

Benefits of Wrestling

Of all the sports choices a parent and child can make, wrestling is perhaps the best sport for overall physical development as it involves all muscle groups, and requires the greatest balance of athletic skill. Not only does wrestling improve coordination, speed, agility and intensity, it strengthens virtually all muscle groups from hips, legs, torso and upper body, including neck and grip strength.

One of the great aspects of wrestling is the use of weight classes. It allows kids of all sizes to compete with others on a safer, more equal playing field. Wrestling also demands a level of commitment, focus and discipline that's unlike many other sports. Because of the characteristics specific to the sport of wrestling, young athletes can expect to develop tenacity, persistence, and skills that carry over into other sports arenas.

Many parents and wrestlers note individual improvement in other aspects of their life resulting from the discipline and success found through wrestling. Wrestling teaches athletes how to compete. When you watch a game of basketball, football or soccer, you often see young kids on the field taking plays off. In a one on one sport such as wrestling, the athlete is forced by the nature of the activity to engage and compete with the opposition 100% of the time.

Wrestling also teaches personal accountability. There is little room for blame when you are the lone participant from your team competing at the time. This can be intimidating at first, but over time becomes liberating. You can lose as a team and win your match, and vice versa. Personal confidence continues to build with each match and flourishes with more experience.

Football & Wrestling

The skills developed from wrestling go hand in hand with the sport of football. Leverage, balance, tackling, inside hands, level changes, and the ability to execute techniques with a low center of gravity (a good stance) are a few of the skills taught and reinforced in the sport of wrestling. In a Monday night game, color analyst John Madden gushed over a lineman from the Houston Texans calling him a natural "knee bender" and further illustrated that this favorable lineman quality was common with football players with wrestling backgrounds.

The coordination associated with wrestling has enhanced the skills of many of today's top professional athletes:

- All Pro Linebacker, Ray Lewis is a former Florida State Champion (4A State Wrestling Champion at 189 lbs).
- Miami running back Ricky Williams, formerly from California, was a standout wrestler at his high school.

- Former world freestyle wrestling champion Stephen Neal is currently a lineman for the New England Patriots. Stephen never played a down of college football.
- Carleton Haselrig won 3 National Titles in college wrestling. Even though he did not play football, he was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers. Within 3 years he was an All-Pro Lineman.
- Iowa State Wrestling Champion and Miami Dolphin TE Matt Roth says: "It's the attitude. (Wrestling) helps you with your hips, your hands and your balance, but more than anything it helps you with your attitude," he said. "A lot of these kids that are basketball players, we eat those kids up. It's just our mentality - you're going to get the job done and you're going to punish them."