

Special Olympics Annual Health Report 1 January 2022 - 31 December 2022



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Executive Summary

The partnership between Special Olympics and the Golisano Foundation continues to lay a foundation for health equity for people with intellectual disabilities (ID) around the world. In 2022, Special Olympics marked the first year of a renewed 5-year partnership and saw significant growth and bounce back in global health work post-pandemic, as well as the launch of new initiatives designed to increase reach and impact. In alignment with Special Olympics goals to digitize the movement, modernizations through technology were a place of emphasis this year as was aligning work with evidence-based best practices for public health. The cash and value in-kind (VIK) match were remarkably strong this year, in total \$30,605,581 in match funding was secured, \$23,361,560 in cash and \$7,244,020 in VIK.

"When people have access to health services and follow-up care, they also have more opportunities for enjoying other rights: education, employment, the right to make their own decisions. When that happens, we all win" remarked Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) at the 2022 Global Golisano Health Leadership Award event. The event honored the remarkable work of 7 individuals and organizations from across the globe and attracted a prestigious group of health leaders including the current and immediate past Surgeon Generals of the United States and the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The press release for the event was picked up by 84 news outlets and reached a readership of 150 million.

Special Olympics' health work is operationalized through four foci – **P**revention, **A**ssessment, **T**raining, and **H**ealth Systems Strengthening (the P.A.T.H to Health Equity). In each area, Special Olympics has launched new initiatives, strengthened existing programming and resources, and established the foundation for continued growth in the next four years.

Prevention: Young Athletes continues to benefit children with ID by providing key developmental supports which result in a 7-month accelerated gain in motor skills, along with increasing social and cognitive development. A Young Athletes mobile app was developed in 2022 and pilots were initiated in 4 U.S. states. To better meet the needs of families, a comprehensive maternal and child health intervention model, which aligns with the World Health Organization's Nurturing Care Framework, was created and piloted in 5 countries. Concurrently, Special Olympics developed the Healthy Young Athletes Pediatric Screening, a holistic assessment that complements a child's primary care and provides an additional review of the child's health and development. The screening was piloted in 5 countries and 5 U.S. states and will be expanded further in 2023. Special Olympics Fitness, which engages athletes in ongoing physical activity, nutrition, and hydration programming, continued to grow substantially. In the lead up to the USA Games, Athletes from 52 US states and 3 Caribbean countries participated in a 20-week, 1 million-step challenge and cumulatively completed 1.7 billion steps, with 487 athletes reaching or exceeding the 1 million step goal.

"When people have access to health services and followup care, they also have more opportunities for enjoying other rights: education, employment, the right to make their own decisions. When that happens, we all win."

> Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO)



An athlete completes a near visual acuity test at a Special Olympics Lions Club International Foundation Opening Eyes screening.

Ongoing improvements to Healthy Athletes will better identify risk factors for chronic conditions and facilitate appropriate follow up care.

Assessment: Healthy Athletes[®] in-person screenings resumed in 2022 with major events occurring at the USA Games, the Berlin National Games, and the Unified Cup in Michigan. Internationally, Special Olympics Programs exceeded their annual screening goal for 2022, and the rates of athletes receiving follow up care are slowly increasing. Ongoing improvements to Healthy Athletes include revised, evidence-based screening protocols, across all nine disciplines, which will better identify risk factors for chronic conditions and facilitate appropriate referral and follow-up. The selection and implementation of an electronic health record system is integral to this, ensuring real-time data capture across screening environments, providing a comprehensive view of athlete health over time, and efficiently contributing to the referral and follow-up care process. A new cloud warehouse brings together data feeds and provides Special Olympics Programs with a self-service data portal to access their Healthy Athletes screening data. Additionally, a data collaboration pilot, ADAPT, explored the build out of dashboards to merge sport participation and health data.

Training: As Healthy Athletes events returned, training of clinical professionals and students increased. A blended learning model, online training followed by in-person experience, became the new standard for Clinical Director (CD) training, allowing increased capacity to onboard CDs. The Learning Management System (LMS) provided opportunities for professionals and students to be trained to provide quality care to people with ID, outside of Healthy Athletes. Additionally, the first five interprofessional modules, *Inclusive Health Fundamentals*, were developed for the Golisano Virtual University (GVU). The modules will be piloted in 1 international and 5 U.S. universities in spring of 2023. Special Olympics is developing clinical simulation experiences, where students perform clinical interviews with people with IDD, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to provide quality care. Additionally, a partnership with Project Implicit out of Harvard University was initiated to develop an Implicit Association test on ID, to help students and clinicians become more aware of their own potential bias.

Health Systems Strengthening: Special Olympics continued to build the case and tools for inclusion and the reputation of Special Olympics as a key partner in disability health. Health Messengers were front and center. At the second-ever White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, Health Messengers Kayte Barton (Minnesota) and Kayla Cornell (Michigan) shared their experiences with members of Congress, federal civil servants, and key representatives in the private and non-profit sectors. At the global launch of the 2nd Missing Billion report, Special Olympics Germany Health Messenger, Reynaldo Montoya, shared his recommendations for an inclusive health system with more than 50 global health leaders. In 2022, the World Health Organization developed their first ever report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities. The report cited Special Olympics' 2019 prevalence report and data documenting a higher rate of obesity among athletes than the general population, as well as a Special Olympics athlete's remarks at the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Conference of States Parties.

