

# 11-year-old Tyler Armstrong preparing to conquer Mount Everest, the world's tallest mountain



Eleven-year-old Tyler Armstrong of Yorba Linda, California is gearing up to become the youngest person to climb Mount Everest – the world's tallest mountain in Spring 2016.

But breaking records is nothing new for Tyler. At 7, he was the [youngest person to climb Mount Whitney in a day](#). At 8, he was the second youngest person to make it to the top of [Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania](#). At age 9, he was the youngest to summit [Mount Aconcagua in Argentina](#). In August, he conquered the more than 18,500 feet of [Mount Elbrus in Russia](#).

To conquer Mount Everest in the spring, Tyler will need to be on the mountain for six weeks while weathering the Himalayas' subzero temperatures.

"I'm really excited that I can actually go to Mount Everest, experience the mountain and get to the summit," said Tyler, a sixth grader at Glenknoll Elementary School whose passion for summiting peaks was awakened by a documentary on hiking.

If he is successful, Tyler will be one mountain closer to completing his ambitious goal to be the youngest person to trek the Seven Summits – the tallest mountain on each continent – and to raise \$1 million toward finding a cure for [Duchenne muscular dystrophy](#). He has already raised about \$25,000 for research.

The fatal genetic disorder, which primarily affects boys, causes progressive muscle degeneration and weakness. More than 300,000 boys worldwide have the disease, according to CureDuchenne, a Newport Beach organization dedicated to funding treatment research.

Tyler's efforts to help children suffering from Duchenne started after he climbed Mount Whitney and met a boy with the disease.

"I asked my parents why couldn't this kid walk," Tyler said, adding that it was difficult to hear about the disease and how the boys affected can't walk, run or climb mountains.

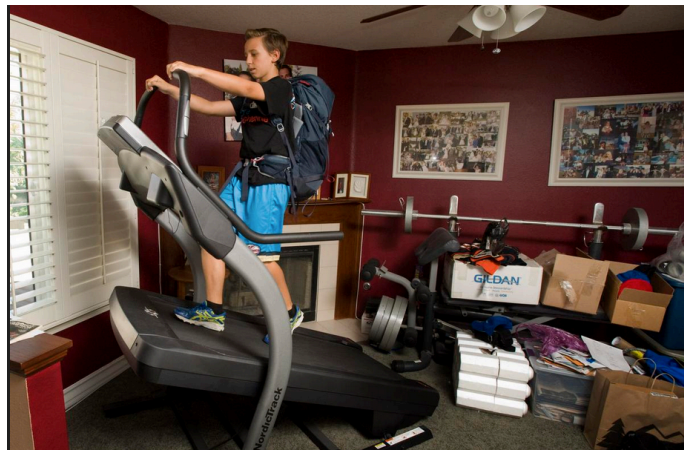
Everest will be Tyler's fourth summit and his father, Kevin, a licensed emergency medical technician, will be with him every step of the way.

"If he wasn't so dedicated I don't think we would support him as much because it is a very expensive and time-consuming sport," Kevin Armstrong, 42, said. "He has shown so much motivation over the years."

Kevin Armstrong estimates that the trek of Mount Everest will cost about \$160,000 and for Tyler to climb the Seven Summits about \$500,000.

"Fortunately he has gotten sponsors, donations and gear," Kevin said. "He has been lucky enough to have people that support him."

On weekdays, Tyler wakes up at 6 a.m. to jog on a treadmill carrying a 30-pound backpack he fills with rice bags. In the evenings he does strength training.



He has been taking ascent classes with Recreational Equipment Inc. at Mount Baldy to master using ice axes and crampons – a metal plate of spikes attached to a boot for walking on ice. He trains with professional guides and his next big practice climb will be in Ecuador over Christmas break.

His mother, Priscilla, a pediatric neuropsychologist at Kaiser Permanente in Anaheim, and his younger brother, Dylan, will accompany Tyler and Kevin on the trip to Ecuador.

Priscilla Armstrong said she worries about the dangers of Mount Everest's 29,000-foot climb and initially was adamant that he wasn't going to do it, but his professional team said that he was ready for the summit.

"I decided that I didn't want to be the dream squelcher, and I didn't want him to become an adult that says 'I could've climbed Mount Everest, but my mom said I couldn't do it,'" she said.

Tyler's parents describe him as a normal kid at home who gets into occasional fights with his younger brother and is easily distracted, but on the mountain he is mature and focused.

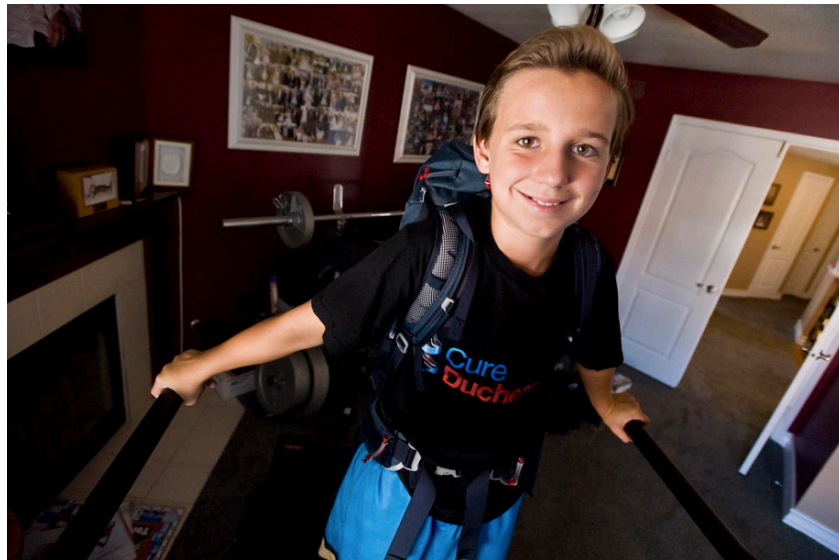
"You watch him on a mountain and he is more like an adult than a child," Kevin Armstrong said.

Kevin Armstrong said he is hopeful Tyler, who will be 12 when he sets out to conquer Mount Everest in April and May, will be issued a permit to climb.

"It's definitely going to be a challenge, but there's been an indication that they will grant Tyler a permit because of what he's done," Kevin Armstrong said. "But they don't issue permits until you get there."

Tyler, an honor student, will miss school while he is on Mount Everest, but he will have a tutor with him to help him stay on top of his homework and will do his science experiment on the mountain.

"I just want to go higher and higher," Tyler said.



Do you agree with Tyler's parents' decision to let him climb even though it is very dangerous? Why/why not? Do you have a goal or goals in life and have already started working hard and letting nothing get in your way in order to achieve that goal? What is the goal, what obstacles have you faced? and how have you overcome them?