

Book review

Pediatric Fitness: Secular Trends and Geographic Variability

Editors: Grant R. Tomkinson and Timothy S. Olds.

Bibliographic Data: ISSN 0254-5020, ISBN 978-3-80558177-6; Karger Publishing, 2007, \$180.00, 245 pages, hardcover.

Subjects: Aerobic and anaerobic fitness of children around the world

DESCRIPTION: This book describes and discusses children's physical capacity in terms of aerobic and anaerobic power generation according to secular trends and geographic variability.

PURPOSE: To discuss the controversial issue of whether present day's children and adolescents are fitter than their equals of the past and whether they are fitter if they live in the more prosperous countries.

AUDIENCE: Pediatricians, medical practitioners, physical educators, exercise and/or sport scientists, exercise physiologists, personal trainers and graduate students in relevant fields will find this book helpful when dealing with contemporary trends and geographic variability in pediatric fitness.

FEATURES: The volume starts by examining the general picture on children fitness by the editors. The individual chapter's authors discuss the data gathered since

the late 1950s on secular trends and geographic changeability in aerobic and anaerobic pediatric fitness performances of children and adolescents from 23 countries in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, the Middle East and North America. There are chapters proposing that there is proof that there has been a world-wide decline in pediatric aerobic performance in recent decades, relative stability in anaerobic performance, and that the best performing children come from northern and central Europe. In final chapters possible causes to that end are considered, including whether weakening in aerobic performance are the result of distributional or widespread declines, and whether increases in obesity alone can explain the failure in aerobic performance.

ASSESSMENT: The editors have assembled a volume of Medicine and Sports Science that is necessary and essential reading for all who are interested in understanding and improving the fitness of children. The readers will find useful information in this book on secular trends and geographic variability in pediatric fitness. I believe, the book will serve as a first-rate reference source for researcher and field workers, since the editors and the contributors are authorities in their respective fields.

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