



Athlete Development Model (ADM)

Athlete Training Standards from USA Wrestling’s National Coaches Education Program

Age 5-8



Age 9-12



Age 13-17



Age 18-22



Age 22+



Early Years

- Focus is on FUN, games and activities
- Daily agility, balance and coordination drills
- 5-12 hours/wk physical activity (including wrestling)
- No weight loss (unless for health reasons)
- Focus on long-term learning over winning
- Learn wrestling rules and basic techniques
- Learn respect for opponents, coaches & officials

Late Childhood to Young Adult

- Introduce wrestling specific strategies
- Learn to focus through a full practice
- Increase levels of competition
- Implement complex coordination and movement training
- Solid technique in every position
- Self-motivated

World-Class

- Speed, strength, endurance, power and flexibility
- Well defined competition style
- Competitive weight management

For Parents

At this age, it is essential that your child learns basic Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS).

Early success is not a good indicator of future success in wrestling. Provide a fun and positive environment so your child can enjoy wrestling well into the next age groups.

It's ok to ask your child about practice and events but respect their privacy if they choose not to talk about them. Focus on positives, not negatives.

Children don't fully understand competition, they just want to make their parents happy. Mistakes at this age are ok and they will learn from them.

For Parents

Ensure goal setting skills are introduced

Promote confidence and self-discipline

Emphasize rest and recovery periods after training & competition

Multi-sport approach

Athletes should be eating and hydrated daily w/ balanced diets

For Parents

Trust your coaches, enjoy the sport and support your athlete

Athletes will typically specialize in one sport

Athletes learn to take criticism as feedback and they understand winning and losing

Healthy diets with well structured gradual weight descent plans

For Parents

Your athlete should be self-reliant and independent

Excellent attention control and positive self-talk

Mastery of technique with advanced concepts

Elite national & international competitions

For Coaches

2-3 practices/wk of 45-60 minutes

Tumbling and FUN

Free Play > Technique

Recommend 10-25 matches/year

For Coaches

4-6 practices/wk of 60-90 minutes

Routine and repetitions

Group and Individual

Recommend 20-40 matches/year

For Coaches

5-10 practices/wk of 90-120 minutes with rest between sessions

Focus on routines, core strength and flexibility

Recommend 30-60 matches/year

For Coaches

10-15 practices/wk of varying intensity

Periodization planning should be utilized year-round

For Coaches

1.5-2.5 hour practices + key recovery plans

Sport science specialists essential

Test and track all training program results

10 Factors for Athlete Development: Physical literacy, Specialization, Age, Trainability, Intellectual/Emotional/Moral Development, Excellence Takes Time, Periodization, Competition, System Alignment, Continuous Improvement

2018 UWW Senior World Champions



J'Den Cox



Kyle Dake



David Taylor



Adeline Gray



Photo by Justin Hoch and John Sachs.