

**ASPIRE to SUPPORT
YOUR SKATER!**

RESOURCE for PARENTS



Athlete GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

While athletes come in all shapes, sizes and ages, many skaters are children, adolescents and young adults. Within this age range, it's important to keep the impact of physical growth and development in mind as a skater becomes older, stronger and more skilled.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGES in BOYS/YOUNG MEN

AGE TYPICAL CHANGES OBSERVED

- 5-11**
 - Growth spurt in arms and legs
 - Average increase in height 2-3 inches per year
 - Improvement and refinement of coordination skills
 - Complex movements - twisting, turning, spinning, kicking, etc.
- 12-15**
 - Begin Puberty
 - Testosterone increases voice lowers
 - Increase in muscle mass with exercise
- 16-18**
 - Growth spurt
 - Muscle mass reaches close to mature proportion
- 18-20**
 - Reach mature height and weight

DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGES in GIRLS/YOUNG WOMEN

AGE TYPICAL CHANGES OBSERVED

- 5-7**
 - Growth spurt in arms and legs
 - Average increase in height 2-3 inches per year
 - Improvement and refinement of coordination skills
 - Complex movements - twisting, turning, spinning, kicking, etc.
- 8-12**
 - Growth spurt
 - Breast development begins
 - First menstrual period (around age 12)
- 13-15**
 - Breast development continues
 - Growth spurt usually ends
 - Body fat reaches close to mature proportion (*varies with genetics, nutrition and training)
- 16-18**
 - Breast development reaches close to mature size
 - Total body weight reaches healthy mature proportion
 - Gain in muscle mass with exercise
- 18-20**
 - Reach mature height and weight

ADAPTATIONS DURING a SKATER'S GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE:

ON-ICE TRAINING

- Technique may need to be adjusted more frequently than before as rapid changes in body size and weight are likely to affect timing of certain skills, balance and coordination
- Limits may need to be placed on jump volume and repetitions of hyper flexibility elements (Biellmann spins, etc.) to decrease an athlete's risk of overuse injury

OFF-ICE TRAINING

- Modifications made to meet the needs of the developing body and the athletic needs related to specific on-ice skills acquisition

NUTRITION

- Energy need should adjust appropriately as the athlete grows
- Attempts at drastic body modification, such as restricting calories to stay at a certain 'thinness' or weight are generally not helpful and can lead to serious injury and/or disordered eating behaviors
- The input of a Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics can be especially helpful during these times

RECOVERY

- Sleep
 - Children aged 6-12 years old need 9-11 hours of sleep on a regular basis to promote optimal health
 - The higher the intensity of a skating day, the more sleep required
- Proper nutrition following a skating practice to include 4:1 ratio of grams of carbohydrates to grams of protein to facilitate appropriate muscle repair
- Dedicate time post-skating practice for active recovery, such as massaging muscles with a foam roller and/or stretching

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