Activating for Awareness: Special Olympics Health programming received strong media coverage in 2022. Altogether, there were over 8,000 media mentions worldwide covering Special Olympics Health. The ad equivalency of these outlets—including major national publications, numerous radio shows, podcasts, and influential blogs with a broad global reach—amounted to over \$35 million. Notable outlets that provided coverage include Medical Marketing + Media, Authority Magazine, CBS Sports Radio, FanSided, FOX Sports Radio, SiriusXM, Sports Byline USA, and TalkSPORT.

Global Golisano Health Leadership Award Event

"When people have access to health services and follow-up care, they also have more opportunities for enjoying other rights: education, employment, right to make their own decisions. When that happens, we all win [...] WHO commends the innovative Special Olympics global health strategy to increase equity and access to health services for the 200 million people with intellectual disabilities around the world. You and your partners have shown admirable leadership in providing health screening interventions, clinical and medical training, and community-based programming in over 120 nations around the world. WHO is proud to work with you" Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Global Golisano Health Leadership Awards recognize health champions – leaders and organizations – that make significant contributions to secure health equity for people with intellectual disabilities around the world. In September of 2022, seven honorees were awarded this top honor at an event held in New York City. The event also celebrated the global impact made through the historic partnership between Special Olympics, Tom Golisano, and the Golisano Foundation.

This event attracted a prestigious group of health leaders from around the world, including the Director General of the World Health Organization and the current and immediate past Surgeon Generals of the United States. Special Olympics' Chief Inspiration Officer, Loretta Claiborne, provided opening remarks and highlighted the impact of the ten-year partnership between the Golisano Foundation and Special Olympics. Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, delivered a keynote address on the vital work of Special Olympics in promoting the health and well-being of people with disabilities, as well as promoting their full inclusion and participation in communities. Dr. Tedros also commended Special Olympics on their global health strategy and its impact increasing equity and access to vital health services for people with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, the Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. Vivek Murthy, engaged with Sargent Shriver International Global Health Messenger Nyasha Derera on the urgent need for equitable mental health services for people with intellectual disabilities around the world. Nyasha also participated in a panel discussion with former United States Surgeon General, Dr. Jerome Adams, and the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr. Francesco Rocca, on strategies to scale health equity.

In addition to the speakers, there were many high-profile leaders in attendance including: former Panamanian Ambassador and current SOI Board Member Jaime Aleman, former Ecuadorian Ambassador and past SOI Board Member Luis Gallegos; Bee Khan, Head of Civil Society Advocacy and Partnerships at UNICEF, Canadian Pariamentarian Mike Lake; Dr. Károly Mirnics, Director of the Munroe-Meyer Institute and current SOI Board Member; Ian McFarlane, Deputy Regional Director at UNFPA; Dr. Karen Remley, Director for the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the CDC; Dr. Catherine Rice, Brance Chief for the Disability and Health Promotion Branch at the CDC; and Princess Yasmine Aga Khan, President of Alzheimer's Disease International.



Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO)

"People with disabilities are often left behind and excluded from meaningful participation in communities. When that happens, we all lose. That's why the work of Special Olympics is so important (...) WHO is proud to work with you."

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO). The Global Golisano Health Leadership Awards recognize health champions leaders and organizations-that make significant contributions to secure health equity for people with intellectual disabilities around the world.

The event celebrated the work of the seven recipients of the 2022 Global Golisano Health Leadership Awards. The honorees were:

- Universidad de Valparaiso (Valparaiso, Chile): The dental faculty at the Universidad de Valparaiso trains all students to provide quality care to people with intellectual disabilities. Students gain hands-on experience at screenings and mobile dental clinics, and urgent referrals are addressed at the university clinic or the mobile unit. Over the past two years, over 150 Special Olympics athletes have been screened and treated for dental caries and received root canals, dental implants, and dental prostheses.
- **Speak Up Africa** (Dakar, Senegal): Focused on public health and sustainable development in West Africa, advocacy organization Speak Up Africa partners with Special Olympics Senegal to ensure inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in public health campaigns to prevent malaria and COVID, promote vaccination, and improve menstrual hygiene. They amplify the message of inclusive health through their extensive network of sports stars and celebrities.
- **Dr. Adib Jaber** (Beirut, Lebanon): Dr. Jaber, an ophthalmologist and volunteer, has led the recruitment and training of local medical professionals that now provide free treatment, including surgery, for individuals with intellectual disabilities across Lebanon and the Middle East/North Africa region, increasing the capacity of health systems across the Region.
- **General Incorporated Association of Japan Lions** (Tokyo, Japan): Lions Clubs of Japan have demonstrated the true value of service by committing to sustain inclusive health initiatives in Japan. They have volunteered at vision screenings and provided prescriptive eyewear, referred athletes to care to address unmet health needs, and supported preventive care, including health education for families of people with intellectual disabilities.
- Sands China Ltd. (Macau): Nearly a decade ago, resort developer and operator, Sands China Ltd. launched a fund to subsidize medical care costs for individuals with intellectual disabilities. To date, 325 individuals with ID have received treatment in dentistry, physical therapy, podiatry, audiology, Chinese traditional medicine and acupuncture from 50 practitioners across five designated clinics. Hundreds of Sands China employees regularly engage with Special Olympics athletes in health and fitness activities, with a focus on mental health during the pandemic.
- **Dr. Serhiy Komisarenko** (Vinnytsia, Ukraine): Dr. Komisarenko saw a stark need for Ukrainian athletes with intellectual disabilities to receive quality health care, which led him to launch Healthy Athletes screenings in Ukraine. He worked with the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences to secure the country's leading doctors and hospitals to provide ongoing screenings and follow-up care to individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout the country.
- **Rebecca Morley** (Montana, USA) In her 15-year career at the Missoula City-County Health Department, Rebecca worked tirelessly to include people with intellectual disabilities in mainstream public health Programs. She has recruited and trained hundreds of healthcare professionals from colleges, hospitals, and health NGOs. Rebecca ensured the inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities in the annual BMI surveillance at local public schools and used the data to advocate for eliminating the use of sweet treats as rewards in classrooms, which has become policy for Missoula County Public Schools.



