



# PARENTING FOR SUCCESS

Winter Sport Parent Information

## FALL DRYLAND TRAINING



The U16's pull weighted sleds along SSWSC's outdoor strength and conditioning area at Howelsen Hill.

Getting the most out of fall dryland training also means getting adequate nutrition and hydration. Emphasize these important points with your child in regard to their nutrition.

- Active young athletes need a diet high in carbohydrates, [vitamins](#) and [minerals](#) like iron and calcium.
- Frequent, small meals are better than three large ones. Each small meal should contain a good source of protein (meat/poultry/fish, dairy, legumes, nuts, quinoa, etc.)
- Make sure your children have a high carbohydrate snack prior to their workout.
- Within 30 minutes of exercise, [hydrate and refuel](#) with a carbohydrate and protein snack. After higher intensity workouts increase the carbs and protein.
- Within two hours of the workout, have a balanced meal.
- Sports drinks are excellent during and after workouts because kids generally like them and they help replace electrolytes. (Sports drinks when they are inactive are essentially like any other sugar drink).
- Kids tend not to drink when they're not thirsty, but [athletes need to](#). Once you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated.

Dryland training, in the ski and snowboard world, is training specifically targeted at improving fitness that happens off the snow. At the SSWSC, most U10 and older programs offer some amount of dryland training before the ski season begins. These training opportunities not only prepare children for the physical demands of winter, they give athletes a head start at building relationships with their teammates and coaches.

In an earlier article we discussed the ways participation in other sports helps children as skiers, riders and jumpers. The SSWSC dryland programs are intended to work around participation in fall sports. If your child's program offers three days of dryland training a week and two of those days conflict with practice for another sport, talk to the child's coach to make them aware that your child will miss those dryland sessions. The coach may then offer suggestions as to a few activities the child can do on their own to help them get stronger or more fit in areas important for the ski season, but that their fall sport may not provide. For example, some endurance or intervals training for a volleyball player or some agility and speed work for a mountain biker.

Very motivated athletes who do a fall sport and participate in a full dryland schedule must be careful not to over-train. Over-training negates the positive benefits of practice. Symptoms of over-training include a consistent decrease in performance; increased susceptibility to colds, allergies or flu; increased resting heart rate; and loss of motivation, among others. Communication with the SSWSC coach is key so the dryland plan can be adapted.

Some programs will do various forms of physical testing as part of fall dryland. Testing is used primarily to help the athletes understand their own strengths and weaknesses to help them focus their effort in the areas of their fitness that need the most work. It can help athletes set goals and train with purpose. Performance in the test itself is less important than what is learned from the testing.

Strength training begins even with the youngest athletes in the dryland programs, though the focus initially is on education and learning the proper movements for lifts. This early introduction has several benefits, particularly in that children master proper technique before the awkward phase in their growth spurt, when it is difficult to learn new, complex movements. This allows them to safely add weight after the peak in their growth spurt, when strength gains can be rapid.

Fall dryland training, whether through fall sports or SSWSC programming or both, is essential for young athletes with high goals in skiing or snowboarding. Greater strength allows them to use proper technique on snow, better endurance allows them to train longer and recover faster, and better fitness in general minimizes injury risk and improves overall health.

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