

# VICTORY SCHOOL OF WRESTLING

## *Club Training Model*

Emphasis on winning at a young age creates an avenue to take shortcuts to success. Winning at the youth level has many different facets than winning at elite levels. Victory School of Wrestling chooses to sacrifice winning at the youth level for the sake of development in order to see more success at older ages, but it's still not about winning. After examining programs all over the world, we have organized our program the following way:

**1. Fundamentals** - this is the beginning stage of development and the emphasis is on FUN.

Fun is important at every level, but is primarily focused on athletes in grades K-3. If an athlete does compete in tournaments/events at this age, those competitions need to focus on having fun and spending quality time with the family. These competitions should be local, but going to practice and having fun is key. We want to make sure every athlete loves practice and wants to come to the next practice. The kids should leave with more energy than they came with.

**2. Basic movements** - this stage is about understanding and exercising basic movements of athletics, not technique. This would include, but is not limited to, agility, tumbling, falling and running. A lot of the focus is still on having fun. In wrestling, skills can be introduced in a fun, games approach way. I believe competition still should not be encouraged, however, the idea of competing needs to remain local and continue focusing on quality family time and fun.

**3. Skill development** - when athletes begin to understand how their body works and have the mental capacity to learn skills and strategies, technique can be introduced. At Victory School of Wrestling, this happens in grades 5-8. The focus becomes 75% training/25% competition. The competition is to assess skill development. It's an evaluation tool so the emphasis is still not on winning.

**4. Train to train** - as athletes mature physically and mentally, the maturation of each athlete begins even. This is when we can teach the principles of training. Everyone needs to learn how to train properly. There's a lot involved in training and we continue focusing on fundamentals and skill development. This generally happens when an athlete enters high school. They inherit a lot of new responsibilities in high school, so training goes hand-in-hand with their emotional development. Still, we do not emphasize winning, although winning becomes more important.

**5. Train to compete** - this stage is very tricky and sometimes goes alongside training to train. An athlete needs to understand how to drill well and train properly before they train to compete. This stage can start as early as ninth grade, but sometimes is not realistic until one is in college. Training to compete is not training to win. It's about understanding a new level of training. Periodization cycles and peaking at the optimum time are central to this stage.

**6. Train to win** - obviously, this is the highest level of competition. In wrestling, this is done at the collegiate level or the international level. There are still a lot of great learning opportunities in sport for adult athletes, however if winning isn't a priority at the highest levels, it's time to move into another season of your life. This attitude can be fostered in the first five stages and allows the athletes that to train to win and not to place their significance in winning. Along with periodization cycles and peaking, tactics and game plans for specific athletes are practiced.



Victory School of Wrestling has been in operation since the spring of 2006 and strives to do what is best for its athletes so they can reach their full athletic and human potential by being who they were created to be!

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