1. Sargent Shriver International Global Messenger, Global Health Messenger and Chair of the Global Athlete Congress, Nyasha Derera from Zimbabwe interviews the Surgeon General of the United States, Vice Admiral Vivek Murthy, MD, MBA.

2. Chief Inspiration Officer and Vice Chair of Special Olympics' Board of Directors Loretta Claiborne delivers a welcome address.

3. Golisano Foundation Executive Director Ann Costello, Health Messenger Gilmour Borg, and Chief Health Officer Dr. Alicia Bazzano present Dr. Jaime Jamett Rojas from Chile with the Global Golisano Health Leadership Award.



MADE POSSIBLE BY GOLISANO

The press release announcing the Awards was picked up by **84 news media outlets** and reached a readership of **150M**.

The celebration of our work was covered by **107 outlets** with an aggregate reach of **276M** and an advertising equivalency of **\$518K**.

The 2022 Global Golisano Health Leadership Award Honorees with Special Olympics Board Chairman Timothy Shriver, Golisano Foundation Executive Director Ann Costello, Health Messenger Gilmour Borg, and Special Olympics Chief Health Officer Dr. Alicia Bazzano. Honorees from left to right: Katarina Tesarova, representative from Sands China, Ltd. (Macau); Dr. Serhiy Komisarenko (Ukraine); Rebecca Morley (U.S.A); Dr. Jamie Jamett Rojas, representative from Universidad de Valparaiso (Chile); Yacine Djibo, Founder of Speak Up Africa (Senegal); Hideyuki Muraki, representative from the General Incorporated Association of Japan Lions (Japan). Not pictured is Dr. Adib Jaber (Lebanon) who was unable to attend the event and accepted his award virtually.

Despite the timing of the event coinciding with a challenging media environment surrounding the death of Queen Elizabeth – one of the most covered global events in history – Special Olympics was able to successfully navigate these waters to break through the news cycle and receive substantial media coverage. The press release announcing the Awards was picked up by 84 news media outlets and reached a readership of 150M. The top three media outlets with the highest readership were Yahoo Finance (45.52M), Associated Press News (27.38M), and MarketWatch (19.9M). Leading up to the event, Special Olympics reached out to 100 top-tier international and trade media outlets. Medical Marketing + Media, Authority Magazine, JRSportBrief Show on CBS Sports Radio, DisruptED podcast, Lebanon Files, Good Mornings with Dahlia Kurtz on SiriusXM Canada, were among the notable media that covered the event. The celebration of the work was covered by 107 outlets with an aggregate reach of 276M and an advertising equivalency of \$518K. The World Health Organization published an article about Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus' attendance at the event, reaching another 15.5M.



Healthy Communities Map

In 2022, Healthy Communities work was newly initiated in 9 countries and 2 US states, bringing the total number of sites where Healthy Communities has been initiated to 132. Healthy Athletes, Young Athletes, and Family Health Forum work was initiated in an additional 14 Special Olympics Programs (all outside of the U.S.), laying a foundation for future Healthy Communities work. Special Olympics has a goal of initiating Healthy Communities in 150 Special Olympics Programs by the end of 2026. At the current rate of expansion, it is anticipated that Special Olympics will surpass this goal.





Healthy Communities work was newly initiated in 9 countries and 2 US states, bringing the total number of sites where Healthy Communities has been initiated up to 132. Special Olympics has a goal of reaching 150 **Special Olympics** Programs by the end of 2026.



P.A.T.H to Health Equity

Special Olympics' Health work is focused on achieving health equity for people with intellectual disabilities (ID). This work is organized in four pillars:



revention

Ongoing Programs in health promotion, physical activity and fitness, child development, social-emotional health, nutrition, and prevention for all ages, from Young Athletes to older adult athletes.



ssessment

Health screenings and coordinated follow-up care for Special Olympics athletes.

raining

Developing curricula and training to equip the healthcare workforce to better serve, and be more inclusive of, people with ID.



ealth Systems Strengthening

Innovative, targeted partnerships and policy changes at the local, national, regional, and global levels to elevate the voices and health needs of people with ID.

This work is supported by enablers including athlete leadership, health communication, research & evaluation, data science, and technology.

Prevention







Early Childhood & Families

Eye on the Outcome: Children with ID make developmental gains

Young Athletes

Special Olympics Young Athletes benefits children with ID by providing key developmental supports, including a 7-month accelerated gain in motor skills, along with increases in social and cognitive skill development. In Year 1, Special Olympics prioritized the rebuilding, growth, and expansion of Young Athletes to bring preventive health programming to more children with ID around the world. The following programmatic efforts played a critical role in the success of Young Athletes in 2022.

