



Young Athletes

Young Athletes is an inclusive sports play program for children with and without intellectual disabilities focusing on active games, songs, and other activities that help develop motor, social, and cognitive skills. The program serves 76,000 participants, ages 2 - 7 years old, around the world.

Building a community of acceptance improves the life experiences for all participants as they find a common ground in the joy of sports. Special Olympics athletes and their Unified Partners learn new abilities and prepare for the next step in their sports participation.

Two Young Athletes models are offered: Community and School



Benefits of Young Athletes

- Participants develop motor, social, and cognitive skills through foundational sports play
- Family members are welcomed to the Special Olympics community and network of support
- Community awareness is raised through inclusive peer participation, demonstrations, and other events

For more information, visit:
www.sosc.org/youngathletes
or contact Melissa Erdmann at 562.502.1122

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the Young Athletes program work in a school setting?

The Young Athletes program can be implemented seasonally through school day activities, physical education classes, or after school programming. It utilizes the curriculum and cross-curricular standards available for the application of Young Athletes in the classroom.

How does the Young Athletes program work in a community setting?

The Young Athletes program can take place seasonally on weekday evenings or weekends in community centers, hospitals, universities, or other organizations. Coaches utilize the flexible and easy-to-follow online curriculum, activity guide, and videos provided.

What is needed to implement Young Athletes?

A trained coach, registration forms, curriculum, and a kit including sports equipment and activity guide is needed to implement Young Athletes.

What does Special Olympics Southern California (SOSC) provide?

SOSC provides the entire Young Athletes program. This includes curriculum, forms, coaches training, equipment kit, T-shirts, and ribbons. SOSC also provides opportunities to participate in demonstrations and festivals at competitions and events.

What does my school/agency need to provide?

You will need a place to implement the program (gym, large classroom, outdoor field, etc.). You will need a staff member/volunteer that is passionate about sports and inclusion to serve as a coach and to provide assistance in the strategic recruitment of Young Athletes.

What activities are included in the curriculum?

Young Athletes lessons include foundational skills, walking & running, jumping & balancing, trapping & catching, throwing, striking, kicking, and a review of skills as sports.

What happens at the end of the season?

A culminating event takes place to conclude the Young Athletes season. Family, friends, and supporters are welcome to celebrate the achievements of the participants as they receive completion awards.



Special Olympics
Young Athletes

The Hoag Foundation

Educate, Empower, and Create Opportunity

