



Special Olympics Young Athletes
TRAINING

FACILITATOR GUIDE



Special Olympics
Young Athletes



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INTRODUCTION



Guide Overview

This Facilitator's Guide is to be a companion document to the Young Athletes Coaches Training and the Young Athletes Impact Training. This document is intended to support facilitators in training Young Athletes implementers. There are two core trainings included:

- **Young Athletes Coaches Training**
- **Young Athletes Impact Training**

The facilitator guide consists of two main sections: Coach Training and Impact Training. Within each section, there are 5 subsections:

1. Training Overview
2. Program Information
3. Slide Notes
4. Additional Resources
5. Frequently Asked Questions

Each of the two trainings has a set of slides to be used and adapted with Program-specific content and information. This Facilitator guide is to be used as a tool to understand the key points and content that should be shared throughout the slides, as well as provide tips and suggestions for adapting the content to fit the needs of the Program and/or Region.

Haven't seen the Young Athletes Coach Training or Impact Training yet? Young Athletes training materials and additional resources can be found on the Young Athletes resource web page:

**[resources.specialolympics.org/
YoungAthletes](https://resources.specialolympics.org/YoungAthletes)**



Getting Started

Ready to get started? Here are a few key steps to get started with hosting a Young Athletes training in your Program:

1. Collaborate with your local Special Olympics Program

Let them know that you are interested in conducting a training. They can assist in connecting you with additional individuals who might be interested, provide you with Program-specific content and support with ongoing sustainability.

2. Determine the goal of the training

Is the goal of the training to prepare new coaches and volunteers to lead Young Athletes, or to educate a broader audience about Young Athletes? There are separate trainings for both! Need help determining which training meets your goals? Check out the section below for more information.

3. Confirm training details

Who is the target audience? When and where will the training take place? Will there be a projector and computer available to share the training slides?

4. Make the information specific to your Program

The training materials can be modified and adapted to include Program-specific information. Not everything that is included in the training will be relevant or important to your Program, but you have the ability to adapt as necessary.

Which Training To Use?

Not sure which training you should use? Use the following criteria to determine which training will meet your goals:

Use the Coach Training to:

- Train new coaches and/or site coordinators to run Young Athletes in the community or school
- Train family members to run Young Athletes in the home
- Train volunteers to help support Young Athletes activities

Use the Impact Training to:

- Educate stakeholders on the goals and impact of Young Athletes at the global and local level
- Influence potential sponsors or partners to support Young Athletes

Using the Slides

All of the slides can be changed or modified based on the goals of the training and the needs of the Special Olympics Program. Every slide within the training will not be applicable or relevant to every audience, so changes should be made prior to conducting a training. The slides have been created as a template— slides can be removed or added at the discretion of the facilitator.

When reviewing the slides, you will see the following icons:



Key Things to Consider



Discussion Time



Let's Get Active



Skill Application



Words from a Coach

Red flags indicate slides that need to be modified prior to a training. Red flags will be placed on the top of the slide and should be removed once the information on the slide is final.

After the necessary changes are made, click on the flag and press delete on your keyboard to remove the flag from

**Additional Program
Information Needed**

Don't have access to a computer and projector for your training? Here are a few suggestions for sharing the information without a presentation:

- Print out copies of the slides for participants to follow along as you share the information
- Make a poster with the key points that you are going to present from each section

Using the Facilitator Guide

Both sections of this guide contain five subsections which outline all of the information needed for a successful training. Be sure to review each subsection in detail before facilitating a training.

The subsections contain the following information:

Training Overview

The Training Overview subsection provides detailed information on the target audience, approximate time it will take to complete, materials you will need for the training, and tips for an engaging and interactive presentation.

Program Information

The Program Information subsection provides a list of slides that need to be modified with Program information prior to using in a training. Tips and information for integrating Program specific content and information throughout the slides is also included.

Slide Notes

The Slide Notes subsection provides detailed notes and tips for each of the slides in the training.

Additional Resources

The Additional Resources subsection provides supplementary 1-pagers to specific content in the slides.



COACHES TRAINING



Coach Training Overview

The Young Athletes Coach Training can be used to train new and existing coaches on implementing Young Athletes. The training contains four sections:

- Special Olympics Young Athletes
- Being a Young Athletes Coach
- Young Athletes Activities
- Implementing the Models

All four sections are made up of training information, discussions, assessments and Special Olympics Program examples. Upon completion of the training, new coaches will have the information needed to recruit athletes, plan Young Athletes sessions, modify activities for a variety of ability levels, identify support and implement activities in different settings.



Target Audience

The Coach Training is for any new or existing Young Athletes Coach who runs sessions in the home, community or school setting

Materials Needed

- Medium-sized ball
- Young Athletes Activity Guide
- Projector and laptop

Timing of Training

The coach training will take approximately 2-3 hours to complete

Coach Training Overview

The training is structured to be interactive and hands-on for all participants. Group discussions and activities are included throughout the slides to encourage everyone to step into the role and mentality of a Young Athletes coach.

To make your training more interactive, consider including some of the following suggestions:

Invite local Young Athletes to the Training

Invite children to the “Young Athletes Activities” section of your training and allow participants to apply the skills they are learning.

Encourage participants to work directly with the Young Athletes during the activities and identify modifications when necessary.

Identify Assistant Coaches Throughout the Training

Have participants step into the role of the coach throughout the training. Allow individuals to lead the group discussions and lead the activities during the “Young Athletes Activities” section.

