



Special Olympics
Strong Minds

Clinical Director Manual

Version 2.0

Special Olympics



SPECIAL OLYMPICS HEALTHY ATHLETES OVERVIEW

What is Healthy Athletes?

Healthy Athletes is a Special Olympics program that provides free health screenings in a fun, welcoming environment. The impact of Healthy Athletes on the health and wellbeing of Special Olympics athletes around the world is significant, in some cases saving lives by discovering unknown health issues or providing health care that otherwise would not be available. Healthy Athletes not only serves the athletes but also trains healthcare professionals who return to their clinical practices with increased knowledge of and compassion for people with intellectual disabilities.

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

Fit Feet (Podiatry): Fit Feet offers podiatric screenings to evaluate ankles, feet, lower extremity biomechanics, and proper shoe and sock gear to participating athletes.

FUNfitness (Physiotherapy): FUNFitness is designed to assess and improve an athlete's flexibility, functional strength, aerobic capacity and balance. These screenings also educate participants, families, and coaches.

Health Promotion (Preventative Medicine): 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.

Healthy Hearing (Audiology): Healthy Hearing is a free hearing screening designed to ensure proper audiology care for participating Special Olympics athletes.

Healthy Young Athletes (Pediatrics): Healthy Young Athletes is a holistic pediatric and developmental screening offered to children 2–7 years old, with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities.

MedFest® (General Medicine): MedFest® offers the physical exam that all athletes need prior to participating in Special Olympics sports programming.

Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Foundation Opening Eyes® (Vision Care): Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Foundation Opening Eyes® is a vision and eye health screening, which is supported through a partnership between Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International Foundation. Led by volunteer vision care professionals, Opening Eyes offers prescription eyewear, sunglasses, and sports goggles to Special Olympics athletes.

Special Smiles® (Dentistry): Special Smiles® provides comprehensive oral health care information, free dental screenings, and instructions on correct brushing and flossing techniques. This also includes issuing preventative supplies like toothbrushes, toothpaste, and fluoride varnish.

Strong Minds: Strong Minds is a mental health screening and interactive learning activity focused on developing adaptive coping skills.

STRONG MINDS OVERVIEW

What is Strong Minds?

Strong Minds provides mental health screenings for Special Olympics athletes and helps strengthen their coping skills. Competition provides a natural opportunity to develop positive and active strategies for maintaining emotional wellness under stress, such as thinking positive thoughts, releasing stress, and connecting with others.

What Happens at a Strong Minds Event?

Athletes complete mental health screening questionnaires and, if screening tools indicate the athlete may be at-risk for mental health challenges, athletes are referred to community providers. Athletes also learn coping strategies to reduce stress and work with volunteers to develop a plan to use these tools in competition and in daily life.

Goals of Strong Minds

- Screen mental health of Special Olympics athletes
- Connect athletes identified to be at-risk for mental health challenges to community providers
- Increase athlete and family awareness about active coping strategies that can be used in competition and in daily life
- Support athletes to identify stress management techniques and coping strategies that they enjoy and will use
- Provide resources on positive coping strategies for athletes, coaches, and caregivers

Strong Minds Clinical Director Role

Strong Minds Clinical Directors are licensed mental health professionals who are responsible for working with their local Special Olympics program to coordinate and run a Strong Minds event in their region. The role of a Strong Minds Clinical Director includes, but is not limited to:

Determining Event Opportunities

Identifying and scheduling the best opportunities to provide Strong Minds events. This is a joint effort between the Clinical Director and their local Special Olympics program.

Recruiting Volunteer Health Professionals and Students

Clinical Directors are the best people to help identify and recruit health volunteers to work with Strong Minds, because they know their community and its local health care professionals. Potential volunteers may be identified from the following sources:

- Private Practices
- Universities/Colleges/Schools
- Health and Professional Associations
- Medical Facilities
- Government Medical Facilities (Military/VA/State/National/Local)
- State or Local Public Health Agencies

Obtaining Equipment and Supplies

Clinical Directors work with their local Special Olympics program to obtain the necessary equipment and supplies to run a Strong Minds event.

