

Health Promotion uses interactive educational tools and displays, motivational literature and demonstrations to heighten the awareness of athletes, reinforcing the need to improve and maintain an enhanced level of wellness and self-care.

Programs around the world must adjust to local situations when implementing Healthy Athletes events. In Malawi, the organizers of a program funded through a Health Promotion grant recognized that a major need at Kalema Primary School was improved hygiene practices. By inverting discarded, water-filled plastic bottles and creating what is called a “tippy tap,” Special Olympics taught hand washing techniques to more than 40 Special Olympics athletes and their parents and coaches, despite the absence of running water.

**“Prior to this idea, very few athletes were washing hands due to the unreliable water sources which were available,”** said Felix Chisowa, Acting Country Director for Special Olympics Malawi.

The lack of effective hand washing contributes to high rates of diarrheal, respiratory, and other diseases and infections, particularly among children. Thanks to the Health Promotion program, however, athletes and their families in Kalema are better educated and aware of the dangers of poor hygiene.

**30% adult athletes are overweight or obese**

**22%**  **have low bone density**

**14%**  **children and adolescents are overweight or obese**

## **IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT:**

62,469 Screenings performed in 69 participating countries.

## **In The Field**

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Develop a body of knowledge about the overall health of children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Encourage and enhance healthy behaviors; reduce risky behaviors; improve self-efficacy and self-advocacy; and increase the investment of health promotion leaders for people with intellectual disabilities.

Increase awareness of and response to infectious diseases

such as malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV in developing nations.

## **GOALS:**

## **3.**

## **2.**

## **1.**

Health Promotion events have found that a large percentage of Special Olympics athletes have limited knowledge of proper health practices.