Allow the group to provide peer feedback to each other.

Include a Practice Young Athletes Session

If you have extra time provided for your training, have participants plan their own Young Athletes session and invite local children to participate.

Allow the group to provide peer-feedback on all of the sessions shared.

Invite a Guest Speaker

Have a coach, an athlete leader or a family member of a Young Athlete share their story and the impact that Young Athletes has had on their life.

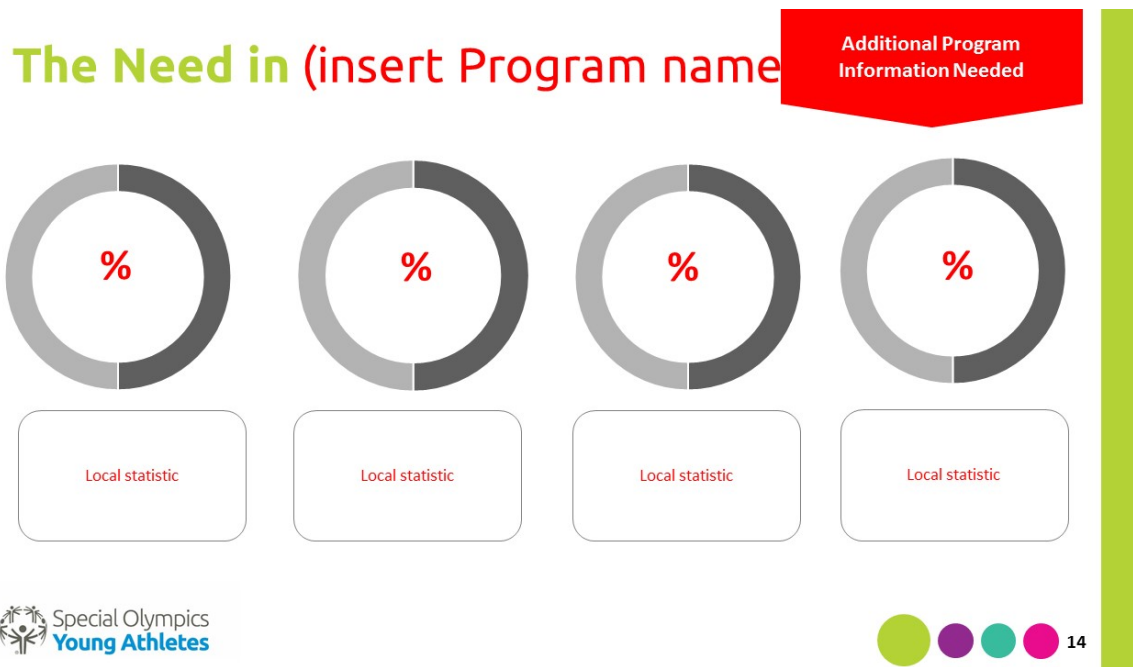


Program Information

The next two pages contain the slides that need to be modified with Program information prior to beginning the training. Suggestions and tips for content is included with each slide.

Remember to click on the red flag and press “delete” on your keyboard to remove the flag once a slide is complete.

SLIDE 14—The Need



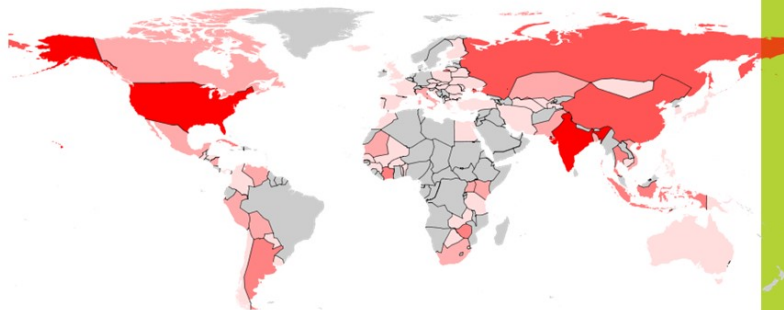
- **Purpose:** The purpose of this slide is to show country/region specific disability information to highlight the need for Young Athletes.
- **Modifying the Slide:**
 1. Delete the “insert local information here” text and replace it with the name of your region or Program (example: The Need in India). Change the text from red to green.
 2. Identify four statistics similar to slide 13, and type them in the boxes below the charts. Right click on one of the pie charts and select “edit data.” Enter two numbers under Column 1 to populate your desired percentage (for example, if you want the chart to show 80%, enter the number 20 in row two, and the number 80 in row three).
 3. Click on the red percentage sign, and enter the desired percentage.
- **Tips to Consider:**
 - Include statistics that are specific to your area and focused on children with disabilities.

SLIDE 16—The Reach

Young Athletes: Reach

Additional Program
Information Needed

- Young Athletes is in all seven Regions
- 66% of Special Olympics Programs conduct Young Athletes
- 163,159 Young Athletes worldwide in 2016
- (Insert Program/Region specific participation numbers here)



- **Purpose:** The purpose of this slide is to show the overall reach of Young Athletes across the world
- **Modifying the Slide:**
 1. Delete the “insert local information here” text and replace it with information regarding the number of Young Athletes in your Program or Region. Change the text from red to black.

