position:

Up or Start position of the pushup.

Bottom position:

Down position of the pushup.

Roving Plank

When the child can hold a good top and bottom position plank they are ready for the Roving Plank.

Begin in the top plank position.

Move the right hand a few inches to the right.

Move the right foot over.

Move the left hand and left foot over.

Continue moving to the right a few feet.

Reverse and return to starting position.

Body should remain in the plank position throughout. Don't let them Spaghetti or inchworm! Learning to hold this is essential to the child's progress.

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Top Plank position



Bottom Plank position

Here is our progression for getting sound pushups from our Brand X kids.

Wall Pushups

1. Hands shoulder width apart, feet together.
2. Maintain plank position throughout.
3. Lower body towards wall while maintaining plank posture until chest is close to wall.
4. As your child gets stronger have them move their feet away from the wall.



Chair/Box Pushups

1. Hands shoulder width apart on chair, feet together.
2. Maintain plank position throughout.
3. Lower body towards chair while maintaining plank posture until chest is close to the chair.

As your child gets stronger have them use a small box instead of a chair.



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Belt Pushups

1. Child is in the top plank position
2. Position a belt around the hips of the child
3. Have the child lower themselves to the bottom position. Keep tension on the belt to help the child maintain the plank position.
4. As the child presses out of the bottom position help them preserve the plank position by maintaining tension on the belt throughout the movement. As the child gets stronger less and less tension is used on the belt.



Pad Pushups

Sometimes kids will need extra help strengthening their shoulder girdle. To help them we use Pad/box pushups. You will need a couple of pads similar to those shown.

1. Hands shoulder width apart on floor feet together, elevated onto one or two pads as shown
2. Maintain plank position throughout
3. Lower body towards floor while maintaining plank posture until chest is close to floor.



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Pushups

If you have followed the progression as described and your kids have mastered each step then they are ready for a shot at the standard pushup. Remember our first goal is the plank the second is the movement. As your child tires and their body position starts to falter let them rest.

Advanced movements

Roving Pushups

1. Begin in the top plank position.
2. Move the right hand a few inches to the right.
3. Move the right foot over.
4. Move the left hand and left foot over.
5. Do a pushup.
6. Repeat.

One Arm Assisted Push ups

1. Use a small bag or box positioned as shown.
2. Place one hand on the bag.
3. Have the youngster do a pushup maintaining a plank position.
4. As the youngster gets stronger move the bag further away.



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Partner Patty Cake Pushups

1. Partners begin in the top plank position facing each other.
2. Do a pushup.
3. Explode forcefully up from bottom position.
4. Bring the right hand up and touch palms.
5. Continue alternating right and left hand.



FOCUS SKILL WORKOUTS

Three sample workouts that emphasize the pushup.

Pushup WOD 1

Big Dawgs:

4 rounds:

10 Box Jumps

Roving Planks 20 second

(or Top Planks for 30 seconds)

Pushups 20 seconds

Pack:

4 rounds:

10 Box Jumps

Top Planks 15 second

Box Pushups 15 seconds

Puppies:

3 rounds:

10 Box Jumps

Forearm Planks 15 second

Wall Pushups 15 seconds

Pushup WOD 3

Big Dawgs:

3 rounds:

Broad Jump X 15

Pushups X 15

Pack:

3 rounds:

Broad Jump X 10

Box Pushups X 10

Puppies:

3 rounds:

Broad Jump X 10

Wall Pushups X 10

Pushup WOD 2

“Lil Lynne”

Big Dawgs:

5 Rounds max effort of:

Pushups

Pull ups

Pack:

4 Rounds max effort of:

Box Pushups

Assisted Pull ups

Puppies:

3 Rounds max effort of:

Wall Pushups

Assisted Pull ups

Games

Two simple games to play.

Plank hold contest

Have a group of kids start in the top plank. See who can hold the longest. Someone is out when they get spaghetti back or inchworm butt.

* Try this in bottom position as well.

** younger kids can use the forearm position to play as well

Walk the plank

The goal of this game is to move from the starting line to the finish line as quickly as possible while remaining in the plank position. Kids start in the plank position. Their right sides should face the finish line 15-20 yards away. On “Go” they should move in a plank position to the finish line. Repeat on the left side.

* For stronger more advanced kids you can yell pushup at varying intervals. They continue doing pushups until you yell “walk the plank” and then begin moving again.