Volunteer Management and Event Coordination

The Clinical Director must train both clinical and general volunteers, which may occur before the event or on the day of the event. On the day of the event, the Clinical Director supervises the event set up, delivery of screening and referrals, interactive activities, and event break down. The Clinical Director serves as the primary supervisor on site, helping to manage volunteers and run the Strong Minds event.

How to Use this Manual

The Clinical Director is expected to read and understand all information contained in this manual prior to implementing a Strong Minds event. The Clinical Director should also go through all information pertaining to individual stations and activities with volunteers during training. It is recommended that all volunteers review each station and activity briefly to understand the overall goals and activities provided in each station. Volunteers should spend more time reading through and familiarizing themselves with the stations or activities they will be facilitating. It is helpful to have at least one copy of the manual available at each station or activity, for reference.

Checklist for Clinical Directors

This checklist serves as a general guide for the activities of the Strong Minds Clinical Director before, during, and after an event:

Prior to an Event:

- Familiarize yourself with this Strong Minds Clinical Director Manual.
- Recruit volunteers for the event.
- Provide orientation and training to the volunteers. Training should include information about the goals of Healthy Athletes and Strong Minds, how to interact with athletes and people with intellectual disability, how to facilitate stations and activities, paperwork duties, and when to consult with the Clinical Director during the event.
- Work with a Special Olympics program staff to obtain materials and provide other logistical support for the event.
- Become educated about the emergency protocols that are in place in the event of athlete disclosure of a mental health emergency.
- Create a local/regional list of community-based resources for referrals that may emerge. This list must include emergency supports and counseling/psychological supports. Leisure/community engagement and social support resources are also recommended.

During an Event:

- Greet volunteers and provide a refresher of the day's activities. Oversee volunteer orientation to each station.
- Facilitate delivery of the Strong Minds mental health screening stations and coping strategy activities.
- Oversee and assist with group management and staffing needs while giving volunteers breaks, managing flow of athletes through the stations, and minimizing wait time. Adjust the station and activity layout as needed.
- Manage any emergency situations that may arise.

After an Event:

- Assist with packing up materials and breaking down the event.
- Ask volunteers to provide feedback.
- Express gratitude to volunteers, either verbally or with a thank you note or certificate.

STRONG MINDS STATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Station Overview & Layout

Strong Minds includes 5 Stations and 5 Activities. Each of the Stations and Activities has a title and an associated icon (see below).



