



Special Olympics
Washington

2150 North 107th Street #220
Seattle, WA 98133



Special Olympics
Washington

young athletes



Young Athletes...

is an innovative sports play program for children with intellectual disabilities, designed to introduce them to the world of sports prior to Special Olympics eligibility at age 8. The program was created to meet the physical and developmental needs of children ages 2-7 by engaging them in appropriate play activities designed to foster physical, cognitive, and social development. Young Athletes also offers families the opportunity to share in the success of their future athlete. The program provides an appreciation of fitness and sport for the whole family. Most importantly, through their preparation for participation in sports, families see the potential for their child.



A Parent's View...

"Young Athletes has helped our son prepare physically for Special Olympics. He enjoyed participating in the Program because of all the wonderful people that he met. Young Athletes also gave us great insight into the world of Special Olympics. It has been an excellent stepping-stone in getting our son and family started. We look forward to many years of participating in Special Olympics."

—Robert Kunold, Jr., father of Stuart (6 years old)

A Teacher's View...

"Through Young Athletes, you see students interacting with students, having a good time, families getting to know each other better, plus the school, staff and parents all working together. It is that whole team, that whole sense of community that the Young Athletes program is helping us to create at an early age for our students."

—Mike Franza, Wenatchee School District

Young Athletes is a versatile program that can work in various learning situations. The program is designed for families to play with their young athletes at home in a fun atmosphere. It is also appropriate for preschools, schools and play groups to use with small groups of young children with and without intellectual disabilities. The flexibility of Young Athletes ensures the opportunity to welcome families and their young children into the Special Olympics family.

Goals

Young Athletes introduces children with intellectual disabilities and their families to the world of Special Olympics by pursuing the following goals:

- To engage children with intellectual disabilities through developmentally appropriate play activities designed to foster physical, cognitive, and social development;

- To welcome family members of children with intellectual disabilities to the Special Olympics network of support;



- To raise awareness about the abilities of children with intellectual disabilities through inclusive peer participation, demonstrations and other events.

Activities

- Foundational skills
- Throwing
- Striking
- Kicking
- Walking and running
- Balancing and jumping



- Trapping and catching
- Advanced skills

Resources

The Young Athletes program includes several resources to guide family members, educators and other professionals as they conduct Young Athletes activities with special needs children and their brothers, sisters, or fellow students.



- The Young Athletes Activities Guide - a complete guide with descriptions of activities;

- The Young Athletes Training DVD - an instructional video of activities;
- The Young Athletes Equipment Kit

Visit www.sowa.org for more information

Special Olympics Washington *young athletes* Registration

Send this form in to receive information on *young athletes* programs in your area.

Future Athlete/Group/Program Name: _____ Participant Age or Age Range: _____
(ex.: Individual, School, Parks & Rec. Program)

Parent/Guardian or Group/Program Contact: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

How did you learn about *young athletes*?

- Word of Mouth/Other Parents
- Media (TV/Radio/Newspaper)
- At a Special Olympics Event
- Special Olympics Website
- Other _____