Tell your kids it is okay to fight

-Jeff Martin

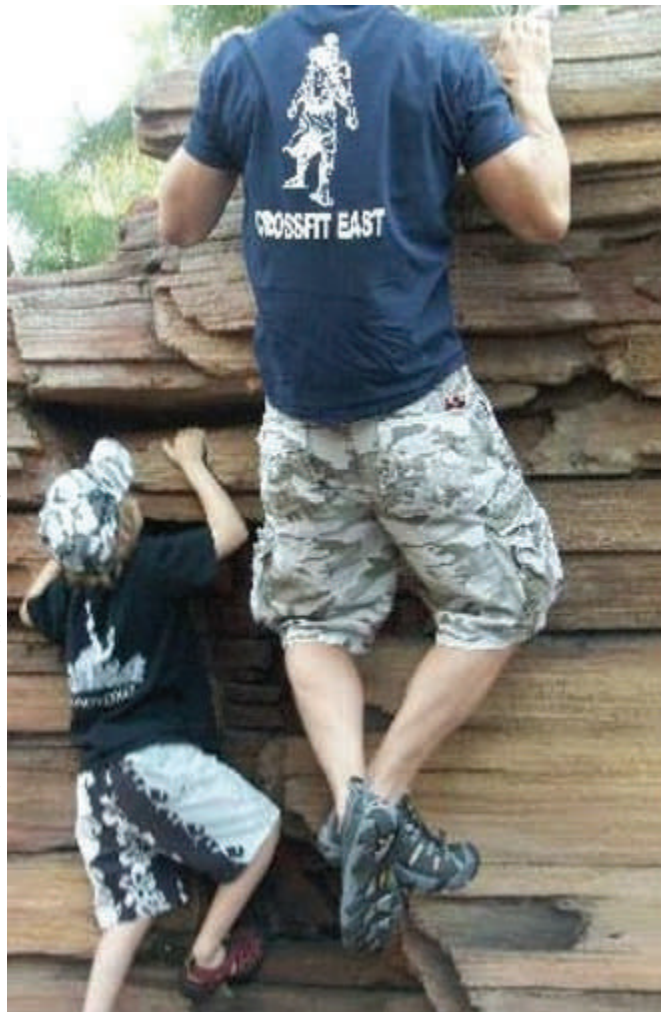
We have been told for years that fighting is morally and ethically wrong. That it is never the answer. This belief has threatened our country's security and now we see the effects it can have on our children. Fighting is not wrong in the cause of self defense. It is not wrong for our nation to proactively protect itself nor is it wrong on a personal level to respond with physical force when threatened.

When I was young and in school a little boy hit me in front of the teacher. He was reprimanded and sent to detention. On the way out of school he told me he was going to do it again the next day. When I told my parents about the incident, they told me if he tried to hit me again, I was to hit him. Actually, they said hit him hard enough that he will never want to hit you again. I did and he didn't.

A couple of years ago my wife went to pick up one of our boys at preschool. She found him hiding under a desk. When she asked him why he was hiding he said he was hiding from one of the other boys who had choked him several times that day. When my wife approached the teacher she was told that the boy "was having trouble at home and just acting out." While I sympathize with the child who was having trouble at home, this was somehow supposed to excuse him attacking my son. That night we taught our son a simple Krav Maga self defense technique. He in turn shared his new knowledge with his teacher. His teacher made it very clear to him that under no circumstances was he to defend himself. He was to get her attention instead (with a child's hands wrapped around his throat) and she would take care of the problem. We of course relieved him of that notion.

Think of the different lessons these two stories teach. In the first, my parents taught me not only that I had a right to defend myself but that the responsibility for my safety rested with me. In the second, the opposite lesson was taught. My son was told his safety was someone else's responsibility and under no circumstances was he to defend himself. If you have been taught the first lesson, you react instantly to someone threatening your safety. If you have learned the second, you look for an authority figure to help you when threatened. If there is no authority figure to stop the attack you waste valuable time deciding what to do and how to react. We are complicit in the victimization of children by predators if we are teaching children to look for an elusive authority figure for help.

A few months ago, we watched in shock, the video of poor Carly Bruscha simply allowing someone she doesn't know to walk up, grab her arm and pull her away. She looks confused and frightened on the video. It takes only an instant for her abductor to move her out of the cameras eye. What a different video we might be seeing if at the instant she was touched by the man she launched into him biting, kicking and using everything she had to keep him away from her. I heard a retired FBI agent say, that they knew of no case where a child who was fighting back was killed in the course of an abduction. The reverse is not true. If abducted the outcome is almost universally bad.



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T Shirt of the month

“It’s not just window dressing dude “

available at www.CrossFitBrandX.com
click on store



What to expect in the CrossFit Kids Newsletters

One article on Kids Fitness and one on Kids Self Defense.

Information on Team Training and a workout including

Sports Conditioning & Implementation

Monthly focus skills with 3-5 workouts that emphasize those skills

Other features may include:

Games Hall of Fame

Diet & Food

The CrossFitkids Newsletter

Is an electronically distributed magazine (emailed e-zine)

published monthly by www.CrossFitBrandX.com

Featuring coaching tips for CrossFit with children, teens, and youth sports teams.

For subscription information go to the BrandX store at

<http://catalog.brandxmartialarts.com/>

Questions or Comments ?

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Tell your Kids it is okay to fight

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On a news program this morning, they ended the story by saying there is “evidence the little girl fought her attacker to the end.” The problem is she didn’t fight in the beginning.

Building good character goes hand in hand with a belief in the right to self defense. Your children must know when and where to apply the defensive skills you teach them. That responsibility falls squarely on your shoulders and on theirs. If you build good character, then self defense will be exactly that—defense. It will be a reaction to an act of violation, and every child has the right to defend himself if violated. Our children need to be given permission to fight. Yes, they ALSO need to be taught good judgment so they know when fighting might be wrong.

But to demand that children discard their moral right to protect themselves is a lesson that should not be taught in any school or in our society. Children need to know it is morally and ethically right to fight and defend themselves the instant they are physically threatened.