

FITNESS

Shaping up the world

Adults are up in arms about kids. It's true, quite frankly, what the health experts are saying. Since 1960, kids' fitness has been going downhill.

A lot of people are nervous about the news. Fitness-related programs are popping up daily to solve this problem.

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports wants to shape up kids all over the world. During 1987 and 1988 kids in the Soviet Union will take the Council's fitness test, and kids in America

will take a Russian fitness test.

This fitness exchange was the idea of former pro football coach George Allen. He really believes in kids and wants them to be healthy. Allen wants kids from all over the world to help spread the news about fitness.

Schools, companies and the federal government are involved in the youth fitness scene, too. The main test for these fitness programs is getting kids involved, and only kids can make that decision.



Chris (left) and Jason Armstrong show they're strong enough to chin up to the bar.



It may look like (from left) Teresa Rose Barsotti, Michelle Dority and Elizabeth Ann Rose Barsotti are having fun, but they're also exercising. Neighborhood parks are the best for fun exercise.

Fun can be exercise

Some kids run to the sofa when they hear the word exercise. They think exercise means pain, sweat and burn, burn, burn. Well, forget that. Kids can keep fit just by doing what comes naturally — playing.

Adults need a regular exercise plan because adults don't ordinarily run around the neighborhood playing tag or kick the can. But kids do — or can — and these activities are just as good for kids as doing sit-ups and pull-ups every day.

A study done at the University of Texas Health Science Center shows that the best way for kids to stay in shape is to skip "adult" exercise, such as aerobics or weight training. Aerobics don't really help kids too much, say Dr. Key E. Wilkins and Dr. Earl A. Stanley. And weight training will only

slightly improve their strength.

Instead, these doctors suggest kids concentrate on having fun. Dancing is just as good for kids as aerobic class and can be done at each person's own pace. Bike riding burns plenty of calories. Playing hopscotch or keep-away keeps kids fit while they have fun.

Exercise is important for both children and adults. Studies have shown that exercise even improves mental outlook. People feel better about themselves and the world around them if they stay in shape.

Fitness experts say it doesn't matter so much what activities kids choose as long as they choose something. Remember — walking to school burns about 100 calories per mile. Watching TV doesn't burn any.

Tried and true tests for fitness

USSR tests

These are the Russian tests American kids will be taking:

1. 1,500-meter run
2. Shuttle run
3. Consecutive alternate foot jumping
4. Target ball throw
5. Pull-ups
6. 25-meter swim

Besides exchanging fitness tests, the two countries will also teach each other different sports. Softball and baseball will be taught in Russia, and gorodski and sambo will be taught to Americans.

USA fitness tests

These are the American tests Russian kids will be taking:

1. Pull-ups
2. One-mile run
3. Curl-ups
4. V-sit reach
5. Shuttle run

Sing for super health

By Susan Henry

Here's something to sing about — singing is good for your health.

A study done by the National Institute on Aging compared heart and lung fitness of 20 professional singers, aged 23 to 65, with non-singers who are the same ages. The singers, even those who do not exercise, had greater lung capabilities and lower heart rates than the non-singers.

Kate McCormick, who led the study, said, "The breathing that singers do is good exercise for their heart and lungs." Singing aloud is good aerobic exercise.

Aerobic? We usually think of running, dancing, sports. That isn't necessarily so. The Greek word aerobic literally means "with oxygen." "With oxygen" for singers is a rapid, lung-filling intake of air followed by a long, controlled release.

There's an added fitness bonus for both singers and players of wind instruments. Proper breathing involves major muscle groups of the torso — back, diaphragm, abdomen. Woodwind and brass players



Lifelong singer Stevie Wonder must be in great shape.

also work out muscles in the face, arms and shoulders.

So go ahead — make music. It's not just fun — it's healthy, too.