Station 1: Check In



Station 2: CORE-LD30



Station 3: Warwick Wellness



Station 4: Check Out



Activity 1: Stress and You



Activity 2: Strong Messages



Activity 3: Strong Breathing



Activity 4: Strong Stretching



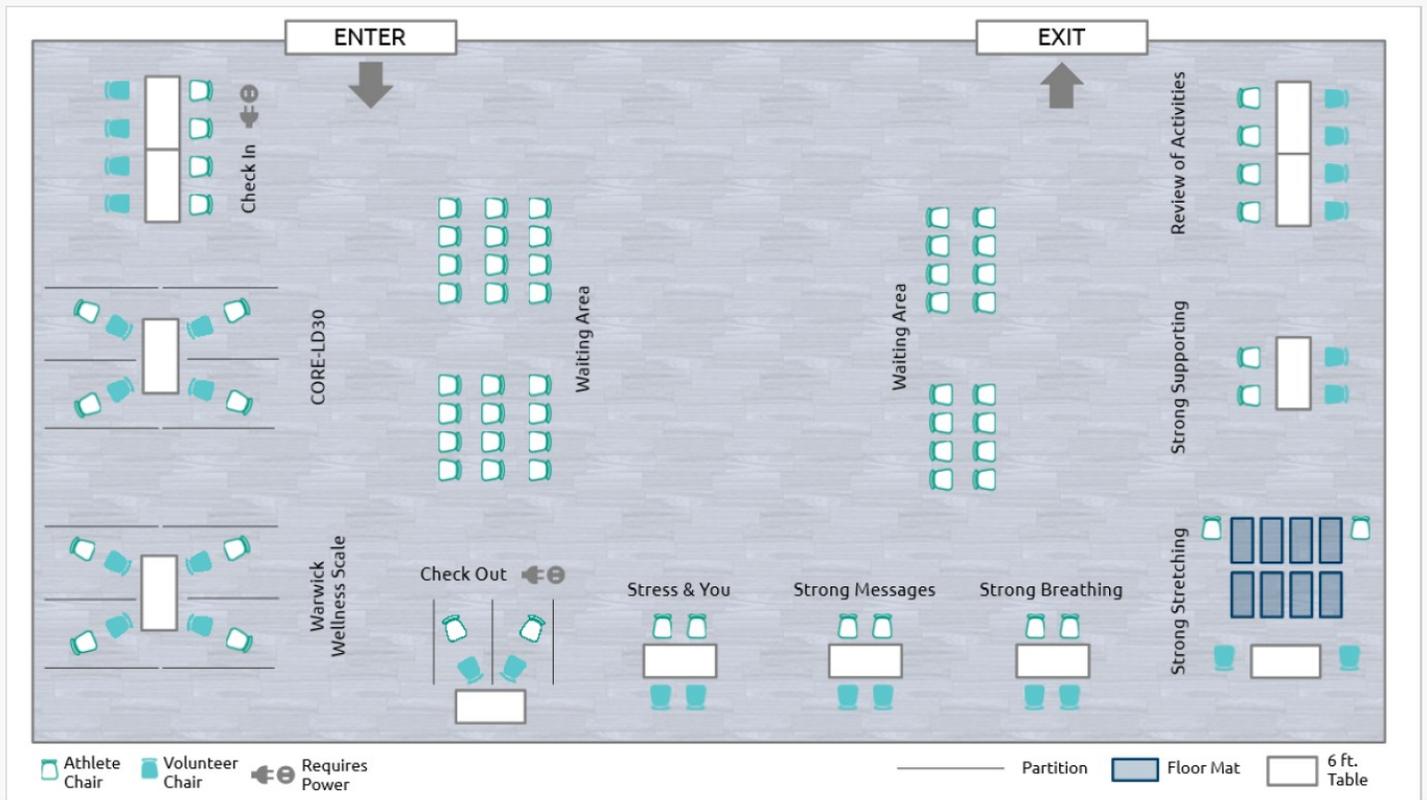
Activity 5: Strong Supporting



Station 5: Review of Activities

Sample Layout

The layout of the stations is very flexible. Successful events have been held in a variety of settings. Arranging the stations in a U-formation is recommended. Here is a sample layout, for reference:



Supplies and Supporting Documents

Please refer to the Strong Minds resources page (<https://resources.specialolympics.org/health/strong-minds>) for the most up-to-date versions of supporting documents, including the most updated Equipment and Supplies List. A summary of materials to be printed are outlined below.

Print Materials

Be sure to print the supplies below for your event. Supplies indicated as “laminated copies” below should be printed and laminated for continued use. Supplies indicated as “1 per athlete” should be printed but not laminated. These will be distributed to athletes during the event.

File Title	Station or Activity	Quantity	Note
Station and Activity Signs	One sign per Station or Activity	1	Required. Programs can use the provided Station and Activity signs or create their own.
CORE-LD30 Visual Support	Station 2: CORE-LD30	1 laminated copy per volunteer at this Station.	For example, if you can screen a maximum of 4 athletes at a time at this station, you will need 4 laminated copies of the visual supports. Booklets should be spiral bound or hole punched and connected with metal ring(s).
CORE-LD30 Scoring Guide	Station 2: CORE-LD30	1 per athlete	Required if using paper forms. If using tablets, these are not needed.
Warwick Wellness Visual Support	Station 3: Warwick Wellness	1 laminated copy per volunteer at this Station.	For example, if you can screen a maximum of 4 athletes at a time at this station, you will need 4 laminated master copies of the visual supports.
Strong Minds Strategies for Stress Handout	Station 4: Check Out	1 per athlete	Required
HAS Form 2.0	Station 1: Check In	1 per athlete	Required if using paper forms. If using tablets, these are not needed.
Activity Guide	Station 1: Check In	1 per athlete	Strongly recommended. Spiral bound or hole punched in corner with metal ring.
Picture Boards	Station 1: Check In	1 per athlete	Optional
Stretching Handout	Activity 4: Strong Stretching or Station 5: Review of Activities	2 laminated copies and/or 1 per athlete	Optional
Exercise Handout	Activity 4: Strong Stretching or Station 5: Review of Activities	2 laminated copies and/or 1 per athlete	Optional
Coach’s Playbook	Station 1: Check In	1 per coach or team	Optional

