



Special Olympics **Health Promotion**

Clinical Director Manual
Chapter One:
Special Olympics Overview

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Special Olympics and Healthy Athletes

From a backyard summer camp for people with intellectual disabilities to a global movement, Special Olympics has been changing lives and attitudes for 45 years.

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. Special Olympics strives to create a better world by fostering the acceptance and inclusion of all people.

Through the power of sports, people with intellectual disabilities discover new strengths and abilities, skills and success. Special Olympic athletes find joy, confidence and fulfillment -- on the playing field and in life. They also inspire people in their communities and elsewhere to open their hearts to a wider world of human talents and potential.

There are about 200 million people with intellectual disabilities around the world. Special Olympics' goal is to reach out to every one of them – and their families as well. Special Olympics does this through a wide range of [trainings, competitions, health screenings and fund-raising events](#). Special Olympics also creates opportunities for families, community members, local leaders, businesses, law enforcement, celebrities, dignitaries and others to band together to change attitudes and support athletes.

The Special Olympics 2013 Reach Report Summary outlines the scope and global impact of Special Olympics from sports to family leadership activities to health programs. The scope is broad and impact significant. Over 4.4 million athletes at 81,000 competitions in 170 countries are just a few of the achievements in 2013.

What is Healthy Athletes?

Healthy Athletes is a Special Olympics program that provides free health screenings in a fun, welcoming environment that removes the anxiety and trepidation people with intellectual disabilities often experience when faced with a visit to a doctor or dentist. The impact of Healthy Athlete on the health and well-being of Special Olympics athletes around the world is great, in some cases saving lives by discovering unknown health issues or providing health care that otherwise would not be available. Healthy athletes not only serve the athletes but also trains health care professionals who then go back to their practices with increased knowledge of and compassion for people with intellectual

disabilities. The one page flyer Special Olympics Healthy Athletes includes program highlights and accomplishments.

Healthy Athletes' influence is evident with more than 120,000 healthcare professionals trained, free health screenings provided to nearly 1.4 million athletes, and 90,000 free pairs of eyeglasses given to athletes. Healthy Athletes continues to grow each year with help from a global network of volunteers, in-kind donations and other financial support. An overview of the vision, problem, proposed solutions, and partnerships is depicted in the Sustaining Athlete Health Infographic.

There are seven disciplines in Healthy Athletes. Information and resources are available for each on the Special Olympics website.

1. **[Fit Feet](#)** Fit Feet offers podiatric screenings to evaluate ankles, feet, lower extremity biomechanics, and proper shoe and sock gear to participating athletes.
2. **[FUNFitness](#)** FUNfitness is the physical therapy component of Healthy Athletes. Designed to assess and improve an athlete's flexibility, functional strength, aerobic capacity and balance, these screenings also educate participants, families and coaches.
3. **[Health Promotion](#)** 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. Screenings include BMI – Height and Weight, BP – Blood Pressure, BMD - Bone Mineral Density and an athlete interview to assess health related behaviors.
4. **[Healthy Hearing](#)** Special Olympics Healthy Hearing program is a free hearing screening designed to ensure proper audiology care for participating Special Olympics athletes.
5. **[MedFest](#)** MedFest offers the physical exam that all athletes need prior to participating in Special Olympics sports programming.
6. **[Opening Eyes](#)** The Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program is a vision and eye health screening in partnership with the Lions Clubs International Foundation. Led by volunteer vision care professionals, Opening Eyes is able to offer prescription eyewear, sunglasses, and sports goggles to Special Olympics athletes.
7. **[Special Smiles](#)** Special Smiles provides comprehensive oral health care information, including offering free dental screenings and instructions on correct brushing and flossing techniques to participating Special Olympics athletes. This also includes issuing preventative supplies like toothpaste and toothbrushes and fluoride varnish.

What is Special Olympics Health Promotion?

The mission of Special Olympics Health Promotion is to improve the quality of life and long term health of Special Olympics athletes through healthy behaviors, screening and medical referrals when appropriate. Health Promotion is one of seven disciplines within the Special Olympics Healthy Athletes Program. In Health Promotion, health professionals provide health screenings, interactive educational tools, motivational health information, and referrals to health care providers.