- Young Athlete Mobile App: Special Olympics began development of the Young Athletes app, which guides parents and caregivers through a child's early development years. The initial phase included gathering user stories, meeting with family members, defining functionalities, and completing 9.5 individual technical build phases. In September, the Most Viable Product version was made available. Pilot outreach began in late 2022, with piloting taking place in Tennessee, Louisiana, Colorado, and Minnesota. Special Olympics Programs will continue to focus on recruiting families to test the app and gather direct feedback that will inform the next phase of development.
- Maternal and Child Health Pilot: To better meet the needs of children with ID and their families, Special Olympics defined a global Maternal and Child Health (MCH) intervention, which provides a coordinated approach to early childhood development. The comprehensive model offers direct developmental support to the child through Young Athletes, education and support to the parent or caregiver through Family Health Forums, and access to health screenings and services through Healthy Communities and Healthy Young Athletes. In alignment with the World Health Organization's Nurturing Care Framework, this intervention is being executed through virtual and in-person strategies to support: 1) good health, 2) opportunities for early learning, 3) responsive caregiving, 4) adequate nutrition, and 5) security and safety. The work was piloted in 2021 and 2022 in India, Pakistan, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Egypt. So far, pilot activities have supported 5,547 children and 3,981 parents and caregivers.
 - Special Olympics Pakistan: Established "Playrooms" or physical inclusive play centers around the country that serve as a hub for parent and child activities. Special Olympics Pakistan runs ongoing Young Athletes activities in the Playroom, while mothers and parents meet with experts for education and support.
 - Special Olympics South Africa: Signed an MOU with the province of Limpopo to continue implementation of project activities in all Early Childhood Development centers across Limpopo province. They also engaged the Head of Pediatrics at Wits University who has since incorporated the Program as a teaching initiative for his pediatric residents.



Special Olympics Young Athletes benefits children with ID by providing key developmental supports, including a 7-month accelerated gain in motor skills, along with increases in social and cognitive skill development.



- Alongside the University of Pretoria in South Africa, Special Olympics is conducting an evaluation of the MCH model within each of the five countries. Data is being collected on key outcomes including social, communication, and daily living skills for children as well as parent empowerment and efficacy, and usefulness of Family Health Forum for improving parent knowledge of child health and development. Data collection is almost complete with findings and a full report expected in June 2023.
- Young Athletes at USA Games: 2022 saw the return of major events with the hosting of the 2022 USA Games. In Orlando, over 200 children and families participated in Young Athletes activities hosted across three locations over four days. This Young Athletes demonstration sparked a return to Young Athletes programming in many states, but especially Florida that had struggled to reinitiate Young Athletes programming post the pandemic.
- Young Athletes Curriculum Development: In 2022, Special Olympics completed development of a new Young Athletes curriculum that expands programming from 8 weeks to a full year for school implementation. The curriculum aligns Young Athletes activities to core academic and physical education standards for pre-K and kindergartners. The curriculum also includes activities that support children in developing social, emotional, cognitive, and learning skills, in addition to motor skills. The curriculum will be piloted in the US in 2023 and updated to meet global education standards following the pilots.

Healthy Young Athletes Pediatric Screening Pilots

To ensure all children can access quality and appropriate services and supports, Special Olympics has developed the Healthy Young Athletes Pediatric Screening as a holistic screening to identify previously undiagnosed health and development conditions in children with ID. The pediatric screening complements a child's primary care and provides an additional review of the child's health and development. The screening is paired with a comprehensive referral and community support strategy that links families with providers, community services, and education resources for follow-up and continued support. The Healthy Young Athletes Pediatric Screening is implemented by trained Clinical Directors, with expertise in pediatrics and family care, and supported by health professional volunteers.

In 2022, the Healthy Young Athletes Pediatric Screening was piloted in 5 countries and 5 U.S. states, including the global launch of the screening at the 2022 Unified Cup in Detroit, Michigan. During the pilot, Clinical Directors identified many needs amongst the children screened, particularly for dental care, with a high number of the children never having seen a dentist. Throughout the pilot over 300 children were screened.

• The Special Olympics United Arab Emirates screening brought about a larger partnership with a local autism center that recognized how many children being screened needed speech therapy. As a result, the center offered ongoing speech therapy services for free to support the Young Athletes and their families.

Family Health Education

2022 was a successful year for family health education, with a return to in-person Family Health Forum (FHF) events and the continuation of virtual events to engage and educate families. In addition to continued FHF programming, Special Olympics established a Family Health Education Advisory Committee – inclusive of global family members, researchers, and experts – with the goal of establishing an ongoing family health education model to support, engage, and educate families over time to support behavior change.

- Special Olympics Ukraine successfully hosted an event for athletes and families featuring a multi-day Family Health Forum, Young Athletes programming, and Strong Minds and FUNfitness screenings. The event was held despite ongoing challenges due to the conflict and needing to secure a location that was physically safe for all participants. The Family Health Forum prioritized supporting mental health for athletes and their families.
- In October 2022, Special Olympics Mauritania faced the annual challenge of malaria season in the region of the capital city, Nouakchott. They organized prevention-focused educational sessions and activities for 168 athletes and family members. Following this, they were able to find care for 59 athletes with malaria cases thanks to Mere et Enfant Hospital and new partner Tiguind Health Center (a testament to the power of health system partnerships).
- Special Olympics Guatemala successfully implemented Family Health Forums in two new regions: in San Juan Sacatepequez in July, and in Quetzaltenango in September. A new Lions Clubs partner assisted with the first, while representatives from the regional health ministry office participated in the latter. These representatives had previously received Community Health Worker training from Special Olympics Guatemala.
- In September 2022, Special Olympics Zimbabwe held their first in-person Family Health Forum since the COVID lockdowns lifted. They took note of many families who were hearing about Special Olympics for the first time. Special Olympics Zimbabwe partnered with the City Health Clinic in Warren Park, and clinic leadership had a chance to listen to and address caregivers' concerns about receiving adequate medical care for their children with IDD. The forum covered COVID, nutrition, diabetes and measles prevention, as well as safeguarding athletes at home, school and the community.