Station 1: Check-In

Goals:

- To greet the athletes and welcome them to Strong Minds
- To provide an overview of Strong Minds, including the Stations and Activities
- To complete the Healthy Athlete Software 2.0 Form 2.0 (HAS 2.0 Form) Check In Station (page 1 if using paper forms)

Volunteers: 1-2 clinical or general volunteers.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1 athlete.

Equipment and Supplies:

Check In Sign

If using tablets:

Approx. 20 tablets (depending on number of athletes expected)

If using paper forms instead of tablets:

Healthy Athlete Software 2.0 Form (HAS 2.0 Form) – 1 per athlete

Approx. 20 clipboards

Pens

Set Up:

- 6 ft (2 meters) banquet table(s) should be arranged with volunteer chairs on one side and athlete chairs on the other.
- Display the Check In sign somewhere visible to direct athletes where to begin.

Steps:

1. Greet the athlete and family/coach, introduce yourself, and welcome them to Strong Minds.
2. Introduce the goals of Strong Minds and see if the athlete is interested in participating in the Stations and Activities.
 - a. Explain that everyone has times when they feel stressed out or worried. Let the athlete know that during Strong Minds, we will ask them lots of questions so we can learn about their thoughts and feelings. Then, they will do different activities to learn how to keep their minds strong and handle stress better. Ask them if that's something they are interested in doing.
 - b. If the athlete is not interested, get more information and validate the athlete's feelings. Listen to the reasons why the athlete is not interested. Gently encourage exploration of the stations and/or activities. Answer any questions or address any reservations that the athlete may have. If the athlete is still not interested, they can choose not to go through the stations or activities.
3. If the athlete would like to participate, give them information about next steps. Let them know you will be asking them some questions, they will wait their turn, and then they will meet with other

volunteers who will ask them more questions and lead them through activities.

4. Complete HAS Form 2.0 Check In Station with the athlete (page 1 on the paper form)
5. After you ask the Check In questions, direct the athlete to the next station, CORE-LD30. Athletes should bring their tablet (or HAS 2.0 paper form and clipboard if using paper forms) with them to the next station.

Station 2:

Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE-LD30)

Note: It is recommended that Stations 2 and 3 be combined.

Goal:

- To complete the first part of the mental health screening - the Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE-LD30) questionnaire (HAS 2.0 Form, page 2 if using paper forms)

Volunteers: 2-4 clinical volunteers - mental health professionals or graduate students with experience conducting clinical interviews or administering questionnaires to patients or clients in a clinical setting. This does not include undergraduate students, general volunteers, or non-clinical volunteers.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1 athlete

Equipment and Supplies:

CORE-LD30 Visual Supports (one set per volunteer, ideally laminated)

CORE-LD30 Station Sign

Partitions or dividers to place between sets of chairs create semi-private, 1:1 spaces to conduct the interview

Noise machine or “white noise” app on a phone or tablet to help with privacy and confidentiality

If using paper forms instead of tablets:

CORE-LD30 Scoring Guide – 1 per athlete

Clipboards (1 per volunteer)

Pens

Station Set Up:

- Put the noise machine or phone/tablet with white noise app on a small table or on the floor.
- Arrange sets of chairs facing each other, one chair for the volunteer and one chair for the athlete. Optionally, a chair for a coach or caregiver can be added, if needed. Chairs should be arranged so athletes are not facing one another.
- Divide sets of chairs using partitions to create a semi-private spaces.
- Refer to the sample layout for clarification.

