

## More Sharing and Discussion

Here is another example of how sharing thoughts can stimulate discussion between colleagues.

**Tracy Fober** - Weights Room, Desired Expectation:

"The Weight Room is a physical education and health classroom. The adults in charge are professional coaches & teachers who accept responsibility for teaching movement and using movement for physical health & supporting adolescent development."

**Jeremy Toohey** replied:

"Most high school weight rooms put a bar on a kid's back on day one and just add load over time. No expectations for form, progressions, or managing load is established. This isn't development, it's negligence."

**Tracy** continued:

"Our relationship with our body and to the role that movement/exercise/resistance training can and should play in our lifetime should begin here. If we fail to develop that positive relationship early in life, it can have devastating consequences later. It matters who is in charge, the culture that is built and the accountability for health and well-being that the adults in the room put upon themselves. Because yes, there are instances of injury, harm (physical/emotional) and outright negligence that happen on a daily basis."

My comments

The person in charge must be open-minded and creative because of the usual environment of the Weight Room. Machines reduce movement opportunity; barbells reduce a little less; dumbbells reduce a little less than barbells. While each of these often-seen components of the weight room restricts the expression of movement as seen in free play and other movement puzzle situations, they are also worthwhile vehicles for selected activities. The suggested journey of *Bodyweight to External Resistance* is one that offers the opportunity for appropriate development of a movement vocabulary before the force outcomes are prioritised with those loaded bars and dumbbells. Again, it must be mentioned that this *Bodyweight to External Resistance* journey is not a linear one. The use of bands, sand sacks, aqua bags, medicine balls and broomsticks can bridge the gap to barbells, dumbbells, benches, power racks, and vice versa. The journey can, and should be, a complex weaving together of all these components so that variability within the challenge enhances the progression along the pathway. Knowing that all external resistance slows actions

down should encourage this complex journey to be one of an ever-changing and stimulating recipe. Such a strategy demands that those in charge are adaptable and flexible in their knowledge and experience to apply and control this complexity based on what each athlete/student produces as an answer to each successive challenge.

There are huge implications here for not only how PE Teachers and Coaches are trained but also the underpinning mission they are involved in. If everything is directed at a quick-fix, fast-track journey to measured sports performance (results and ranking) then there is little chance of this suggested broad-based, movement vocabulary, long-term physical well-being and adolescent development model being created.

*Most development programs are not designed to meet children's needs; they are designed entirely for adult ambitions. Richard Bailey*

So, we are left with two things (a) an appropriate set of values and outcomes underpinning the mission and (b) a teacher/coach development strategy that reflects the parameters of this mission. Neither currently exists.

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