



Advice on Summer Activities

This resource stems from a question submitted to the Ask PCA blog. Responses come from our experts including PCA Trainers, who lead live group workshops for coaches, parents, administrators and student-athletes.

“My 12-year-old children will each play for an organized team practicing two hours a day and playing tournaments on weekends. What other physical activity, if any, do you recommend to fill their time while they are out of school?”

PCA Response by Roch King, PCA Trainer–Indiana

The answer depends quite a bit on the sport your children are playing as part of the organized team. In addition it will also depend on the level of intensity of practices that your children’s coaches run. For example, the most appropriate supplemental physical activities to a two-hour baseball practice that includes a large proportion of standing, sitting, or jogging will be quite different from those activities that complement two hours of a highly intense basketball practice.

If your children desire more physical activity and you think more is advisable, there are three general rules of thumb to use. First, look for activities that contribute to their overall athletic development in areas such as agility, balance, coordination and strength as it relates to their own body weight. Second, provide opportunities for them to spend active time with their friends. (Many activities can satisfy these guidelines; brainstorm with your children’s friends’ parents for ideas that everyone can enjoy while at the same time continuing to build the children’s athletic foundation.)

Third, and just as important, watch for signs of over programming. Again depending on the intensity of the main practices, recovery may be one of the most important ingredients for keeping them healthy and motivated throughout the summer. If there are changes in sleeping patterns, motivation toward their primary sport, or any nagging aches and pains, then no activity may be the best activity for a period of time.

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