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# THE CrossFit LIFE

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## CrossFit Kids Community Series

The *CrossFit Journal* presents a collection of brief CrossFit Kids updates and stories from around the world.

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May 2012

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Thad Wheeler

CrossFit Kids is growing, appearing in schools, boxes and on practice fields across the globe. As the CrossFit Kids community grows, it improves the confidence, athleticism and health of kids everywhere. Here are some of their stories.

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Michelle Van Buren

*Rancho High School is going to need more space for all the students interested in its CrossFit Kids program.*

### **CrossFit Kids Gone Wild—Michelle Van Buren, Rancho High School, Las Vegas, Nev.**

Michelle Van Buren, head varsity softball coach and physical-education teacher, started a CrossFit program at Rancho High School in Las Vegas, Nev., in September 2011. Van Buren began by offering just one class—she wasn't sure if anyone would be interested. Her class is now capped at 32 students, with a long waiting list. Students frequently stop her in the halls asking if they can join her class. Due to overwhelming demand, Van Buren will be offering five CrossFit classes in the 2012-2013 school year.

Van Buren has also been using CrossFit to train the spring athletic teams over the winter. The coaches and players love it, and they have already seen positive results.

### **No Rower, No Problem—Thad Wheeler, Bristol Public Schools, Virginia**

One day, middle-school teacher and CrossFit Kids trainer Thad Wheeler of Bristol Public Schools in Virginia used a small, four-wheeled cart in a WOD. The small scooter gave Wheeler and his colleague, Andrew Belcher, an idea. The school doesn't have any rowing machines, so the two men hit on the idea of taking the scooters and securing a jump rope to the gymnasium bleachers to create a rower. The contraption immediately intrigued the students. They had a blast mimicking the rowing movement by pulling themselves to the bleachers with the jump rope and then using their legs to push away—and they got a good workout to boot.



Thad Wheeler

*Patent pending?*



Dan Cerrillo

**Blake Johnson (first) trains hard at Dan Cerrillo's CrossFit Bellevue.**

Wheeler also met with local community-based organizations and the Bristol Public Schools superintendent to discuss CrossFit Kids. The administrators loved what Wheeler is doing and expressed interest in implementing CrossFit Kids in their after-school programs before the children hit their homework. Representatives of the alternative detention center and parks and recreation also said they would like to institute CrossFit Kids as part of their programs.

Look for more about Wheeler's experience integrating CrossFit Kids into his physical-education curriculum down the road.

### **Developing Champions—Dan Cerrillo, CrossFit Bellevue, Washington**

Blake Johnson, an 18-year-old senior and honor student at Mercer Island High School in Washington, just won the 160-lb. Washington State Wrestling Championship. He attributes his victory in part to his training at CrossFit Bellevue under Dan Cerrillo.

A member of CrossFit Bellevue's Youth Athletes Class, Johnson says CrossFit provided him with the cardiovascular and muscular endurance and strength necessary to excel in his sport. The Youth Athlete's Class is for teens whose parents see fitness as fundamental to athletic success. Cerrillo's programming for the class is a hybrid of the Wendler and Hatch strength programs and delivers strength, conditioning, speed and agility work Monday through Friday.

Johnson has wrestled for seven years, and he and his family have been training at CrossFit Bellevue for just over a year. Johnson participated in the 2012 Reebok CrossFit Games Open and finished 239th in the North West despite being in the middle of wrestling season.

CrossFit runs in the Johnson family. Cerrillo also helped prepare Johnson's brother for his crew season at Stanford University, and Johnson's mother and father are avid CrossFitters. Johnson enjoys being a part of the CrossFit Bellevue community.

"The staff is excellent and the fellow CrossFitters are great to be around," he said.

Johnson "is a tremendous young man from a great family. He is humble, personable and hardcore," Cerrillo said. In the fall, Johnson will be attending Oregon State University, where he has been invited to walk on to the wrestling team.

