

5. Fitness

Objectives

1. Describe the importance of, and commit to, exercising regularly
2. Explain the five facets of the Active Cadet Fitness Program
3. Demonstrate how to perform each event in the CPFT
4. Participate in a fitness activity while displaying a positive, team-orientated attitude
5. Take the CPFT to set fitness baseline

Lessons

5.1 Introduction to Fitness

Key Question: Why is fitness important and how can cadets develop a lifelong habit of regular activity?

5.2 CPFT Practice

Cadets learn each of the CPFT exercises and practice the skills to complete them

5.3 Fitness Activity

Fun fitness activity

5.4 CPFT

Take the fitness assessment to understand fitness baseline

5.1 Introduction to Fitness

Key Question: Why is fitness important and how can cadets develop a lifelong habit of regular activity?

This activity introduces cadets to the Cadet Program's physical fitness element. It begins with a brief discussion about why cadets need to be physically fit. However, the activity's main focus is the five aspects of the Active Cadet Fitness Program.

Suggested Instructors

A cadet officer or NCO should lead this activity

Duration

30 min

Objectives

1. Defend the need for physical fitness being in the CAP Cadet Program
2. Describe the five facets of the Active Cadet Fitness Program
3. Identify the CPFT standards required to qualify for promotion to Cadet Staff Sergeant

Special Equipment

New Cadet Guide Super Chart HFZ Standards

LESSON OUTLINE

Warm up

5 min

Start this class with a quick activity from CAPP 60-50, Cadet Physical Fitness Manual, 2-5. Bean Bag Hockey and Rock, Paper, Scissors with Legs are recommended, but any quick physical activity can be used.

Discussion Questions

5 min

1. Why is fitness part of the Cadet Program?

Anticipated Response

CAP aim to develop the whole person. We want to develop your intellectual firepower, your character and sense of personal honor, and we want to encourage you to be physically fit. Being physically active is one of the most important steps that Americans of all ages can take to improve their health.

2. What types of fitness-related activities can you do in CAP?

Anticipated Response

Hiking, orienteering, geocaching, team sports, calisthenics, obstacle courses, rappelling, etc. Activities are a huge part of the Active Cadet Fitness Program.

3. What expectations do you think CAP has in terms of physical fitness?

Anticipated Response

The main expectation is simple: CAP wants cadets to be healthy. And to that end we want you to develop the habit of exercising regularly. If you participate in gym class a few times a week, that counts. If you're in sports, that counts. If you do calisthenics at home or ride bikes with a friend, that counts.

TRANSITION

Physical fitness is one of the four main program elements of the Cadet Program along with leadership, aerospace and character. The Active Cadet Fitness Program has five facets to support cadet health: Activities, academics, attitudes, assessment and awards. We've just been discussing some activities you'll be participating in. Activities are the heart of the cadet fitness program. You'll experience a range of fun, structured activities at squadron meetings and weekend events.

Discussion Questions

15 min

1. What about that next facet, academics? What might that mean in a fitness context?

Anticipated Response

To get the most benefit from the program it's important that cadets understand the concepts of fitness, training, nutrition and more. You'll learn about these ideas in both classroom and hands-on lessons, and then put them into action in their daily lives.

2. What about "attitudes"? What might that mean here? Raise your hand if you consider yourself an athlete, you love a physical challenge. Now raise your hand if you'd rather do anything else before you play volleyball. Anyone want to share about their attitude towards fitness?

Anticipated Response

So I see some of you already have a positive attitude, and some may need some encouragement. That's ok, that's where the attitudes facet comes in. No one wants to do something that makes them feel miserable. Developing a positive relationship with fitness is what this facet is all about. Our squadron is a supportive environment no matter where you are on your fitness journey. We'll help you identify activities that you find enjoyable.

3. To plan where you're going, you have to know where you are. CAP will host quarterly fitness tests to help you identify your current fitness levels for personal goal setting and progress evaluation. The fitness assessment is aligned with the Presidential Youth Fitness Program, so you may be familiar with it from school. Has anyone here done the PACER test/beep test before? What was that like?

Anticipated Response

Yeah, the PACER is tough! It's a test where you run at an increasingly fast pace until you're too tired to keep it up, by definition that's uncomfortable! That's why we try not to do it too often. But it's a great feeling when you see your score going up. Other tests on our Cadet Physical Fitness Test, CPFT, include the mile run, curl-ups, push-ups, and the sit & reach.

We'll do the fitness test at our next meeting, but don't worry, we'll practice a bit beforehand. For this first assessment, we just want to get a picture of where we all are. We'll use that information to set some goals. There's no pass or fail for the CPFT at this point. To earn the Wright Brothers Milestone Award and become a Cadet Staff Sergeant you'll need to score in the Healthy Fitness Zone. Go ahead and pull out your New Cadet Guides and turn to the Super Chart. You can see the fitness standards there. If that looks easy, great, we'll find some more challenging goals for you! If those look hard, that's ok, we'll help you make a plan to reach them.

4. So what happens if a cadet does poorly in fitness? Maybe fails to achieve a goal or doesn't meet the HFZ suddenly after passing easily before?