SLIDE 61—Section 4



Programs select which
model(s) to include in their
training

Section 4 Young Athletes in School

- **Purpose:** The purpose of section four is to provide detailed information on the Young Athletes models. It is recommended to offer trainings based on the models the coaches will be implementing (example: bring together all of the school-based coaches for a training).
- **Modifying the Section:**
 1. Determine which models you will focus on during your training. Once that has been determined, delete all slides that relate to the models you won't be discussing.

Slide Notes

The following section contains facilitator notes for each slide. The notes include additional content, tips for facilitation, answers to assessments and discussion topics.

Introduction

Slide 1: Title Slide

- Facilitator Introductions
- Outline the time that it will take to complete the training and when breaks will occur
- Allow all participants in the room to introduce themselves

Slide 2: Training Overview

- Provide an overview of the four main sections of the training
- Each section will take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete

Slide 3: Training Preparation

- Throughout the training you will see a variety of icons that will indicate different actions within the training—ideas to consider, discussion time, activity time, skill application or words from a coach

Section 1: Special Olympics Young Athletes

Slide 4: Special Olympics Young Athletes

- The first section of the training will cover introductory information on Special Olympics and provide an in-depth overview of Young Athletes

Slide 5: Special Olympics

- Special Olympics transforms lives through the joy of sport every day, everywhere
- Special Olympics is the leading voice in raising awareness about the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities

Slide 6: What is an Intellectual Disability?

- Special Olympics is for individuals with intellectual disabilities—the Paralympics is for individuals with physical disabilities
- The category “intellectual disability” includes a wide range of abilities—you will interact with athletes who are on both sides of the spectrum

Slide 7: Young Athletes Overview

- What does every child want? The chance to kick a ball, to throw it well, to share their success with family members. What does every child with intellectual disabilities want? The exact same thing.
- Young Athletes welcomes children and their families into the world of Special Olympics

Slide 8: The Goals

- Social inclusion—Teaching acceptance and respect at a young age
- With and without ID—Creating inclusive environments
- Skill and Ability Levels—All children can participate in YA, and all children can experience success

Section 1: Special Olympics Young Athletes (Cont.)

Slide 9: Why Young Athletes

- YA's impact has a ripple effect that extends benefits beyond the participants in the program to the family and community
- In this way, YA serves as a catalyst for change in the community and a mechanism to enhance social inclusion for people with ID

Slide 10: Why Young Athletes (Child)

- Children with ID often experience challenges developing motor skills. Research found that YA improves the motor skills of participants in both U.S. and international contexts.
- After two months of participation in YA, children with ID experienced a seven month gain in motor skills
- More statistics can be found [here](#)

Slide 11: Why Young Athletes (Family)

- Families benefit in a number of ways, including helping parents understand ID, raising parent expectations of their child, fostering support networks and creating opportunities for family engagement.
- Studies have found that through YA, parents begin to better understand their child with ID
- A 2014 study found that by demonstrating that children with ID can participate in and benefit from group activities, parents became more willing to bring their children into social settings
- YA raises parents' expectations of their child with ID

Slide 12: Why Young Athletes (Community)

- YA is shown to have a positive impact on the broader community. Schools and community members who assisted with YA were given the opportunity to learn about and interact with people with disabilities
- YA provides the community with an opportunity to learn about ID and to embrace members of the community with ID and their families

Slide 13: The Need

- The benefits of Young Athletes are so important because the need for children with ID around the world is so great
- Children from impoverished areas who have an intellectual disability are destined to perpetuate the cycle of poverty if they are unable to access, and participate in, early childhood intervention programs like Young Athletes

Slide 15: Where it Happens

- School: Led by educators in a school setting. Activities take place during the school day.
- Community: Led by Young Athletes coaches and volunteers. It gives parents, siblings and friends a chance to get together. Activities can be done in a sport club, recreation center or other community facility.
- Home: Parents, siblings and friends play together at home

Slide 16: Reach

- Young Athletes was started in 2005
- Young Athletes is in all seven Special Olympics regions and 66% of SO Programs conduct YA

Section 1: Special Olympics Young Athletes (Cont.)

Slide 17: The Impact

- Motor Skills Development: Motor Skills Development is a large benefit of Young Athletes which we have already mentioned—but it is not the only benefit
- Social, Emotional and Learning Skills: Parents and teachers of children who took part in the Young Athletes curriculum said the children learned skills that they will use in pre-primary school. The children were more enthusiastic and confident. They also played better with other children
- Expectations: Family members say that Young Athletes raised their hopes for their child's future
- Acceptance: Inclusive play has a benefit for children without ID as well. It helps them to better understand and accept others.

Slide 18: Skill Development

- There are eight skill areas in Young Athletes that help children learn movements they will use in sports and daily life
- Each skill area has activities in the Activity Guide that can be done with one child or a group of children

Slide 19: Stages of Motor Learning

- There are three stages in which motor learning occurs. Through participation in Young Athletes, you will be able to witness the growth and progression that children have as they move from one stage to the next
- The Stages of Motor Learning can be referenced when determining the progress a child is making

Slide 20: Words from a Coach

- Read the "Words from a Coach" or select a participant to read it out loud

Slide 21: Group Discussion

- Have participants form small groups of two or three people
- Allow participants ten minutes to answer all three questions
- Allow for five minutes to share responses

Slide 22 & 23: Skill Application

- Have all participants find a writing utensil and a piece of paper
- Give all participants two minutes to answer all questions
- Have participants check their own answers and ask the group if anyone was able to get all four questions correct
- Ask the group if anyone has any questions before continuing

Section 2: Being a Young Athletes Coach

Slide 24: Section 2

- Section two contains the roles, responsibilities and expectations of Young Athletes coaches

Slide 25: Coach Responsibilities

- Being a YA coach starts well before you show up for your first YA session
- Regular communication with your local Special Olympics Program will need to occur as you prepare to host YA sessions
- Registration forms, required coaching paperwork and facilities can be discussed with the local Special Olympics Program

Section 2: Being a Young Athletes Coach (Cont.)

