



FREE RESOURCE GUIDE

THE PARENT'S PLAYBOOK

TRAINING THE 8 TO 12 YEAR OLD ATHLETE

A complete guide to building speed, strength, and power during the most important developmental window of your child's athletic career.



trueap.com

WELCOME

A NOTE TO PARENTS

If you're reading this, you already know something most parents don't. You know that talent alone won't carry your kid to the next level. You know that the gap between the kids who make varsity and the kids who don't isn't always about who works the hardest in their sport. It's about who built the foundation underneath the sport.

That foundation gets built between ages 8 and 12. The motor patterns, the coordination, the running mechanics, the athletic literacy. This is the window where it all gets locked in.

This guide will walk you through exactly what to focus on, what to avoid, and how to give your young athlete the foundation they need to compete at the highest level for years to come.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Most young athletes never reach their ceiling. Talent isn't enough. Without dedicated speed, strength, and power training, athlete potential turns into plateau. We eliminate the guesswork.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Why Ages 8 to 12 Are the Most Important Years
- The Three Pillars of Youth Athletic Development
- What to Do and What to Avoid
- 10 Foundational Exercises Every Young Athlete Should Master
- The TrueAP Method

WHY AGES 8 TO 12 MATTER

THE WINDOW MOST PARENTS MISS UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE.

Between ages 8 and 12, your child's nervous system is at its peak for learning new movement patterns. Skills built during this window become

THE SCIENCE

Sports scientists call this period the "skill hungry years." During this stage, the brain is rapidly building motor pathways, and athletic skills like coordination, balance, sprint mechanics, and body control are absorbed at a rate that will never happen again in your child's life.

Kids who develop proper movement patterns now move better, run faster, and stay healthier for the rest of their athletic careers. Kids who don't will spend years trying to undo bad habits and compensate for skills they should have built early.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU WAIT

The most common mistake parents make is assuming their athlete will "develop later" or that "real training" starts in high school. By high school, the window has closed. The kids who built their foundation at 8, 9, and 10 are now 3 to 5 years ahead in movement quality, and that gap rarely closes.

This is why we built the Multi-Sport Foundation Program specifically for ages 8 to 12. It is designed to catch the window while it is wide open.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The motor patterns built between 8 and 12 shape every season that follows. This is not a phase you can skip and make up later.

SIGNS YOUR ATHLETE IS READY

- They love playing sports, even casually in the backyard
- They want to get faster, stronger, or jump higher
- They have started comparing themselves to teammates
- They are playing one or multiple competitive sports
- They have asked you for "training" or want to work out

If any of these apply, your athlete is ready to start building a real foundation.

THE THREE PILLARS OF YOUTH ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT

01

ACCELERATE **SPEED**

Most young athletes run with inefficient sprint mechanics. We fix the fundamental mechanics that hold athletes back from their true top-end velocity. Through sprint training, plyometrics, and dynamic strength work, we rebuild the biomechanical sequence of the sprint and unlock the hidden speed that converts talent into breakaway plays on game day.

02

DOMINATE **STRENGTH**

Functional strength is not about bulk. It is about transferability. We use velocity based training and multi-planar movements to ensure the strength built in the weight room transfers to the field. Every ounce of strength translates to faster speed, higher jumps, harder throws, and the armor required to compete and stay healthy.

03

UNLEASH **POWER**

The best athletes produce the most force at the highest speeds. Power is the bridge between raw strength and game-day performance. Through advanced plyometric progressions, medicine ball work, and velocity-based methods, we build the rate of force development that separates good athletes from great ones.

FOR AGES 8 TO 12

At this age, the work looks like coordination drills, bodyweight strength, sprint mechanics, and agility games. It is fun, age-appropriate, and built to develop the engine that will carry them through high school and beyond.

WHAT TO DO AND WHAT TO AVOID

THE RULES THAT SEPARATE SMART YOUTH TRAINING FROM HARMFUL YOUTH TRAINING.

Not all youth training is created equal. In fact, a lot of what passes for "training" at this age can actually hurt long-term development. Here is the simple framework we follow.

DO

- Prioritize fun and play in every session
- Teach proper running and jumping mechanics
- Use bodyweight strength before adding load
- Encourage multi-sport participation
- Build coordination and balance daily
- Focus on movement quality over reps
- Train consistently 2 to 3 times per week
- Track progress with simple, measurable tests

AVOID

- Pushing early sport specialization
- Skipping movement basics for advanced lifts
- Training kids like mini adults
- Chasing fatigue or punishment workouts
- Ignoring form to add weight or speed
- Year-round play with no recovery
- Comparing them to older athletes
- Forgetting that they are still kids

THE MULTI-SPORT ADVANTAGE

One of the biggest mistakes we see is parents pushing kids to specialize in one sport before age 12. The research is clear. Athletes who play multiple sports as kids develop better coordination, suffer fewer overuse injuries, and actually outperform single-sport specialists by the time they reach high school.

