The Curl-Up

Assessment Administration
The objective is to do up to 75 curl-ups to a specified cadence (three seconds per repetition). Student lies on the mat on his/her back, knees bent at an angle of approximately 140°, feet flat on the floor, legs slightly apart, arms straight and parallel to the trunk with palms of hands resting on the mat. The fingers are stretched out and the head is in contact with the mat. Student curls up and moves the fingertips from one side of the measuring strip to the other (3.0 inches to 4.5 inches). Head must touch the mat at the end of each curl-up.

Interpreting Curl-Up Scores
Students who score poorly in abdominal strength should be encouraged to participate in calisthenics and other strengthening and stretching activities that will develop the abdominal muscles. However, it is essential to remember that physical fitness training is very specific and that the areas of the body being assessed represent only a fraction of the total body.

To focus on activities that develop the abdominal muscles without equal attention to the trunk extensor muscles will not accomplish the important objective, which is to develop an overall healthy musculoskeletal system. Remember, you must have strength and flexibility (muscle balance) in the muscles on both sides of every joint.

Poop performance on the measures of abdominal strength and trunk extensor strength and flexibility may merit special attention. Gaining strength and flexibility in these areas may help prevent low back pain, which affects millions of people, young and old.