Slide 26: Coach Responsibilities

- Connect with your local Special Olympics Program prior to the start of Young Athletes to discuss equipment needs. If the Program is unable to supply equipment, ideas for equipment substitutions can be found in the YA Activity Guide
- Connect with your local Special Olympics Program on volunteer requirements, expectations and training. Prior to the start of the first session, be sure that your volunteers understand all activities and have been provided information on working with children that have an intellectual disability

Slide 27: Identifying Support

- Ask the participants if they have any ideas for where they could recruit volunteers
- Engage Athlete Leaders as YA volunteers if possible - it is very beneficial for parents to interact with adult Special Olympics athletes and see the potential future for their child

Slide 28: Coach Responsibilities

- During each session you are responsible for making sure all aspects of the session run smoothly and that all children are having fun in a safe and supportive environment
- Make sure everyone is having fun!

Slide 29: Making Modifications

- Modifications to equipment and activities will need to be made to fit the needs of each child
- The YA Activity Guide contains resources on equipment modification, making modifications for children with motor challenges and making modifications for children with autism

Slide 30: Coach Responsibilities

- If parents are not present for the sessions, provide them with information on what activities were covered each week and encourage them to practice at home

Slide 31: Evaluating Success

- Although it is not required, tracking progress through YA is a great way to monitor the motor gross development of a child
- Determine your goal for evaluating your activities and then determine what tool will work best for your needs
- Simple tracking can be done (such as a check list) or an evaluation tool can be used

Slide 32: Resources Available

- The YA Activity Guide and Curriculum are both online and free for anyone to access. Both resources are offered in multiple languages
 - [YA Activity Guide](#): Allows for flexibility in creating lesson plans based upon the ability and interest of the children
 - [YA Curriculum](#): Structured 8-week curriculum with three lessons per week
- If you are able to provide printed copies of the resources, now would be a great time to pass them out

Slide 33: Young Athletes Structure

- YA looks different in all of the three models, but the basic structure for YA is at least eight weeks with 30-45 min sessions two or three times per week
 - Three times per week is recommended, as data shows that children develop more with regular repetition
- Eight weeks is the suggested minimum— but year round programming is preferred. We want all children to have opportunities from the point they enter YA to the point they can enter competition at age eight

Section 2: Being a Young Athletes Coach (Cont.)

Slide 34: Key Components of a Session

- Sessions are structured this way to model a sports practice and prepare children to transition from YA to sports

Slide 35: Group Discussion

- Have participants form small groups of two or three people
- Allow participants ten minutes to answer all three questions
- Allow for five minutes of sharing out

Slide 36: Words from a Coach

- Read the “Words from a Coach” or select a participant to read it out loud

Slide 37 & 38: Skill Application

- Have all participants find a writing utensil and a piece of paper
- Give all participants two minutes to answer all questions
- Have participants check their own answers and ask the group if anyone was able to get all four questions correct
- Ask the group if anyone has any questions before continuing

Section 3: Young Athletes Activities

Slide 39: Section 3

- Section three contains information and strategies for implementing the YA activities

Slide 40: YA Activity Guide

- The YA Activity Guide is the primary YA resource

Slide 41: YA Equipment

- Equipment substitutions can be made if the YA equipment is unavailable
- Ask the participants to get into groups of two and answer the discussion question
- Allow the groups five minutes to answer the questions
- Select two groups to share their answers out loud

Slide 42: Equipment Modifications

- Equipment can be modified to make an activity easier or more challenging
- Size, shape, color, texture and sound can all be changed
- Take time to get to know each child and determine if there are modifications you could be making to their equipment to better suit their needs
- If time permits, facilitate a group discussion about how you could modify various pieces of equipment for different abilities/challenges

Section 3: Young Athletes Activities (Cont.)

Slide 44: Selecting Activities

- There is no timeline or order that you should follow with the activities—let the child’s learning speed pace the progression
- Begin with foundational skills and once those skills have been mastered, the child can move to the next skill area
- If you have moved a child to the next skill area and they are not making progress it is okay to take a step back

Slide 45: Health and Fitness

- Developing healthy habits at an early age will bring lifelong benefits
- If snacks are provided, make sure it is a healthy snack (fruits and vegetables) and water is encouraged over soda
- Encourage the children to drink water regularly during YA sessions
- Educate parents on the importance of healthy habits so they can continue the habits at home

Slide 46: “Healthy Play” Activities

- Healthy Play activity variations are provided for some activities
- Healthy YA Activities can be found in the resources section of the Activity Guide as well as some suggested equipment for Healthy Play

Slide 47: Learning through the Activities

- Motor skills are not the only thing that can be learned during YA—colors, numbers, letters and counting can easily be integrated into the Activities

Slide 48: Activity Terminology

- This terminology might be seen on some activities—but it will not be included on every activity
- If an activity does not have a healthy play or group play option listed, you can get creative and develop your own activity variation

Slide 49: Implementing Activities

- If you are unsure how to implement an activity, check out the videos online. Most of the YA activities can be found online
 - Facilitators should watch the videos online prior to hosting a training so they fully understand every activity

Slide 50: Skill Application

- It’s time to get on our feet! This next session will include discussion topics and opportunities for us to try out the activities.
- Only one activity per skill area will be highlighted in this section, but participants are encouraged to ask questions about any of the other activities they see in the YA Activity Guide or YA Curriculum
- Have all participants stand and move the group to an area with open space for this section

Slide 51: Foundational Skills

- Explain that for the first activity, you will be the “coach” and will facilitate the activity—let participants know that you will be looking for volunteers to coach the next activities
- Let the group know that you are running the activity as a Young Athletes coach and that they are all to step into the shoes of a Young Athlete for the activity

Section 3: Young Athletes Activities (Cont.)