Anticipated response

We're all human and the most important thing is that you keep showing up and learning. CAP believes physical activity is a positive thing and not a punishment, so you won't have to "drop and give me 20." Cadets need to have a CPFT in the Healthy Fitness Zone from the past six months to promote starting with the Wright Brothers Award. By testing quarterly, this gives you a chance to improve your fitness before it holds you back from promotion. If you don't have a current HFZ credential you will be held in grade until it improves. We'll assign you a fitness mentor to help get you on track.

4. And there was one more facet of the Active Cadet Fitness Program, awards! Yeah, we like to celebrate your efforts. *Discuss local awards and recognitions, squadron hall of fame, personal best boards, Presidential Youth Fitness Award, Presidential Active Lifestyle Awards, etc...* This is also a good place to discuss group or wing fitness competitions.

Conclusion

1 min

Now that you know what is expected of you, you can start developing that habit of exercising regularly if you don't already. There's a Run/Walk training plan in your New Cadet Guide that you might find helpful. In the next class we'll learn about the CPFT exercises and get some practice taking those tests. Then we'll do a fun fitness activity.

5.2 CPFT Practice

Cadets learn each of the CPFT exercises and practice the skills to complete them

Suggested Instructor

Cadet NCO and assistants to demonstrate the exercises and make form corrections

Duration

20 minutes

Goal

Cadets gain familiarity with the skills needed to perform their best in the CPFT

Equipment Needed

- PACER Cadence
- Push-Up/Curl-Up Cadence
- Sit & Reach box or yardstick
- Speaker with adequate volume
- Curl-Up mats
- Curl-Up measuring strips
- PACER score sheets

Lesson Outline

CPFT Demonstration – Performance (20 min)

Using the demonstration – performance method described below, teach cadets how to perform each event in the Cadet Physical Fitness Test. While cadets have certainly run and done curl-ups, doing the exercises with the Fitnessgram cadences is a different skill. Cadets shouldn't encounter these exercises for the first time in a high-stakes testing environment. For a description of the events, see CAPP 60-50 or the Resources page at GoCivilAirPatrol.com/Fitness.

1. State the exercise to be performed and explain its purpose.
2. Perfectly demonstrate how the exercise is performed at a normal cadence. For calisthenics, demonstrate 3 or 4 repetitions.
3. Break the exercise into segments. Show the starting position and the finishing position and identify any special rules or standards. Slowly demonstrate the exercise one step at a time. Allow cadets to ask questions.
4. Have cadets try the exercise on their own. Watch them closely and give them feedback. Ensure everyone understands how to perform the exercise properly.

Mile Run: It is not necessary to run a mile to demonstrate the mile run, but ensure cadets know what the course is, how many laps they need to complete, etc. Remind cadets to listen for their final time as they cross the finish line so it can be recorded. Encourage cadets to walk a bit afterwards to cool down, do not sit immediately.

PACER: Allow cadets to listen to several minutes of the cadence CD so that they know what to expect. Pair students and have half practice running and the other half practice scoring, then switch. Make it clear that the first missed lap does not end the test. If the cadet hasn't completed their lap when the beep sounds they have one more chance to regain the pace. They should turn around immediately and keep running. The first incomplete lap still counts towards their total score. The second time the cadet cannot reach the line by the time of the beep, his or her test is completed.

Curl-Up: While the movement of the curl-up may be familiar, the form and exercising to a cadence are likely to be new to most cadets. Cadets should practice the exercise with the measuring strip alone, then with the cadence. The movement be smooth, controlled, and constant, not a quick curl-up and a two-second rest.

90° Push-Up: Like the curl-up, cadets may be familiar with push-ups, but performing at a cadence may be a challenge for some. It can be helpful to have a short cone, playground ball, or other piece of pliable equipment that could be placed under the cadet's chest so they can feel when they've reached the right height.

Back-Saver Sit and Reach: Cadets are discouraged from reaching past 12 inches for safety.

CPFT Standards (2 min)

Review the CPFT performance standards. Ensure everyone knows what standards they need to meet for their age and gender to qualify for promotion to cadet airman. See Super Chart or CAPP 60-50 for details.

5.3 Fitness Activity

During Cadet Great Start, cadets will participate in a team-based fitness activity. Any sport, game, or fitness drill that promotes team spirit and builds a sense of camaraderie would be appropriate.

Volleyball, ultimate Frisbee, soccer, and tug-o-war are suggested. Ensure cadets properly warm up and cool down.

Suggested Instructors

Cadet officers and NCOs

Duration

50 min

Objectives

1. Actively participate in the sport, game, or fitness drill
2. Demonstrate teamwork and good sportsmanship

5.4 CPFT

Take the fitness assessment to understand fitness baseline

Suggested Instructor

Testing Officer, Cadet NCO and assistants to assist with scoring

Duration

45-60 minutes

Goal

Cadets set a baseline fitness level and gain familiarity with the Cadet Physical Fitness Test.

Equipment Needed

- PACER Cadence
- Push-Up/Curl-Up Cadence
- Sit & Reach box or yardstick
- Speaker with adequate volume
- Curl-Up mats
- Curl-Up measuring strips
- PACER score sheets
- Cadet HFZ Data Input Worksheet

Lesson Outline

Conduct CPFT in accordance with CAPP 60-50.