Objectives of Health Promotion are to:

1. Encourage and enhance healthy behaviors;
2. Reduce risky behaviors;
3. Improve self-efficacy and self-advocacy;
4. Deliver screening services, and
5. Increase the investment of health promotion leaders for people with intellectual disabilities.

In order to evaluate the health of athletes and the health of our program, and to provide necessary resources to clinical directors across the world, Healthy Athletes Health Promotion focuses on the following core health areas:

- Height/Weight –Body Mass Index Exam
- Blood Pressure Exam
- Bone Density Exam
- Healthy Habits Interview
- Foods that Make Me Healthy
- Sun Safety
- Hydration
- Hand Washing
- Physical Activity
- Tobacco Avoidance
- Referral and check out

Health Promotion is one of the few Healthy Athletes programs that encourage its clinical directors to be responsive to his/her community and to develop his/her own program beyond the core Health Promotion areas. If the local program provides the core health areas, the flexibility was designed to encourage Health Promotion activities which will effectively meet the health needs of all athletes, worldwide.

Additional health topics programs have included are: cardiovascular health, night safety, sleep deprivation, food demonstrations, milk mustache photo booth, ask the doctor (nurse or nutritionist), and community gardening.

About this Manual

This manual will provide you a background about the Special Olympics Healthy Athletes (and Health Promotion) Program and share important resources and tools to help you hold a successful Healthy Athletes Health Promotion event in your community. The following pages provide some high level information and data about the Healthy Athletes program broadly. The remaining chapters of the manuals provide details and steps specific to Health Promotion, and your role as a Clinical Director.




OUR MISSION
Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

The data presented in this document is sourced from the Special Olympics Reach Report, which summarizes the breadth, depth, and impact of the global Special Olympics movement, including data from 170 countries on athletes, coaches, competitions, financial support and other areas.

For more information, or to download a copy of the full 2014 Reach Report, visit SpecialOlympics.org

www.SpecialOlympics.org
[fb.com/SpecialOlympics](https://www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympics)
[@SpecialOlympics](https://twitter.com/SpecialOlympics)
[youtube.com/specialolympicshq](https://www.youtube.com/specialolympicshq)
www.specialolympics.org/blog

2014 REACH REPORT SUMMARY

ATHLETES SERVED
4,532,339

3,287,953
TRAINING & COMPETITION
1,244,386
TRAINING

2013-2014 CHANGE
+2.4%
+105,170

COMPETITIONS
94,339

258 GAMES / DAY
11 GAMES / HOUR

2013-2014 CHANGE
+16.3%
+13,215

VOLUNTEERS
1,482,126

COACHES
376,853
ADULTS
686,841
YOUTH
300,521
LAW ENFORCEMENT
97,000
HEALTH
20,911

ACCREDITED PROGRAMS
221

COUNTRIES
170

ATHLETE CHANGE
YEAR / ATHLETES IN MILLIONS

2014	4.5
2010	3.7
2006	2.5
2000	1.0

ATHLETE LEADERSHIP
ATHLETE LEADERS
39,643

2013-2014 CHANGE
+5.2%
+1,946

YOUTH LEADERSHIP
YOUTH LEADERS (AGE 12-25)
29,783

2013-2014 CHANGE
+40.6%
+8,600

FAMILY LEADERSHIP
FAMILY LEADERS
49,138

REGISTERED FAMILY MEMBERS
663,401

ATHLETE GENDER

FEMALE	39.2%	1,777,130
MALE	60.8%	2,755,209

UNIFIED SPORTS
854,090

ATHLETES
407,863
PARTNERS
446,227

2013-2014 CHANGE
+21.4%

HEALTHY ATHLETES
831

ATHLETE EXAMS
138,775
CLINICAL VOLUNTEERS
20,911

2013-2014 CHANGE
+30 CLINICS
-5 PROGRAMS

PROGRAM LEADERS
PAID PROGRAM DIRECTORS
134

% OF PROGRAMS WITH A PAID PROGRAM DIRECTOR
61%

ATHLETE AGE

0-15 years	33.8%	1,531,464
16-21 years	30.3%	1,371,435
22+	33.0%	1,498,568
3-5 years	1.2%	53,709
6-7 years	1.7%	77,163