Slide 52: Walking and Running

- Facilitate a group discussion on the following two questions:
- How could healthy play be incorporated into this activity?
 - Example answer: Use colored floor markers and have the children name a healthy food that is the color of the floor marker they are stepping on
- How could this activity be modified for a child that uses a wheelchair or walker?
 - Example answer: For children that use wheelchairs, have them weave in and out of the floor marker. For children that use walkers, practice side-stepping while continuing to use the walker for support

Slide 53: Balance and Jumping

- Select two participants to be the “coaches.” All other participants should be a Young Athlete.
- Have the coaches explain the activity and demonstrate it to all of the other participants
- Allow five minutes for everyone to practice the activity

Slide 54: Trapping and Catching

- Facilitate a group discussion on the following two questions:
- How could group play be incorporated into this activity? What about healthy play?
 - Example answer: To engage more than one child in the activity, have the group stand in a circle and have them bounce the ball to someone across the circle. Have the children name fruits or vegetables every time they bounce the ball.
- What can you do if a child is repeatedly struggling to catch the ball?
 - Example answer: Stand closer to the child and progressively move further away as they become more comfortable

Slide 55: Throwing

- Select two participants to be the “coaches.” All other participants should be a Young Athlete
- Have the coaches explain the activity and demonstrate it to all of the other participants
- Allow five minutes for everyone to practice the activity

Slide 56: Striking

- Facilitate a group discussion on the following question:
- What equipment substitution could be used if you did not have access to a floorball and floorball stick?
 - Example answer: A broom handle and a medium-sized ball
 - Example answer: A stick/branch and a medium-sized ball

Slide 57: Kicking

- Select two participants to be the “coaches.” All other participants should be a Young Athlete.
- Have the coaches explain the activity and demonstrate it to all of the other participants
- Allow five minutes for everyone to practice the activity

Slide 58: Advanced Sport Skills

- Facilitate a group discussion on the following question:
- What skills from the other skill areas will a child need to learn to be successful at Pass and Shoot?
 - Example answer: The child will need to be able to trap and catch the ball when it is passed to them
- What can you do if a child is struggling with this activity and unable to catch the ball?
 - Example answer: Make a modification so the child is still able to participate and be successful. Roll the ball to them so they have to stop it with their hands or feet. Have them continue the activity by passing the ball or throwing it in the hoop.

Section 3: Young Athletes Activities (Cont.)

Slide 59 & 60: Skill Application

- Have all participants find a writing utensil and a piece of paper
- Give all participants two minutes to answer all questions
- Have participants check their own answers and ask the group if anyone was able to get all four questions correct
- Ask the group if anyone has any questions before continuing

Section 4: Young Athletes in School

Slide 61: Section 4

- The purpose of section four is to provide detailed information on the Young Athletes models
- It is recommended to offer trainings based on the models the coaches will be implementing (example: bring together all of the school-based coaches for a training, etc.)
- When training community or school programs, it is recommended to keep the section on the home model so the information can be relayed to parents for them to do the activities at home

Slide 62: Structure in the Schools

- Young Athletes has the greatest impact on motor skills when run more than once per week. Schools should strive to offer activities three times per week.
- If YA is being run in a special school, consider partnering with a neighboring general education school
- Inclusive schools should strive to have an inclusive group of students participating in Young Athletes

Slide 63: Key Implementation Points

- YA can be run in almost any setting. Safety is the most important consideration and that should drive your search for a location. Some settings could include a gym during physical education time or in the classroom/outdoors during a time dedicated to motor development or play.

Slide 64: Key Implementation Points

- A minimum ratio of one adult per every four children should be followed in the school setting
- Older students are a great resource for helping to lead the activities—but must be over the age of sixteen to count towards the one adult for every four children ratio

Slide 65: Key Implementation Points

- Even though they might not be present for the YA session, there are plenty of ways to engage parents (example: send home newsletters or information on the activities to have them practice at home)
- The progress a child is making in YA can be discussed during parent-teacher conferences or Individualized Education Plan meetings
- Have parents volunteer in the classroom during YA

Slide 66: Incorporating Leadership

- Have students lead the opening and closing songs
- Identify ways for children to begin taking on leadership roles. For example, let children take turns being the leader in “Follow the Leader”
- Have classroom discussions around inclusion, respect, friendship and abilities

Section 4: Young Athletes in School (cont.)