"I reached my goal of weighing under 200 lbs. I'm learning more about healthy eating and ways to stick to my healthy eating plan! My friend and I work out at the gym with our trainer. I also do Rock Climbing with my family. I make videos for Team TN for the health tip each week."

> **Eric Massey** Special Olympics Tennessee Athlete and Health Messenger

Fitness

Eye on the Outcome: Athletes live active and healthy lives

USA Games Fitness Challenge

From January – May 2022, Special Olympics hosted a 20-week fitness challenge for athletes, partners, and coaches competing at the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games. Participants were challenged to reach 1 million steps during the challenge, and track fruit and vegetable intake and Strong Minds activities. Participants received weekly health tips and health education lessons, and Health Messengers and Athlete Leaders from each delegation served as Challenge Leaders to support the challenge activation, engagement, and health education.

Participants from 52 US states and 3 Caribbean countries participated in the challenge. Cumulatively, challenge participants completed 1.7 billion steps, with 487 athletes reaching or exceeding the 1 million step goal. The top 10 athletes in the Challenge completed between 4 and 10 million steps! Among athletes using Fitbit fitness tracking devices, 67% achieved an average daily step count of 7,000 steps or higher. 7,000 steps per day was selected as an appropriate challenge goal based on current literature, which suggests that adults with a disability or chronic illness should aim for a daily step count of 6,500-8,500 steps per day, with 3,000 of these steps performed at moderate to vigorous intensity.

Special Olympics Ontario implemented fitness and wellness programing through an initiative called "Reveal Your Champion," with multiple challenges per day using a variety of fitness resources, including Fit 5. Activities included "Workout Wednesdays" – yoga, dance, cardio, tabata. 150 athletes enrolled in spring and winter in the Reveal Your Champion Program. 75 enrolled in summer in Reveal Your Champion 60 enrolled in cycle challenge.

Among Athletes using Fitbit tracking devices, 67% achieved an average daily step count of 7,000 steps or higher. 7,000 steps per day was selected an appropriate challenge goal based on current literature, which suggests that adults with a disability or chronic illness should aim for a daily step count of 6,500-8,500 steps per day, with 3,000 of these steps performed at a moderate to vigorous intensity.

High 5 for Fitness

In July 2022, Special Olympics launched High 5 for Fitness. High 5 includes a set of resources to help school-aged youth take control of their own fitness by making healthy physical activity, nutrition, and hydration choices. The High 5 resources include guides, cards, and videos with age-appropriate content to meet the individual needs of youth with and without ID in three age groups: 8-11, 12-14, and 15-21. The High 5 materials also include resources to support caregivers and educators in working with youth and are designed to seamless integrate into the classroom to encourage the increase in physical activity minutes and health education for students with ID. Children with intellectual disabilities are nearly twice as likely as their peers without ID to not participate in regular physical activity and more than half of children with ID engage in sedentary behaviors, leading to chronic illnesses later in life. High 5 for Fitness was developed to engage youth ages 8-21 with and without intellectual disabilities in healthy behaviors including regular physical activity, proper nutrition, and adequate hydration. Promoting healthy habits early on can establish lifelong healthy behaviors and support

Fitness through Sport

To learn from athletes, caregivers, coaches, and Program staff about how to better promote health behaviors and improve health outcomes through sports practice, Special Olympics conducted an evaluation, including surveys and focus groups with 324 participants across 17 countries and all 7 Special Olympics regions. The evaluation defined key priorities for Programs, coaches, and athletes about the importance of health and fitness integration into sport. Nearly 70% of coaches agreed that their health and fitness promotion efforts helped athletes change their health or fitness. Participants also placed a strong emphasis on the importance of 3 leaders in changing health for athletes in the sports context: coaches, athlete leaders, and health and fitness professionals. The results from the evaluation will drive fitness through sport work in the future, with specific focus on defining three key training priorities: training coaches to implement fitness into practices, training fitness professionals to implement inclusive fitness practices in gyms and community centers, and training Fitness Captains, an athlete leader role to support fitness and health integration into practices through peer-to-peer programming.

In alignment with the fitness through sport findings, Special Olympics continued to prioritize fitness trainings in 2022. In particular, the "Fitness for the Sports Coach" eLearning continues to be one of the most popular courses in the SO Online Learning Portal, with 1,814 completions across all SO Programs/Regions in 2022.

Special Olympics Zimbabwe has established seven new sites for weekly fitness sessions for athletes, including one at Queensdale Primary School. On Tuesdays and Fridays, Barbara Njovo, an athlete leader who won silver and bronze at the 2019 World Games, leads Fit 5 sessions for 8- to 10-year-old athletes in conjunction with their volleyball practice. The national staff are very proud of her and hope to train her as a Health Messenger.



Athlete leaders from Special Olympics South Africa champion Fit 5 throughout the country.

Children with ID are nearly twice as likely as their peers without ID to not participate in regular physical activity.



Performance Stations at Unified Cup

Performance Stations equip athletes competing in Major Games with resources to enhance their fitness before, during, and after the competition experience. Stations are strategically placed in the flow of the competition from beginning to end. This unique experience not only leads to injury prevention, improved recovery, and enhanced performance during competition; it also strengthens the message that Special Olympics values fitness as an important part of the mission. During the Unified Cup in Detroit, Performance Stations were integrated into the competition protocol to ensure every athlete and Unified partner (252 athletes and 200 unified partners) participated in the Performance Station activities. Following activities, 42% of athletes and Unified partners strongly agreed and 51% somewhat agreed that they competed better at Unified Cup because of their participation in Performance Stations. Additionally, 61% strongly agreed and 36% somewhat agreed that the information learned at the Performance Station can help them be healthier.