Steps:

1. Greet the athlete and family/coach (if applicable) and introduce the station. Let the athletes know you will be asking them some questions about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
2. Briefly discuss limits of confidentiality. [Note to volunteers: Athletes and/or their legal guardians have already consented for athletes to participate in health screenings]. Explain to the athlete that their answers are confidential, which means they are private and most of the time you won't talk to anyone about what they say. Let them know there are only a few times when you will tell

someone what they said, like if the athlete is in danger or someone else might be in danger. Make sure the athlete understands and agrees.

3. If the athlete agrees to participate, let them know you are going to start asking the questions. Let the athlete know they can skip any question or ask for help if they don't know the answer. Let them know there are no right or wrong answers, because we are just trying to find out more about them.
4. Present the athlete with the visual support page that says "3 Point Scale" at the top. Explain the rating scale to the athlete. Athletes can respond to questions verbally or by pointing.
5. Then, show the picture for the first item and ask the question. Please ask the question word-for-word, at first. If needed, you and/or a caregiver or coach can help the athlete by rewording the question. Provide the athlete with positive feedback after a response.
6. Indicate whether visual supports/prompts were utilized when conducting the questionnaire.
7. If the athlete does not understand a question despite rewording, or if the athlete does not know the answer or does not want to answer the question for any reason, please mark "Did not answer" and proceed to the next question. Do not pressure the athlete to come up with a response.
8. If an athlete is unable to complete the questionnaire at all:
 - a. Please mark "Did not answer" for all 30 questions
 - b. Indicate the reason(s) why the athlete was not able to complete the questionnaire under the "Unable to test because athlete:" question at the end of this section.
6. After completing the questionnaire, direct the athlete to the next station, Warwick Wellness Scale. Athletes should bring their tablet (or HAS 2.0 paper form and clipboard if using paper forms) with them to the next station.
7. A note if using paper forms: The CORE-LD30 will need to be scored by hand to determine whether a referral to a community provider is recommended during Check Out. This can be completed in a few ways. (1) The clinical volunteer may be able to score the measure on the fly as they are conducting the interview. (2) The clinical volunteer may be able to score the measure after the athlete proceeds to the next station, before a new athlete arrives. (3) Additional volunteers may be needed to score the questionnaire. Scoring can be completed by clinical or general volunteers. Please refer to the Strong Minds Resources Page for the most up-to-date CORE-LD30 Scoring Guide.

Station 3: Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale Intellectual Disability Version (Warwick Wellness Scale)

***Note: It is recommended that Stations 2 and 3 be combined.**

Goal:

- To complete the second part of the mental health screening – the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale Intellectual Disability Version (Warwick Wellness Scale) questionnaire (HAS 2.0 Form, page 3 if using paper forms)

Volunteers: 2-4 clinical volunteers - mental health professionals or advanced graduate students with experience conducting mental health intakes with supervision. This does not include undergraduate students, general volunteers, or non-clinical volunteers.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1 athlete

Equipment and Supplies:

Warwick Wellness Visual Supports (one set per volunteer, ideally laminated)

Warwick Wellness Station Sign

Partitions or dividers to place between sets of chairs create semi-private, 1:1 spaces to conduct the interview

Noise machine or “white noise” app on a phone or tablet to help with privacy and confidentiality

If using paper forms instead of tablets:

Clipboards

Pens

Steps

1. This station proceeds in much the same way as the CORE-LD30 Station.
2. Greet the athlete and family/coach and introduce the station. Let the athletes know you will be asking them some questions about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
3. Briefly explain that the same limits of confidentiality discussed in the previous station apply to this questionnaire as well.
4. If the athlete agrees to participate, let them know you are going to start asking the questions. Let the athlete know they can skip any question or ask for help if they don't know the answer. Let them know there are no right or wrong answers. We are just trying to find out more about them.
5. Present the athlete with the visual support. Explain the rating scale to the athlete. Athletes can respond to questions verbally or by pointing.
6. The first two questions are practice questions to make sure the athlete understands the new rating scale. These practice questions are optional and can be administered or skipped based on whether the volunteer feels it is necessary.
7. This questionnaire does not have visual supports for each item. Please ask the question word-for-word, at first. If needed, you and/or a caregiver or coach can help the athlete by rewording the question. Provide the athlete with positive feedback after a response.