Slide 67: Celebration Events

- Celebration events are optional—but are a great way to highlight YA to the school and community
- Consider making the event more festive by having a small opening and closing ceremony (include a parade of athletes, athlete oath and award ceremony)
- Invite children in older grade levels to volunteer at the event

Slide 68: Discussion

- Ask the participants to get into groups of two and answer the discussion questions
- Allow for five minutes of sharing out

Section 4: Young Athletes in the Community

Slide 69: Section 4

- The purpose of section 4 is to provide detailed information on the Young Athletes models
- It is recommended to offer trainings based on the models the coaches will be implementing (example: bring together all of the school-based coaches for a training).

Slide 70: Structure in the Community

- YA can be run in almost any setting. Safety is the most important consideration and that should drive your search for a location.

Slide 71: Key Implementation Points

- Plan for a rest break and encourage children to all drink water
- If too many children have signed up, break your group into two smaller groups for the sessions

Slide 73: Family Forums

- Family Forums promote networking and connections among families that have a child with ID while providing helpful information and discussions
- Family Forums can be small and can take place in any location
- Considering inviting guest speakers with specific knowledge on the topic being discussed

Slide 74: Structure in the Schools

- Family Forums promote networking and connections among families that have a child with ID while providing helpful information and discussions
- Family Forums can be small and can take place in any location

Slide 75: Section 4

- The purpose of section 4 is to provide detailed information on the Young Athletes models
- It is recommended to offer trainings based upon the models the coaches will be implementing in (example: bring together all of the school-based coaches for a training).
- When training community or school programs, it is recommended to keep the section on the home model so the information can be relayed to parents for them to do the activities at home

Section 4: Young Athletes in the Home

Slide 76: Structure in the Home

- Siblings are encouraged to participate or help lead the activities
- Schedule a regular time for the activities to occur (right after dinner, etc.) so the child can anticipate when YA will take place and get comfortable in a routine
- Invite neighborhood children to take part in the activities

Slide 79: Key Implementation Points

- Connect with other families—reach out to your local Special Olympics Program to find a Family Support Network to join
- Be creative—don't be afraid to develop your own activity variations

Slide 80: Discussion

- Ask the participants to get into groups of two and answer the discussion questions
- Allow for five minutes of sharing out

Training Recap

Slide 81: Training Recap

- This section is to provide a final overview and wrap up of the Young Athletes Coach Training
- The reflections included in this final section will allow participants to think about how they will apply the skills and knowledge learned throughout all four sections to be a successful Young Athletes coach

Slide 82: Helpful Reminders

- Ask participants if there are any other “helpful reminders” that everyone should remember

Slide 83: Final Discussion

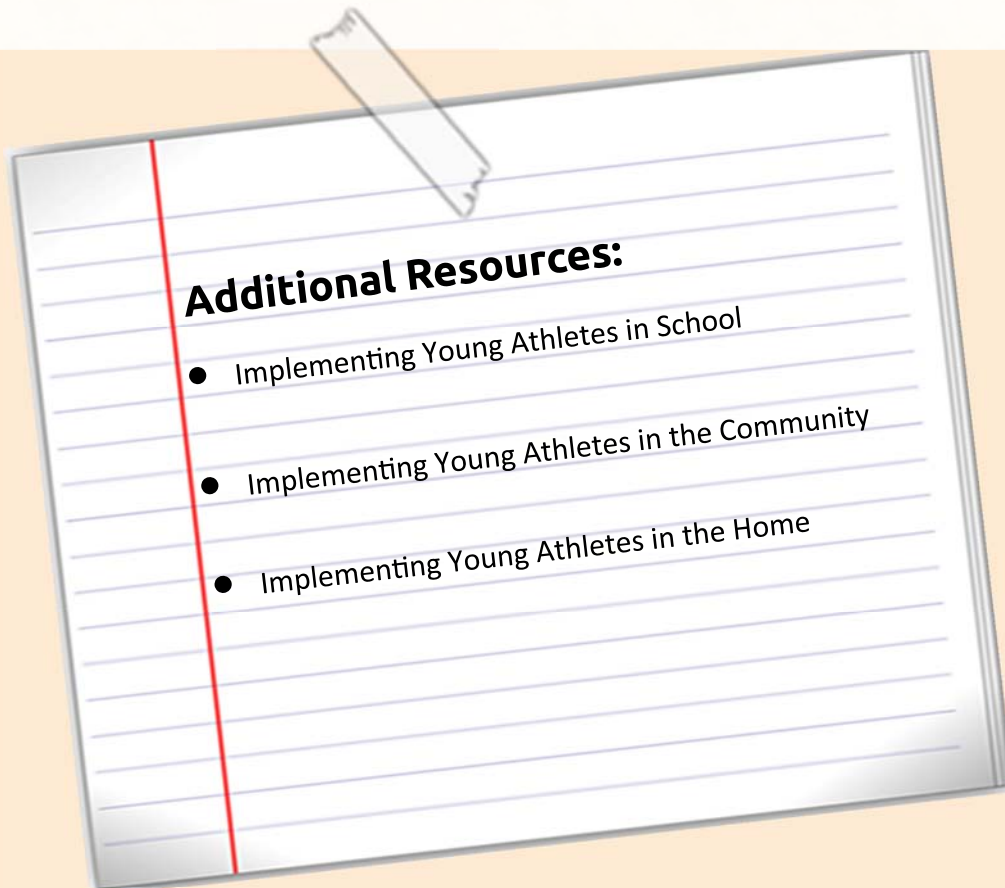
- Allow participants fifteen minutes get with a partner and answer all five questions
- Allow for ten minutes of sharing out and final reflections



Additional Resources

To assist coaches with implementing Young Athletes, there are one-page documents for each model that outline the structure and highlight key points for success.