New Research Concludes Special Olympics Lowers Rates of Clinical Depression

New research published by researchers at Ontario Tech University examined the depression status of more than 51,000 young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Ontario from 1995 to 2015. The study used statistical modelling of Special Olympics registration data and administrative health records data held at the Institute for Clinical Evaluation Sciences (ICES), divided subjects into two categories: those who had participated in Special Olympics and those who had not. Depression diagnosis rates among those in each group were calculated and compared over the 20-year period to reveal significant results:

Special Olympics participants were

49%

less likely to develop depression compared to non-participants. up to 20 years, the risk of depression was

Across the period of

9.49% or person years

in Special Olympics participants compared to

19.98% person years

for non-participants.

Age, sex, type of community (Rural vs Urban), affluence, and morbidity of individuals

did not influence the outcome of the study.

"These are exciting findings for the team," said Dr. Meghann Lloyd, Lead Author and Researcher with the Faculty of Health Sciences, Ontario Tech University. "This study provides strong evidence that participating in Special Olympics has a positive impact on mental health which means that communitybased physical activity Programs, like Special Olympics, can be a great social prescription for health care providers and social service workers to use when supporting young adults with IDD in their mental health and well-being."

Evidence has shown that young adults with IDD are more likely to have depression than their peers without IDD, and that they tend to have lower levels of physical activity, on average. Special Olympics provides the unique opportunity for adults with IDD to improve their physical activity while developing social skills and supporting friendships. By comparing the rate of depression in young adult Special Olympics participants with IDD to non-participants with IDD, the new research concluded that Special Olympics participants with IDD experienced a significantly lower rate of depression than individuals with IDD who did not participate in Special Olympics, in fact, the risk of depression was cut in half.



"This study provides strong evidence that participating in Special Olympics has a positive impact on mental health which means that community-based physical activity programs, like Special Olympics, can be a great social prescription for health care providers and social service workers to use when supporting young adults with IDD in their mental health and well-being."

Meghann Lloyd

Lead Author and Researcher with the Faculty of Health Sciences, Ontario Tech University

Assessment







Healthy Athletes®

Eye on the Outcome: Athlete health issues and risks are promptly and accurately identified

Healthy Athletes (HA) programming has now been an integral part of the Special Olympics' athlete experience for over twenty years. The Healthy Athletes Program has screened thousands of athletes and has identified important health issues and has subsequently improved the athletes' quality of life and health outcomes. In-person screenings resumed in 2022 with major events occurring in Orlando, Florida for USA Games; in Berlin, Germany for the Berlin National Games, and in Detroit, Michigan for Unified Cup.

Internationally, Special Olympics Programs have exceeded their annual screening goal for 2022, reporting 28,416 completed screenings of the targeted 16,500. In the US, Programs have reported 27,708 screenings completed this year, exceeding the annual target of 19,900.

Globally, 4,218 pairs of prescription eyewear were provided to athletes at Opening Eyes, correcting vision and allowing athletes to better perform both on and off the field of play. One hundred and twenty-eight individuals had their hearing restored through hearing aids provided by Starkey Cares in partnership with Healthy Hearing, and an additional 1,112 athletes and Unified partners were referred for follow-up audiologic care in their communities.





Special Olympics Bharat – A World Health Day Triumph

On World Health Day in 2022, Special Olympics Bharat (India) hosted an historic event, *National Health Fest – We Care*, which set several world records including the largest number of health professionals trained to provide quality care to people with ID, the most Healthy Athletes screenings in one day (75,000 athletes screened), and the largest number of people running simultaneously for one minute. This event signified a huge shift in return to activities within Special Olympics Bharat. Seventy-five cities participated in the country-wide event with universities and private practitioners coming together to offer health screenings and to commit to providing lifelong care. A partnership with the Indian government was key to the success of this event, which took place as part of the 75th anniversary of Indian independence.



Follow-up Care

Eye on the Outcome: Athletes receive treatment for health issues identified through Healthy Athletes screenings

The referral to and coordination of follow-up care is critical in ensuring that health needs are met through Healthy Athletes programming. Systematic efforts to enhance the capacity of care coordination of local Programs are being implemented in the U.S. and globally.

In 2022, these solutions included the utilization of a care coordination template to guide Programs in developing their system for managing referrals and follow-up contact; the provision of grant funding to support contractual care coordinators to assist in referral management following Healthy Athletes screenings and the piloting of an electronic health record system that improves the consistency and efficiency of referral generation and tracking. In total, Special Olympics Programs reported 3,960 referrals were addressed through follow up care, for conditions identified during Healthy Athletes screenings. There remains a disparity between the connection to community-based care and referral follow-up between the United States and Global Programs. On average, nearly 73% of referrals generated outside of the United States are confirmed to have received follow-up care, whereas less than 38% of US-based athletes who receive a referral report receiving follow-up care to address their health concern identified in Healthy Athletes.

To address this significant difference and the ongoing challenge of facilitating connections to care, Special Olympics is supporting Program efforts strategically by increasing capacity and improving efficiency through the provision and utilization of a care coordination template to guide Programs in developing their system for managing referrals and follow-up contact; the provision of grant funding to support contractual care coordinators to assist in referral management following Healthy Athletes screenings and the piloting of an electronic health record system that improves the consistency and efficiency of referral generation and tracking.