8. Indicate whether visual supports/prompts were utilized when conducting the questionnaire.
9. If the athlete does not understand a question despite rewording, or if the athlete does not know the answer or does not want to answer the question for any reason, please mark “Did not answer” and proceed to the next question. Do not pressure the athlete to come up with a response.
10. If an athlete is unable to complete the questionnaire at all:
 - a. Please mark “Did not answer” for all 14 questions
 - b. Indicate the reasons why the athlete was not able to complete the questionnaire under the “Unable to test because athlete:” question at the end of this section.
8. After completing the questionnaire, direct the athlete to the first Activity, Stress and You.
 - a. If using tablets, athletes should *not* bring their tablets with them, because tablets are not needed for the activities. Tablets should be collected at Station 4: Check Out and periodically brought by volunteers back to Station 1: Check In.
 - b. If using HAS 2.0 paper forms, it is recommended that volunteers bring the HAS 2.0 paper forms to Station 5: Review of Education and alphabetize by athlete first name.
9. There is no need to score this questionnaire during the screening.
10. Direct the athlete to Station 4: Check-Out.

Station 4: Check-Out

Goals:

- To complete page 4 of the HAS Form 2.0 and to provide appropriate referrals when needed.

Volunteers: 1-2 clinical volunteers. Must have strong clinical mental health background and experience in communicating information about mental health referrals to athletes and caregivers. The facilitator of this station may be the Clinical Director themselves or an experienced clinician working closely with the Clinical Director during the event.

Equipment and Supplies:

HAS Form 2.0 or tablet

Strong Minds Strategies for Stress handout – 1 per athlete

Strong Minds Activity Guide

Resources and Referrals Handout/List

If using paper forms:

CORE-LD30 Scoring Guide

Pens

Clipboards

Steps:

1. Greet the athletes and ask them about their experiences.
2. Review the athlete's HAS Form 2.0 to determine the appropriate level of follow-up needed. An athlete will require one of the following: no mental health-related follow up, routine follow up, a non-urgent referral, or an urgent referral. Ultimately, this final decision rests solely with the Clinical Director. The current referral guidance is on the Strong Minds Resource Page but can be implemented at the discretion of the Clinical Director and should not be taken as prescriptive or diagnostic in any way.
3. All non-urgent or urgent referrals should be confirmed with the Clinical Director prior to providing information to the athlete and/or caregiver.
4. Direct the athlete to complete activities (if desired) or thank them for coming and direct them to exit the screening.

Activity 1: Stress and You

***Note: All activities are optional and are not required for a Strong Minds screening to be considered completed. Athletes are encouraged to complete all activities in the order they are presented here. However, they can complete as many or as few as they would like.**

Goals:

- To define “stress” for the athletes
- To explore what causes stress for each individual
- To show how stress impacts the body and mind
- To introduce a tension-and-release exercise as a coping strategy for stress

Volunteers: 1-2 general or clinical volunteers. No previous clinical experience needed.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1-3 athletes.

Equipment and Supplies:

Stress balls (1 per athlete)

Steps:

1. [Note to volunteer: The information and wording below is just a suggestion. Feel free to engage the athlete in a conversation about stress and demonstrate the activity however feels comfortable and natural for you and the athlete.]
2. Greet the athlete and introduce the topic. Explain that you are going to talk to the athlete about stress and show them one of the ways to make them feel better if they are stressed out.
3. Engage the athlete in a brief discussion about stress. Use examples to show that some stressors are commonly experienced and others may be unique to a particular person. Let them know that everyone feels stressed out sometimes, but it’s not always a bad thing, like if you have a big project or before competition.
4. Listen, elaborate, and share information, as appropriate. Point out stressors that are familiar and commonly experienced (e.g., sports, school, work, friends, siblings). Discuss how different people find some things more stressful than others.
5. Explain that stress impacts how we feel in our bodies. Built-up stress can make you feel tense and unhappy. Let them know we might feel dizzy, have difficulty breathing, feel our hearts beating faster, or have an upset stomach. Stress can also make our bodies feel tense, which makes it hard to feel calm and relaxed. For a lot of us, we have to calm our bodies before we can calm our feelings.
6. Remind the athlete that sometimes we cannot control the cause of our stress, but we can do things to help ourselves feel better.
7. Give the athlete a stress ball and demonstrate a brief tense-and-release exercise. Coach the athlete to try this exercise a few times. Praise effort.
8. Review that these kinds of tense-and-release exercises can be done anywhere, with or without a stress ball. Encourage the athlete to try it the next time they feel nervous before a competition or stressed out by something.
9. Explain the Strategies for Stress handout to the athlete. Ask them to check the green circle if they enjoyed the activity and may want to use it again in everyday life or red circle if they did not. Provide assistance, as needed.

