

Pop Warner is Helping Youth Athletes Move More

Did you know that every child should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day?

Lack of physical activity is a big contributor to our current childhood obesity epidemic - where 1/3 of children are either overweight or obese. With this number on the rise, doctors are concerned about what this means for our children in the future.

You may be thinking that youth who play sports are the exception to this rule; unfortunately, that is not always the case. While we know that Pop Warner athletes participate in added physical activity, research on all youth sports tells us that sometimes these youth do not get the full 60 minutes in a day. In fact, depending on the sport, youth athletes who participate in an hour-long practice are typically only active for about 50% of that time.

What is Pop Warner doing?

Together we can ensure our athletes stay active and develop healthy habits that will help them perform on and off the field. Pop Warner is collaborating with Healthy Kids Out of School to issue a challenge: we want to hear from Pop Warner coaches and volunteers across the country about your best ideas for keeping youth athletes moving more during practice.

Look for the competition details, including how to submit your ideas for both football and cheer & dance, coming in August. **You could win a \$500 donation to your association, signed memorabilia, and more!** In the meantime, check out these tips below for keeping our athletes active and healthy.

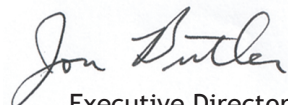
What can I do as a coach or volunteer?

- To help your youth athletes meet the recommendation, **aim to add 10 - 15 minutes of active time to each practice.**
- Find ways to keep athletes moving by reducing lines and wait time during practices. When possible, have them do drills in small groups. When lines are needed, teach movements they can do while waiting their turn.
- Break up activities with frequent water breaks (as often as every 15 minutes) so the team stays hydrated.

What can I do as a parent?

- Encourage and support your child to take part in outdoor games and activities during the summer so they're ready for the physical conditioning that starts on the first day of practice.
- Make sure they bring **at least two full water bottles** to practices and games. Plan meals and snacks to sustain their energy, **including plenty of fruits and vegetables.**
- Watch out for crash dieting to reach weight categories. Rapid weight change is not recommended for anyone, especially youth.

Thank you for joining Pop Warner in this important effort.



Executive Director, Pop Warner