Athlete Story

Xu Zhang was born in 1993 in China's Inner Mongolia. He was diagnosed with cerebral palsy and a clubfoot at birth, and he has been receiving rehabilitation services since early childhood. He learned to walk at the age of seven but had an unstable gait, had difficulty using stairs, and he always needed a companion when he went out.

Xu began to play table tennis in 2013 and participate in Special Olympics activities. In 2016, Xu attended a competition in Nanjing where Healthy Athletes screenings were being offered as part of Special Olympics China's Healthy Communities work. The Fit Feet Clinical Director, Lifei CAI, found Xu had severe foot health issues (left clubfoot, right foot pronation and leg length discrepancy) which caused him to have a very unstable gait. Based on the Clinical Director's screening, an urgent referral was given. On the recommendation of Special Olympics China, and accompanied by his mother, Xu went to the China Rehabilitation Research Institute for follow-up care. After a detailed biomechanical evaluation, a pair of custom foot orthotics were made. The results were life changing. Xu can now walk much more steadily, go out on his own, and with no support going up and down the stairs. Periodically, Xu returns to the China Rehabilitation Research Institute for a review, adjustment, or reorder of the orthotics. Special Olympics China met Xu and his mother at a recent Healthy Athletes screening, where everyone was happy to see Xu walk with confidence.





Healthy Athletes 2.0

While highly successful and expanding globally, there is an identified need to improve the Healthy Athletes model to build capacity and optimize data capture for actionable results. This has led Special Olympics to initiate a major Program revision in 2022, entitled Healthy Athletes 2.0. Healthy Athletes 2.0 focuses on the development and implementation of elevated screening protocols, across all nine disciplines, which are evidence-based and functional in nature. Healthy Athletes 2.0 will better identify risk factors of chronic conditions and facilitate appropriate referral and timely follow-up to contribute to improved health outcomes for Special Olympics athletes. The selection and implementation of an electronic health record system is integral to the development of Healthy Athletes and ensuring realtime data capture across screening environments, providing a comprehensive view of athlete health over time, and efficiently contributing to the referral and follow-up care process. Improvements are planned in several major categories which include screenings, data capture, care coordination, and operational elements. Specifics can be seen in the following diagram. In the past year, work has been completed in each of these categories.

Healthy Athletes 2.0 Elements



To address the changing needs in Healthy Athletes' screenings, numerous focus groups were completed with global professionals and stakeholders to identify the need to make the screenings more evidence-based, person-centered, and integrated. From this imperative, the screening process and forms are in revision currently. Once revisions are complete later in 2023, the revised process and forms will be piloted prior to a fuller implementation.

Along with the ongoing improvements being made across the nine disciplines of Healthy Athletes, Healthy Hearing, in partnership with Starkey Cares, has recently been expanded to include cerumen management, the removal of obstructive ear wax that contributes to hearing impairment, to ensure improved ear health and accurate hearing aid fitting and adjustment. Cerumen management has been successfully implemented at USA Games, Unified Cup, and at the Program level at events including the Healthy Athletes launch in Puerto Rico. Cerumen management will be an integral part of the Healthy Hearing screening moving forward, including activation at the 2023 World Games in Berlin. In 2022, the official launch of the global partnership with Starkey Cares enabled the provision of hearing aids for Special Olympics athletes at no cost. In addition to major events, this activation can occur at the local Program level with the partnership support of Starkey Cares providers around the world. Additionally, this partnership offers a robust provider network of nearly 2,000 clinical locations in the US and additional globally, that offer in kind follow-up services and hearing care to athletes following Healthy Hearing screenings, including the provision of hearing aids, hearing aid maintenance, and cerumen removal.

Accurate and actionable data is critical to the success of Healthy Athletes, and there has been much work on this in the past year which continues into 2023. At the USA Games in June 2022, several new surveillance questions were piloted. A completely new mental health screening tool, a 14-item survey entitled Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation for People with Learning Disabilities (LD-Core-14), was piloted within the Strong Minds discipline with nearly 1,000 athletes. Questions from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) were also posed to athletes so that initial surveillance data could be captured and compared to the US general population. The LD-Core-14 is validated for use with individuals with intellectual disabilities and aims to identify mental health risk and indicate the need for follow-up care. Its introduction into the Strong Minds discipline is aligned with the goal to integrate standardization and evidence-based screening protocols across all disciplines of Healthy Athletes. Additional piloting of the LD-Core-14 was conducted at the National Games in Berlin in June 2022. These pilots have provided valuable data which will lead to the identification of a final mental health screening tool for Strong Minds projected later in 2023.



The LD-Core-14 asks questions like the ones displayed here:

In the past week have you felt happy with the things you have done? (n = 1686)



In the past week have you found it hard to say how you feel? (n = 1684)



BRFFS – HAS Comparison

Weekly Strength Training



Preliminary NHANES Data

In general, how healthy is your overall diet? Would you say...



To build and expand the capacity of screenings, an improved digital/electronic platform needs to be identified. Requirements for a new platform and an initial vendor were identified in 2022. In February 2023, an initial pilot with three of the HA disciplines was launched with this vendor to determine the feasibility of broader use of this platform and vendor. Improvements in data capture and integration will be critical for athletes, Programs, and stakeholders.

