



Healthy Young Athletes is a holistic pediatric screening offered to children 2-7 years old, with and without Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), as an initial offering by Healthy Athletes. It can be implemented in schools, at community events or in conjunction with large-scale Healthy Athletes events. It entails a comprehensive medical assessment including vision, audio and dental screenings, developmental surveillance, and physical examination. This is followed by referral to local healthcare providers and community services for further evaluation and management. It also serves as an educational experience to increase health and development knowledge amongst parents and caregivers so that they are empowered to better support their child's growth and development.

Importance and Impact

Some of the health issues that occur more commonly amongst children with IDD compared with the general population include:

- Vision problems are **10x** more common
- Obesity is **1.5x** more common while they are also **3x** more likely to be underweight
- **22x** more likely to have hearing impairment
- They have Poorer oral hygiene with untreated cavities being **2x** more common
- Vaccine hesitancy is **11 times** more common in parents/caregivers of children with IDD
- Autism occurs in **40%** of children with IDD
- Seizure disorders are at least **20x** more common
- Sleep problems occur in **70-80%** of children with IDD
- Depression has been reported in **40%** parents with children with IDD

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Purpose of the Screening:

- Provide a **safe and trusted space for parents** to share their concerns about their child's health and development
- **Empower parents** to better support their child's growth and development by equipping them with educational resources
- **Identify previously undiagnosed comorbidities** that commonly occur in children with IDD.
- **Connect families** to needed community resources and referrals to local healthcare providers.
- **Increase healthcare workforce awareness** of the unique health care needs of children with IDD and adaptations to be made to meet those needs.
- Foster **new partnerships** between Special Olympics and the local community.