Activity 2: Strong Messages

Goals:

- To show that we can use music, photos, and other positive reminders to feel better when we are under stress.
- To show that thinking positive thoughts can improve our confidence and ability to handle stress.

Volunteers: 1-2 general or clinical volunteers. No previous clinical experience needed.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1-3 athletes.

Equipment and Supplies:

Art supplies (markers and paper or index cards)

Sample positive statements and/or pictures

Stickers with positive messages (Optional)

Activity Set-Up: Hang examples of positive messages and pictures on the wall or spread them out on the table.

Steps:

1. Greet the athlete and introduce the topic.
2. Demonstrate the power of positive messages.
3. Using index cards or paper, help the athlete come up with positive statements about themselves. They can write them down, tell you them verbally and you can write them down, and/or use positive message stickers (if available).
4. Remind the athlete to check the green or red circle on the Strategies for Stress Worksheet. Provide assistance, as needed.

Activity 3: Strong Breathing

Goals:

- To show that the way we breathe impacts how calm or nervous we feel. Breathing slowly and deeply and from the stomach has a self-calming effect.
- To demonstrate that breathing is a powerful and portable tool that we can use anytime, anywhere to help ourselves feel better when we are nervous or stressed.

Volunteers: 1-2 general or clinical volunteers. No previous clinical experience needed.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1-3 athletes.

Equipment and Supplies:

Pinwheels

NOTE: The Strong Breathing station may not be appropriate for individuals with certain medical conditions, such as epilepsy. Please either skip or modify the activity based on needs of the athlete.

Steps:

1. Greet the athlete and introduce the topic.
2. Introduce breathing as a powerful tool.
3. Connect the breath with feelings.
4. Introduce and demonstrate the breathing exercise. Give each athlete a pinwheel and demonstrate deep breathing a few times, encouraging the athlete to try it.
5. Describe how breathing is a biological (or body) tool for calming yourself down.
6. Practice slow, deep breathing and link to physical, body feelings.
7. Describe different situations in which deep breathing can help a person to feel calm when stressed.
8. Encourage the athlete to think of times they can use deep breathing.
9. Remind the athlete to check the green or red circle on the Strategies for Stress Worksheet. Provide assistance, as needed.

Activity 4: Strong Stretching

Goals:

- To show that we hold tension and stress in our bodies and that we can release tension by doing some simple stretches.
- To link the feelings of tightness in our bodies to the emotional feelings of being stressed, nervous or anxious.
- To illustrate that we can use our bodies to help our minds feel better.

Volunteers: 1-2 general or clinical volunteers. No previous clinical experience needed.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1-4 athletes.

Equipment and Supplies:

Yoga mats

Chairs

Disinfecting wipes

Notes:

If athletes are not fully clothed (e.g., wearing a bathing suit), be very careful that the stretching exercises you are doing are dignified and will not be embarrassing, immodest, or inappropriate for the athlete. Having chairs available is also a good alternative for showing how stretching can help without risking a loss of privacy. Caution: To protect athletes, volunteers **should not** touch the athletes. **Do not** physically move the athlete's body into specific positions. Instead, model the stretches or describe them. Do not physically prompt athletes to assume poses.