Our Multi-Sport Foundation Program is built around this principle. We develop the underlying athleticism that transfers to every sport your kid plays, instead of replacing the time they spend on the field, court, or diamond.

“Our son plays baseball, football, golf, and basketball, so it's great cross-sport training.”

– STEPHANIE E., PARENT

10 FOUNDATIONAL EXERCISES EVERY YOUNG ATHLETE SHOULD MASTER

This list is a starting point, not a full program. Real athletic development requires structured progression, regular assessment, and coaching from professionals who understand youth development. That is exactly what the Multi-Sport Foundation Program is built to provide.

SPEED MECHANICS

A-SKIP

A controlled skip that teaches the knee drive, posture, and ground contact patterns needed for proper sprinting. The single most underused drill in youth sports.

2-3 SETS OF 20 YARDS

ACCELERATION

WALL DRIVE

Hands on the wall, body at a forward angle, drive one knee up. Teaches the body position and force application needed to accelerate from a stop.

2 SETS OF 5 REPS PER LEG

STRENGTH FOUNDATION

BODYWEIGHT SQUAT

The most important strength pattern in sports. Heels flat, chest tall, knees tracking over toes. Master this before adding any load.

2-3 SETS OF 10-12 REPS

UPPER BODY STRENGTH

PUSH UP/MODIFIED PUSH UP

Full body tension, hands under shoulders, hips locked. If a full push up is too hard, drop to knees and build from there.

2-3 SETS OF 5-10 REPS

CORE STABILITY

PLANK

Forearms down, body in a straight line, glutes squeezed. Teaches whole-body stiffness that transfers to every sprint and jump.

2-3 HOLDS OF 15-30 SECONDS

POWER DEVELOPMENT

BROAD JUMP

Two-foot jump for maximum distance. Land softly, reset every rep. Builds the explosive hip drive that translates to every sport.

3-5 QUALITY REPS

BALANCE AND POWER

SINGLE LEG HOP AND STICK

Hop forward on one leg and stick the landing for 2 seconds without wobbling. Builds the single-leg strength every sport demands.

3 REPS PER LEG

AGILITY

LATERAL SHUFFLE

Athletic stance, low hips, short choppy steps. The foundation of multi-directional speed that shows up in every sport.

2-3 SETS OF 10 YARDS EACH DIRECTION

COORDINATION AND CORE

BEAR CRAWL

Hands and feet on the ground, knees just off the floor. Builds full body coordination, shoulder stability, and core control.

2 SETS OF 10 YARDS

EXPLOSIVE POWER

MED BALL SLAM (LIGHT BALL)

Lift a light medicine ball overhead, slam it down with full intent. Teaches kids to express power through their whole body.

3 SETS OF 5 REPS

TRACKING PROGRESS

The simplest way to track progress at home is to test three things every 4 to 6 weeks:

- 10-yard sprint time measured with a stopwatch
- Broad jump distance measured in inches from heel to heel
- Vertical jump height measured with a chalk mark on a wall

Improvement in any of these numbers means the training is working. If the numbers stall for more than 8 weeks, it's time to bring in a professional eye.

THE TRUEAP METHOD

ASSESS. BUILD. DOMINATE. THAT'S THE SYSTEM.

We don't guess. We don't run cookie-cutter programs. We assess every athlete, build a customized plan, and prove the results with data.

PRECISION ASSESSMENT

On day one, we baseline your athletes using the 10-yard sprint, Fly 10, 5-10-15 agility test, broad jump, standing vertical jump and max vertical jump.

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING PROTOCOL

We build a program around their specific gaps, not a one-size-fits-all template. Every session targets what actually moves the needle.

MEASURABLE TRANSFORMATION

Plus 1 mph speed. Plus 3 inches vertical. Monthly retesting proves the progress. That's why we guarantee the results.

OUR GUARANTEE

+1

MPH SPEED

+3"

VERTICAL

90

DAY PROMISE

OR YOUR TRAINING IS ON US. NO FINE PRINT. NO CATCHES.

**YOUR KID HAS
THE DRIVE.
WE BUILD
THE ATHLETE.**

BOOK YOUR FREE ATHLETE ANALYSIS

MULTI-SPORT FOUNDATION PROGRAM
BUILT FOR ATHLETES AGES 8 TO 12



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