Provide each participant with a one-pager that aligns with where they will be implementing Young Athletes.



School Model

The benefits of physical activity and play go beyond sports. Special Olympics Young Athletes helps children interact with each other and develop important communication, learning and self-help skills. Starting motor activities early is very important for children with intellectual disabilities. Children who receive support at an early age will be more capable of doing challenging movements as they grow older.

Structure

Frequency

At least one time a week for a minimum of 8 weeks

Timing

30-45 minute sessions

Setting

Indoors or outdoors. Any space can be used!

Coaches

Educators, physical educators, counselors, administrators

Inclusion

Open for all students in the class to participate

Volunteers

Family members, older students, school staff



Implementing in the School

Safety and Space

- Not too big; not too small. Make sure the space matches the needs of the activity and your group size.
- Indoor vs outdoors. Young Athletes is great for indoors and outdoors – but be mindful of spacing and safety.
- One space vs two spaces. If the class is large, you can consider dividing the class into two groups.

Structure

- Establish a routine. Routines provide clear expectations.
- Plan for rest breaks. Provide a place where children can rest if they become overstimulated.
- Encourage different modes of movement to transition between activities.
- Use music to signal transitions.
- Unified Partners. Have older children or children without ID support younger children.

Engage Family Members

Initial Meeting—host an introduction meeting at the start of the school year

Weekly newsletters and emails—easy way to connect with parents weekly!

At home activities—share the Activity Guide with parents so they can practice the activities at home

Volunteer—Invite family members to volunteer

Community Model

Young Athletes in the community allows parents to share in the fun their children have while playing with others. They also observe their children achieving skills that will help them in sports and in life.

Structure

Frequency

One time per week, plus two times per week at home

Timing

45 minute – 1 hour sessions

Setting

Indoors or outdoors. A community center, recreation center, or library can be used

Coaches

Community volunteer, specialized professional, family member or university student

Inclusion

Siblings or local community children

Volunteers

Family members, Special Olympics athlete leaders, local sport club members or university students



Implementing in the Community

Safety and Space

- Not too big; not too small. Make sure the space matches the needs of the activity and your group size.
- Indoor vs outdoors. Young Athletes is great for indoors and outdoors – but be mindful of spacing and safety.
- One space vs two spaces. If your class is large, you can consider dividing your class into two groups.

Structure

- Establish a routine. Routines provide clear expectations. Create different skill stations to accommodate children of different abilities and ages.
- Plan for rest breaks. Provide a place where children can rest if they become overstimulated.
- Encourage different modes of movement to transition between activities. Invite siblings, parents or children without ID to support children by modeling activities.
- Use music to signal transitions.

Engage Family Member

Family Support Groups—Provide families with a space to talk and connect while their children are in YA

Weekly newsletters and emails—easy way to connect with parents weekly!

At home activities—share the Activity Guide with parents so they can practice the activities at home

Volunteer—Invite family members to volunteer

Home Model

Family involvement in the lives of young children is important. Parents, grandparents, caretakers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins should have every opportunity to be involved in Young Athletes. Through Special Olympics Young Athletes in the home, families can play together in a fun and caring environment.

Structure

<p>Frequency</p> <p>At least three times per week</p>	<p>Timing</p> <p>20-30 minute sessions</p>	<p>Setting</p> <p>Indoors or outdoors. Any space can be used!</p>
<p>Coaches</p> <p>Family members, neighbors or friends</p>	<p>Inclusion</p> <p>Siblings or local community children</p>	<p>Volunteers</p> <p>Family members, Special Olympics athlete leaders or neighbors</p>



Implementing in the Home

Stand-Alone Activities

- A great way to start Young Athletes is simply to play with children, using the Young Athletes Activity Guide to structure playtime.
- Start by having 20 to 30 minutes of structured play, at least three times per week.
- Select 2 to 3 activities to focus on in each play period.

Support for Community or School Programs

- Practicing Young Athletes at home can help support the skills children are learning as part of Young Athletes in their school or community.
- Families can use Young Athletes as a guide for play at home.
- Coaches can share the lessons they are doing each week with the family members to encourage them to follow along at home.

Key Points for Consideration

Connect with other families—find a local Special Olympics Family Support Network

Invite siblings and other children in your community—all children love to play!

Get creative—as you become comfortable with the activities, add new variations to play to the strengths of the children

Have Fun—Enjoy the time playing with your child in a supportive setting

IMPACT TRAINING



Impact Training Overview

The Young Athletes Impact Training can be used to educate potential sponsors, government officials or other stakeholders on the impact and need of Special Olympics Young Athletes. The training contains four sections:

- The Need
- Young Athletes
- The Impact
- Young Athletes at the Program Level

The training contains general information on Young Athletes with a primary focus on the need and lasting impact on children, families and the community. The last section of the training can be modified by the Program/Region to provide specific information on the current status and goals of Young Athletes locally.

Target Audience

The Impact training is for potential sponsors/partners, government officials or other stakeholders

Materials Needed

- Projector and laptop
- Program/Region one-pager
- Any additional Program resources

Timing of Training

The impact training takes approximately 20 minutes to complete



Program Information

The next two pages contain the slides that need to be modified with Program information prior to beginning the training. Suggestions and tips for content is included with each slide.