YOUTH UNIFIED SPORTS
AGE 12-25
211,593

ATHLETES
109,322
PARTNERS
102,271

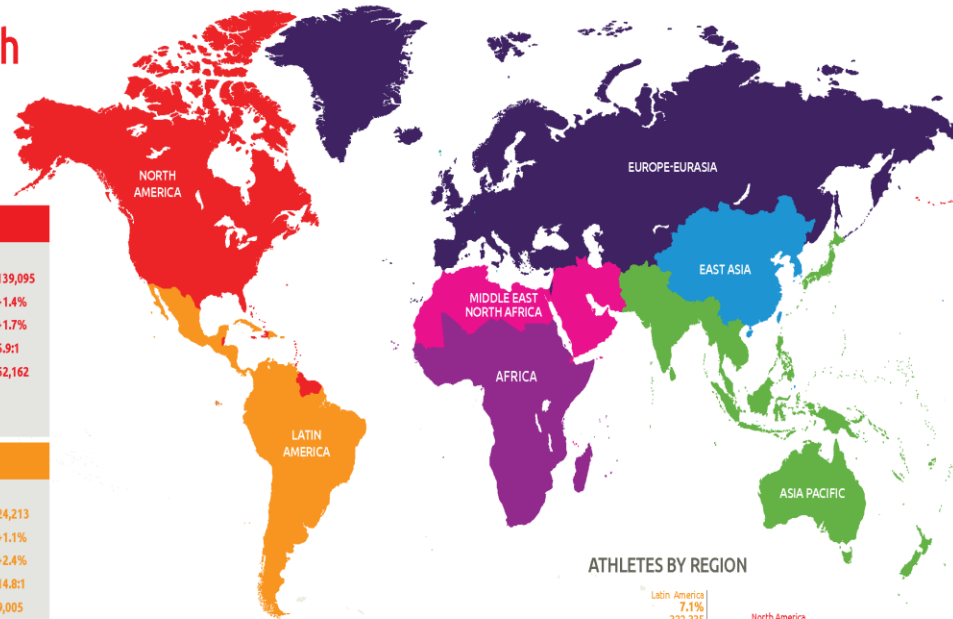
2013-2014 CHANGE
+130.0%

SUPPORT
\$422,319,475

CASH
\$302,991,615
IN-KIND
\$119,327,860

+10.3% vs. 2013 +9.9% vs. 2013

Special Olympics Reach by Global Region



NORTH AMERICA

Athletes.....	727,787	Unified Sports Participation.....	139,095
Competitions.....	19,720	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	+1.4%
Coaches.....	123,032	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+1.7%
Volunteers.....	641,171	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	5.9:1
Support Cash.....	\$189,047,773	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	62,162
Support In-Kind.....	\$71,692,841		

LATIN AMERICA

Athletes.....	322,335	Unified Sports Participation.....	24,213
Competitions.....	6,539	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	+1.1%
Coaches.....	21,846	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+2.4%
Volunteers.....	37,645	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	14.8:1
Support Cash.....	\$3,105,627	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	9,005
Support In-Kind.....	\$1,981,738		

AFRICA

Athletes.....	191,156	Unified Sports Participation.....	25,984
Competitions.....	8,585	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	+15.2%
Coaches.....	17,678	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+11.7%
Volunteers.....	18,301	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	10.8:1
Support Cash.....	\$776,605	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	13,590
Support In-Kind.....	\$492,986		

EUROPE-EURASIA

Athletes.....	519,748	Unified Sports Participation.....	66,618
Competitions.....	16,208	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	-7.2%
Coaches.....	31,847	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+1.3%
Volunteers.....	70,946	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	16.3:1
Support Cash.....	\$21,579,780	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	28,570
Support In-Kind.....	\$2,088,930		

EAST ASIA

Athletes.....	1,236,375	Unified Sports Participation.....	434,142
Competitions.....	6,717	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	+1.3%
Coaches.....	46,652	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+5.3%
Volunteers.....	72,826	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	26.5:1
Support Cash.....	\$2,828,245	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	6,210
Support In-Kind.....	\$153,199		

