



Special Olympics
ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT MODEL

UNLOCK THE SUCCESS!

***Special
Olympics***



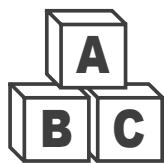
What is the Special Olympics ADM?

The Special Olympics Athlete Development Model (ADM) is a support plan designed to empower each of our athletes so they can experience the joy of reaching their full potential. The model promotes motor and skill development as well as health and fitness, while preparing athletes for competition at all levels.



How is the Special Olympics ADM Structured?

The Special Olympics ADM is based on a four-stage progression. It recognizes that not all athletes will move through the stages at the same pace and allows athletes to train at a level that works for them.



At the **Fundamental Stage**, the focus is on the development of athletes' basic motor skills, fitness, and good nutritional habits in a fun way. It includes:

- > Fun activities with family, volunteers, and Unified partners
- > Activities in a gym, pool, or outdoors
- > Structured activities that focus on balance, coordination, speed, agility, and flexibility
- > Training opportunities to acquire essential sports skills



The **Learning to Train Stage** takes athletes to the next level by focusing on specific sports training. It includes:

- > The conversion of skills learned in the Fundamental stage into sport specific skills
- > The offering of a variety of sport activities focusing on strength, endurance, and balance
- > Goal setting and evaluation with a focus on fun
- > Awareness of the importance and impact of training
- > An environment conducive to competition preparation



The **Training to Compete Stage** raises the bar, as athletes focus on one or two sports and develop tactics, technique, strength, and endurance. It includes:

- > Mental preparation for training and competition
- > A focus on rules, planning, goal setting, and evaluation
- > A move toward the athlete becoming responsible for their training and competition preparation
- > Opportunities for athletes to also compete in settings outside of Special Olympics



The **Recreation Stage** allows athletes to share the benefits of friendship and fitness through sports with a focus on participation and less emphasis on winning. It includes:

- > The ability to choose from a variety of activities in their communities
- > An environment that is fun and encouraging

ADM Targets

The Special Olympics ADM is made up of structured targets and includes standardized coach certification at each stage. It also emphasizes the importance of integrating families, caregivers, and Unified partners in the athlete's development. Specific targets offer athletes the following:

- > A minimum of two training opportunities per week
- > The opportunity to participate in two or more competitions per sport they are training for
- > The provision of quality training by certified coaches
- > The opportunity to be challenged
- > Equal respect for athletes training to participate and those committed to competition
- > Tools to select the sport in which they have the best potential for success
- > Appropriate competition opportunities
- > Support for all ages and abilities
- > Tools for introducing physical activities at an early age
- > Tools to allow athletes to take ownership of their fitness and development

Coach Certification

The Special Olympics ADM recommends standardized coach certification that is based on the following:

- > SO Orientation
- > Coaching the SO Athlete
- > Specific Sports Coaching
- > Mentorship
- > Endorsement

In addition, each stage recommends specific requirements for coach certification.





Goal of the Special Olympics ADM

The Special Olympics ADM empowers athletes beyond simply training with their coaches. ADM empowers athletes by building confidence and allowing them to take control of their own fitness, skills development, health, and well-being.

The joy realized by athletes through Special Olympics ADM is empowering. By following the ADM, we can unlock success for all our athletes worldwide whether their goal is fitness, fun, or top performance.

Unlock the success!

SOI's ADM – Lifelong sports experience

Stages >				
Components v	Fundamental	Learning to Train	Competition	Recreation
Training Sessions per week	2-3	2-4	3-6	2-6
Sports per year	3-5	2-3	1-2	4-8
Competitions per quarter	N/A	2-3	3-5	2
Focus	Fun activities with focus on Motor Development, Balance, Coordination, Speed, Agility, Flexibility & Healthy Habits	Learning Sport Skills, Goal Setting, Strength, Endurance, Balance & Mental Preparedness	Focus on 1-2 Sports, Training & Competition Preparation	Activities that achieve fitness & enjoyment
Type of Competitions	Local level (Young Athletes and MATP demonstrations)	Local level	All levels including high performance athletes (4-6 times per season)	Local/Community events, Unified Sports® Recreation
Coach Certification	SOI certification standards	SOI certification standards	SOI certification standards & University/Federation sports specific certification	Meet SOI General Orientation & familiarity coaching within the ID community
Coach Focus (1 or more coaches)	Safe environment, fun and family environment, basic sport & social skills	Safe environment, multi-skill development & sport rules	Safe environment, goal setting, injury prevention, development of individual sport skills & competition planning	Safe environment, inclusive recreation & promotion of healthy habits
Unified Sports®	Fundamentals applicable to Unified Sports	Training applicable to Unified Sports	Competition applicable to Unified Sports Competitive & Unified Sports Player Development models	Recreation applicable to Unified Sports
Tools				
Special Olympics Strive Move. Measure. Motivate.	Special Olympics Strive. Promote health/screening & fun	Special Olympics Strive. Promote health/screening, fun & personal responsibility for health	Promote health/screening & personal responsibility for health	Athletes promote SO & Special Olympics Strive with focus on fun fitness
Technology (SO Sports Resources)	Special Olympics Strive. Assessments. Track training, nutrition & health info	Special Olympics Strive. Assessments and ATA. Enhance coach/athlete communication. Track goals, training, performance & health/nutrition	Special Olympics Strive. Assessments and ATA. Enhance coach/athlete communication, injury prevention & mental training. Track goals, training, performance & nutrition	Special Olympics Strive. Assessments and ATA. Enhance coach/athlete communication & social networking. Track goals, training, performance & health/nutrition
Best Practice	Develop best practices/drills/games based on research and share via social media (samples available)	Align with National organizations' best practices and share via social media (samples available)	Increase competition opportunities and integrate mainstream sport. Share via social media	Providing support to make recreational participation decisions and share via social media



Support				
Family and Caregivers	Encourage home training, physical activity and nutrition while interacting with other families	Provide motivation, support, home training, transportation, coaching and nutrition.	Provide home equipment, motivation, nutrition and support	Be involved and act as Unified partners
Community Partners	Health care providers, schools, organizations and clubs	Learning and volunteer organizations	Learning institutions, sports clubs and Federations	Government agencies, sports, learning and volunteer organizations
Funding Sources	Government agencies, sponsors and grants	Government agencies, sponsors and grants	Regional offices, government agencies, sponsors and grants	Regional offices, government agencies, sponsors and grants
Awareness	Media, family networks, social media, demonstrations and ambassadors	Media, family networks, demonstrations, social media, ambassadors and sports organizations	Media, family networks, demonstrations, social media, ambassadors and sports organizations	Media, family networks, demonstrations, social media, ambassadors and sports organizations
SO athletes in Other Roles	Volunteering in meaningful roles	Athletes as officials, coaches and Project Unify	Athletes as officials, coaches, Project Unify, mentors and SO board members	Athletes as officials, coaches, Project Unify, mentors and SO board members

More information can be found with links to materials at:

www.specialolympics.org/sports.aspx





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