Steps:

1. Greet the athlete and introduce the topic.
2. Explain how stress causes tension in the body. Encourage the athlete to check in with their body and see if they can identify any areas of tension or places they have tense muscles. Discuss with the athlete.
3. Introduce the activity.
4. Demonstrate stretches, coaching them to move gently and slowly. Ensure they are breathing slowly while stretching and make sure they are not holding their breath.
5. Encourage athletes to feel the tension in their bodies and to reflect on whether stretching has helped them to feel less stressed.
6. Discuss the connection between stretching, body sensations, and mood.
7. Remind the athletes to breathe with the stretches for full relaxation effects.
8. Ask the athletes to consider times when stretching would be a helpful tool for them – both within competition and in real-life.
9. Remind the athlete to check the green or red circle on the Strategies for Stress Worksheet. Assist the athlete, as needed.

Activity 5: Strong Supporting

Goals:

- To emphasize that giving and receiving social support is good for our health. Kindness has health benefits and makes the world a less stressful place.

Volunteers: 1-2 general or clinical volunteers. No previous clinical experience needed.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1-4 athletes.

Equipment and Supplies:

Wristbands (2 per athlete): 1 “Brave” wristband per athlete *and* 1 “Strong” *or* “Kind” wristband per athlete

Steps:

1. Greet the athlete and introduce the topic.
2. Discuss examples of being supportive, elaborating on athlete’s responses. If needed, provide examples of what we mean by “supporting others,” such as helping out a friend, listening to someone who’s had a bad day, and remembering someone’s birthday.
3. Discuss the importance of seeking support from others.
4. Help the athletes identify supportive people in their lives and how they can access them.
5. Provide a reminder of Strong Supporting. Give the athlete a wristband for themselves which says “Brave.” Allow them to select another wristband that says “Strong” or “Kind.” This second wristband is for them to give to a friend, coach, or loved one, as a way of spreading kindness and support.
6. Remind the athlete to check the green or red circle on the Strategies for Stress Worksheet. Provide assistance, as needed.

Station 5: Review of Education

Goals:

- To review the activities and tools the athlete learned for managing stress and nervous feelings
- To review the “Strategies for Stress” worksheet.
- To encourage the athlete to choose which activities they liked and/or found useful by indicating their “likes” and “dislikes” on the worksheet, if they haven’t already.
- To remind the athlete that the tools they’ve learned about in the Strong Minds stations can be used before a competition and in daily life
- To complete the HAS Form 2.0, page 5
- To encourage athletes to set a goal for utilizing one of the strategies

Volunteers: 1-2 general or clinical volunteers. No previous clinical experience needed.

Volunteer to Athlete Ratio: 1 volunteer to 1 athlete.

Equipment and Supplies:

HAS 2.0 Forms or tablets

Strategies for Stress Handout

If using paper forms:

Pens

Clipboards

Steps:

1. Greet the athletes and ask them about their experiences.
2. Chat with the athlete about their experiences, following their lead
3. Refer to the “Strategies for Stress Worksheet.” Encourage the athlete to reflect on each activity and choose “like” or “dislike” for each, if they have not already completed it. Assist as much as needed, encouraging athlete independence whenever possible. Discuss strategies with openness. Praise the athlete for their openness to trying new strategies.
4. Work with the athlete to complete page 5 of the HAS Form 2.0. Create a goal using one of the strategies the athlete would want to use in the future and identify a person that will support them with that goal.
5. Thank the athlete for their time and encourage them to practice their chosen strategies.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

General Notes for Working with Athletes

Athletes may arrive independently or may be accompanied by a coach or caregiver. Encourage the athlete to respond to questions independently as much as possible instead of relying solely on their coaches or caregivers to answer on their behalf. If the athlete prefers their coach or caregiver to answer for them, please note this on the HAS form and proceed. Continue to ask questions directly to the athlete but accept answers from their coach or caregiver as well.

Importance of Consistency of Screening Tools for Standardization

When conducting the mental health screening stations using the published and validated screening tools provided, it is important for Strong Minds Clinical Directors and clinical volunteers to adhere as closely as possible to the instructions for conducting the interview questionnaires in the way they were intended and outlined. This is to ensure consistency across Programs internationally for continued evaluation of reliability and validity.

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