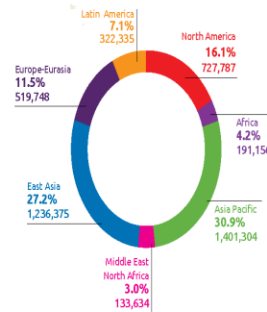
ASIA PACIFIC

Athletes.....	1,401,304	Unified Sports Participation.....	144,673
Competitions.....	35,292	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	+8.2%
Coaches.....	130,237	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+11.9%
Volunteers.....	136,385	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	10.8:1
Support Cash.....	\$9,287,463	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	14,511
Support In-Kind.....	\$14,110,681		

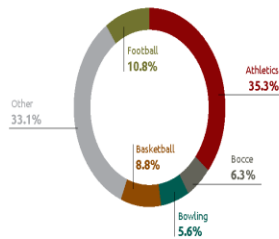
MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA

Athletes.....	133,634	Unified Sports Participation.....	19,365
Competitions.....	1,278	Athlete Growth (2013-14).....	-10.5%
Coaches.....	5,561	Average Athlete Growth (2009-14)...	+1.3%
Volunteers.....	10,088	Athlete to Coach Ratio.....	24.0:1
Support Cash.....	\$1,525,000	Healthy Athletes Exams.....	4,727
Support In-Kind.....	\$330,000		

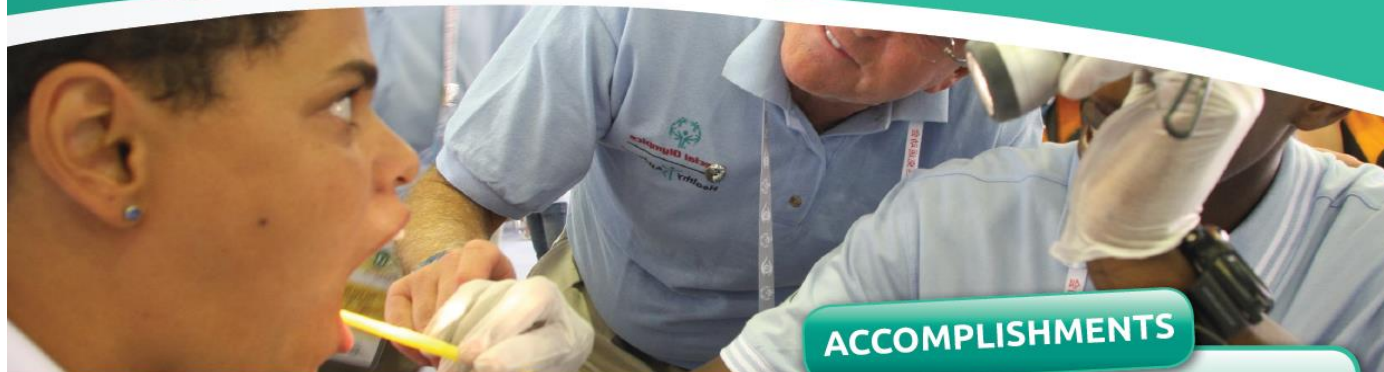
ATHLETES BY REGION



TOP SPORTS



Special Olympics
Healthy Athletes®



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WHAT WE DO:

Healthy Athletes is a Special Olympics program that provides free health examinations in a fun, welcoming environment that removes the anxiety and trepidation people with intellectual disabilities often experience when faced with a visit to a medical professional. Our impact on the health and well-being of Special Olympics athletes around the world is great, in some cases saving lives by discovering unknown health issues or providing health care that otherwise would not be available.

We not only serve these athletes but also train health care professionals who then go back to their practices with increased knowledge of and compassion for people with intellectual disabilities.

Examinations are offered in seven different health areas:



IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT:

Despite a mistaken belief that people with intellectual disabilities receive the same or better health care than others, they typically receive sub-standard care or virtually no health care at all.