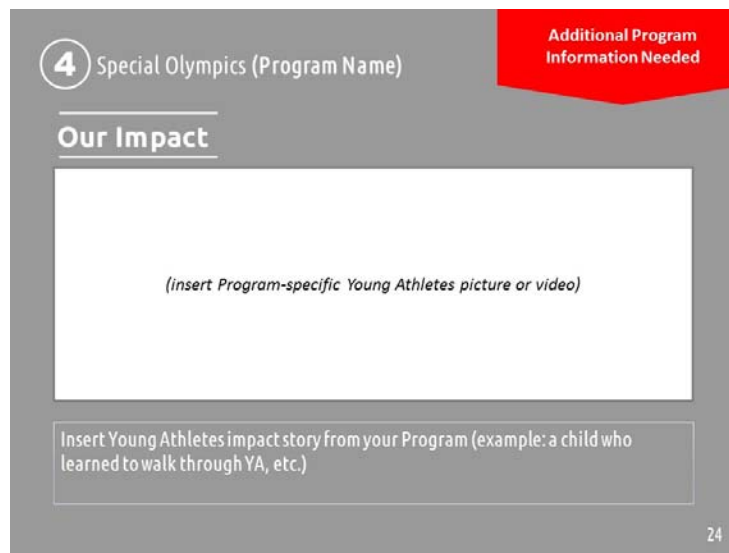
Remember to click on the red flag and press “delete” on your keyboard to remove the flag once a slide is complete.

SLIDE 23—Special Olympics (Program Name)



- **Purpose:** The purpose of this slide is to outline the current status of Young Athletes in your Program or Region.
- **Modifying the Slide:**
 1. Delete the “Program Name” text and replace it with the name of your Program or Region
 2. Delete “insert Program-specific Young Athletes picture.” Insert a picture and place it over the white box
 3. Delete the text in the text box and replace it with Young Athletes information for your Program (example: number of registered Young Athletes, number of trained coaches, etc.)
- **Tips to Consider:**
 - Include statistics that are important or relevant to the audience—if you are presenting to the Ministry of Education be sure to include education statistics.

SLIDE 24—Our Impact



- **Purpose:** The purpose of this slide is to show the impact Young Athletes has had on your Special Olympics Program
- **Modifying the Slide:**
 1. Delete the “insert Program-specific Young Athletes picture or video.” Insert picture or video and place over white box. Delete “Program Name” and replace it with the name of your Program.
 2. Insert a Young Athletes story or quote in the provided text box

SLIDE 25—Our Goals



- **Purpose:** The purpose of this slide is to outline the goals the Special Olympics Program has set for Young Athletes and what is needed to achieve the goals
- **Modifying the Slide:**
 1. Delete the “insert Program-specific Young Athletes picture.” Insert picture and place over white box. Delete “Program Name” and replace it with the name of your Program.
 2. Insert goals in the text box provided

Slide Notes

The following section contains facilitator notes for some slides. The notes include additional content.

The Need

Slide 1: Title Slide

- Facilitator Introductions
- Allow all participants in the room to introduce themselves

Slide 2: Training Overview

- Provide an overview of the four main sections of the training
- The full training should take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete

Slide 3: The Need

- Participating in Special Olympics has been shown to inspire joy, improve self-confidence, bolster family relationships and improve parents' expectations of their children with intellectual disabilities (ID)
- While this is crucial for people with ID of all ages, Special Olympics' traditional sports program is only available to athletes ages eight and over
- Children from impoverished areas who have an intellectual disability are destined to perpetuate the cycle of poverty if they are unable to access, and participate in, early childhood intervention programs like Young Athletes

Slide 9: The Need

- Most individuals with intellectual disabilities do not have access to medical care and do not see a doctor regularly

Slide 10: The Need

- Although society has come a long way with inclusion and respect, we still have a long way to go

Special Olympics Young Athletes

Slide 11: Special Olympics Young Athletes

- Special Olympics is working on tackling these needs through Young Athletes

Slide 14: Skill Development

- There are eight skill areas in Young Athletes that help children learn movements they will use in sports and daily life
- Young Athletes consists of fun and engaging activities that align with the eight skill areas

Slide 15: Where is Happens

- Young Athletes can take place in the home, community or school—led by educators, parents, coaches or volunteers

Slide 16: The Reach

- Young Athletes was started in 2005
- Young Athletes is in all seven Special Olympics regions and 66% of SO Programs conduct YA

The Impact

Slide 17: The Impact

- Young Athletes benefits the child and the family, challenges expectations, forges relationships, fosters support networks, and builds crucial skills for young children

Slide 18: The Impact

- YA's impact has a ripple effect that extends benefits beyond the participants in the program to the family and community
- In this way, YA serves as a catalyst for change in the community and a mechanism to enhance social inclusion for people with ID

Slide 19: Impact on Participants

- Children with ID often experience challenges developing motor skills
- Research conducted by Special Olympics has found that YA improves the motor skills of participants in both U.S. and international contexts
- YA creates an environment where children with ID can play with their peers, perhaps for the first time, while developing motor and social skills

Slide 20: Families

- A 2014 study found that by demonstrating that children with ID can participate in, and benefit from, group activities, parents became more willing to bring their children into social settings
- YA raises parents' expectations of their child with ID

Slide 21: Community

- YA provides the community with an opportunity to learn about ID and to embrace members of the community with ID and their families

Slide 26: Closing Slide

- Use this slide to summarize the information shared and make an "ask" to the audience you are presenting to



