

## WTRC - Children's Running Guidelines

Running is fun for children and it's good for them.

Running with classmates, friends, and family is a positive experience for all participants. To promote youth running is a goal of the West Texas Running Club. Participation by children, pre-teens, and teenagers must be safe, and the distances appropriate for younger ages. The younger the age the shorter the right distance, both for training and racing. For example, no purposeful running before Kindergarten( 5 years of age) and One mile "fun runs" for children under 8 years of age.

Children are not young adults. They are more vulnerable to climate stress, both heat and cold. Their growing bones and developing joints are susceptible to overuse injuries. A child who is hurting should not continue running. Cross-training with other sports prevents psychological burnout and overuse injuries.

Please enjoy the Kids Running Program and provide encouragement and wise counsel on appropriate distances and training...and the occasional pair of shoes. Running is a perfect activity to continue into adulthood.

Three references are provided for further use:

1. "Risks in Distance Running for Children" *Pediatrics*; Vol 86 5 Nov 1990  
<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/pediatrics;86/5/799?eaf&eaf>
2. "Overuse Injuries, Over Training, and Burnout in Adolescent Athletes" *Pediatrics*; Vol 119, 6 June 2007
3. "Youth Movement" *Runners World*; 4 April 2010

The American Academy of Pediatrics, on the issue of excessive training among children, published a policy statement in the 1990s that says growth-plate damage, stress fractures and chronic tendinitis, among other maladies, can hinder children who run too much too soon. Children are also less efficient at regulating their body temperature, which means running more than 30 minutes can become harmful for them on especially hot or cold days.

.....

### WTRC - CHILDRENS RUNNING POLICY

- 1) Children must be at least 4 years old to run in the 1 mile races and it is advised that an adult run along with the child less than 7 years old.
- 2) No one under 7 should be allowed to run more than 1 mile
- 3) Anyone under 13 must run the shortest race in our multi race events and a minimum age of 10 to run the 5K or 3Mi
- 4) Must be at least 16 to run any race over 10K (No 12K, 8 Mile, 15K, 10 Mile, 11 Mile or Half Marathon)
- 5) Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult at ALL times! Our courses are NOT closed and therefore a traffic hazard is always present.