Health examinations have found that Special Olympics athletes are at increased risk of secondary health issues:

- 48%** have at least one kind of skin or nail condition
- 37%** have obvious, untreated tooth decay
- 26%** fail hearing tests
- 23%** have low bone density
- 16%** have an eye disease

Largest global public health organization specifically for people with intellectual disabilities

Provided more than 1.4 million examinations to Special Olympics athletes worldwide

Trained more than 120,000 health care professionals in the specific health care concerns of people with intellectual disabilities

Events in more than 125 countries

Given away more than 100,000 pairs of eyeglasses free of charge

Healthy Athletes Software (HAS) is the largest database of health data for people with intellectual disabilities in existence

Contributed to establishment of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry and the signing of the Special Olympics Sports and Empowerment Act of 2004

(Data through 12/31/2013)

Special Olympics Health Promotion



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.

IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT:

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

- 60%** adult athletes are overweight or obese
- 22%** have low bone density
- 29%** children and adolescents are overweight or obese

62,469 examinations performed in 69 participating countries.

GOALS:

1. 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.
2. Increase awareness of and response to infectious diseases such as Malaria, Tuberculosis, and HIV in developing nations.
3. Develop a body of knowledge about the overall health of children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

CONTACT:

Peyton Purcell: Senior Manager, Health Promotion - E-mail: ppurcell@specialolympics.org
Alice Lenihan: Senior Global Clinical Advisor - E-mail: lenihanaj@aol.com
Mary Pittaway: Global Clinical Advisor - E-mail: mpitt59802@aol.com

In The Field

Programs around the world often must adjust to local situations when implementing Healthy Athletes events, but in Malawi, the organizers of a program funded through a Health Promotion community-based grant took creative problem-solving to new heights when teaching hygiene at the Kalema Primary School. By inverting plastic, water-filled Coke bottles and creating a tap, they illustrated hand-washing techniques to more than 40 Special Olympics athletes and their parents and coaches, despite no 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 intestinal, 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.



Sustaining Athlete Health



VISION

A world where every person with an intellectual disability & their family and/or caregivers understands what they need to do in order to optimize their health, & where accessible information, resources, systems & policies exist at the individual, community, national & global levels that support them in realizing healthy & productive lives.

THE PROBLEM

<h3>The Issue</h3> <p>Up to 200,000,000 people with intellectual disabilities are denied access to quality health services.</p>	<h3>Our Role</h3> <p>Promote the overall well-being of people with intellectual disabilities via programs that ensure ongoing access to quality, community-based healthcare services, highlighted by free health exams and a year-round focus on health and wellness.</p>	<h3>Successes</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1.4 million exams ✓ 7 healthcare disciplines ✓ 120,000 professionals trained ✓ New data for research & awareness ✓ Increased access to care through the launch of Healthy Communities 	<h3>Limitations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Episodic exams (at games only) ! 3.5% athlete penetration rate ! Static snapshot data system ! Limited engagement of coaches, families & community partners ! Low awareness of Special Olympics' role as the largest global public health organization dedicated to people with ID
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THE SOLUTION

1 Infuse expanded health services into all of Special Olympics' worldwide, year round events & programming.

<p>> More Exams in More Places</p>	<p>> New Programming</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>+ MALARIA</td> <td>+ WASH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+ FITNESS</td> <td>+ HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+ MENTAL HEALTH</td> <td>+ TB, HIV/AIDS</td> </tr> </table>	+ MALARIA	+ WASH	+ FITNESS	+ HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS	+ MENTAL HEALTH	+ TB, HIV/AIDS	<p>> More SO Advocates (athletes, coaches, families)</p>
+ MALARIA	+ WASH							
+ FITNESS	+ HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS							
+ MENTAL HEALTH	+ TB, HIV/AIDS							

2 Create local Healthy Community networks of health providers engaged in Special Olympics' health work & committed to providing ongoing health resources & services to people with intellectual disabilities & their families outside of Special Olympics.

<p>> Foster Community Partnerships</p>	<p>> Activate at Special Olympics</p>	<p>> Catalyze Access to Community Healthcare Services</p>
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3 Create global Healthy Communities coalition of leading businesses, NGOs & governments that support Special Olympics' health work & increase access to health resources & services through macro-level action.

4 Develop world class bio-informatics capability to monitor longitudinal health outcomes for people with intellectual disabilities to measure progress, inform public policy leaders, and demand health justice worldwide.