Referrals and care coordination are one of the most important elements of the HA screening model. Athletes receive referrals for either non-urgent or urgent needs identified during the screening process. In Healthy Athletes 2.0, an initial revision of the care coordination process was completed in 2022, but additional work needs to be outlined to identify stakeholders and partners who can support local Programs with referrals and complex care coordination for athletes. Several potential partners have been identified and initially explored in 2022. The Institute for Exceptional Care (IEC) completed an assessment with 4 US Programs to identify key successes and barriers to care coordination. Their report outlined several recommendations which were reviewed by a SOI internal working group. This working group outlined several standardized processes for all Programs to follow in response to referral follow-up. Further work continues in 2023 to identify the best solutions for Programs to implement in their communities.

Finally, operational improvements have been identified as part of USA Games, Berlin National Games, and Unified Cup in 2022. Athlete appointments for the screenings were piloted at the USA Games and a new process for using the tablets with athletes was piloted at the Berlin National Games. This has led to an extended test of the use of athlete appointments at the upcoming World Games in 2023. Additional quality improvements to improve efficiency and standardize the experience, including establishing recommended levels of supplies, equipment, and tablets for in-person screenings, have been completed in 2022 and are moving into implementation in 2023.

Health Constituent Relationship Management

A critical component of broad health surveillance is understanding the scale and composition of Special Olympics' constituency. To that end, Special Olympics established the Digital Center of Excellence (CoE) in late 2022, a Program-led initiative to develop business critical technologies for the Movement. The CoE's first charge is the implementation and deployment of a large-scale Athlete Registration Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) with a focus on centrally collecting and managing athlete records, including digitization of the Health History section of the Athlete Medical Form. This will be the first time that such an effort will be undertaken at scale. It is expected that the initial deployment across a handful of Special Olympics Programs will be completed by quarter 3 of 2023.



Special Olympics Alabama athlete is fitted for a new hearing aid, through partnership with Starkey Cares, at the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games. A self-service data portal allows Special Olympics Programs to access Healthy Athlete data - a major step forward in data efficiency.

Health Data Science

In early 2022, the Special Olympics Data & Analytics team deployed a cloud data warehouse which brings together all major assets and data feeds currently being collected, including all Healthy Athletes data (current and historical), sport participation data, competition and fitness data, and aggregate Program statistics. This has enabled the development of a number of analytics dashboards and automation. For example, a major challenge that most Programs face is accessing their Healthy Athletes data for the purposes of evaluation, advocacy, and fundraising. To address this challenge, in late 2022 the team deployed a self-service data portal for Program and Regional access to their Healthy Athletes screening (HAS) data, including public health statistics and referral data. This has already significantly reduced the time and overhead to service data requests and use cases and represents a major step forward in data efficiency.



In early 2022, a major data collaboration across Programs and SOI, called ADAPT (Athlete DAta ProjecT), was launched to facilitate coordination and support for Program data initiatives. This effort has blossomed into a regular standing forum (with between 12-17 Programs attending each month) to identify and investigate questions and challenges across Program operations. It further serves as a cohort of early adopters with whom SOI has piloted novel improvements to Health technology, including the above-described data portal. Because the data warehouse unifies sport participation and Healthy Athletes data into one location, Special Olympics has been able to investigate relationships between participation and health screening results through ADAPT. This work is ongoing and Programs regularly receive tailor-made dashboards informed by discussions surfaced in monthly sessions.

Training







Trained outside of Healthy Athletes



Special Olympics Annual Health Report 2022

Eye on the Outcome: A healthcare workforce equipped to provide quality care to people with ID

In order to reduce the health disparities experienced by people with ID, training of healthcare providers and students remains a top priority. Special Olympics anticipates significant gains in training in the next five years. Healthy Athletes continues to be an excellent entry point into training for clinicians and students, and Special Olympics supports many other educational opportunities beyond Healthy Athletes events. Major target audiences for educational and training opportunities include healthcare professionals, healthcare profession students, Clinical Directors, non-clinical volunteers, Community Health Workers, and organizations such as health ministries and Area Health Education Centers.

Training Clinicians and Students at Healthy Athletes

Globally, 4,817 clinicians and students (2,333 clinicians and 2,484 students) were trained at Healthy Athlete events. Beginning this year, the blended learning format became the standard modality for training Healthy Athletes Clinical Directors. This allowed increased capacity to fully train Clinical Directors, as they were not restricted to in-person events only. Due to expansion in online training with the COVID-19 pandemic, this allowed for continuation of training with providing some accommodations



to the in-person experience. The blended learning training consists of an online training component followed by an in-person experience. The online training encompasses 5 modules: Introduction to ID, Special Olympics Health, Role of a Clinical Director, discipline specific training and FAQs. Those who complete the online training modules complete a pre and post survey, an assessment, and an assignment. For the in-person experience, the candidate is matched to a Special Olympics Program with a strong Clinical Director who has led quality screenings in their discipline. The trainee shadows the Clinical Director during a Healthy Athlete screening, including set-up, data collection, referrals, all stations and closing. During the in-person experience the trainee will fill out an assignment to verify that they completed each station during their experience, share any guestions or concerns and have the Clinical Director sign off confirming the completion of training. Once the blended learning training option became available, there was an influx of interest from Special Olympics Programs. To better accommodate Programs and trainees, training hubs were established. The Discipline Managers identified 3-5 Special Olympics Programs that had established high quality screenings with experienced Clinical Directors.

These Special Olympics Programs were labeled as hubs and are now locations where other trainees may visit to complete the in-person experience part of the Clinical Director training if they are unable to train locally. This process has been streamlined using Smartsheet technology for all Special Olympics Programs to access, including details for each hub, such as discipline, screening details, date, location, nearby airport, and recommended hotel. This has created efficiency in the training process, allowing Special Olympics Programs to easily access training/hub information, and has increased opportunities for candidates to complete their training in a manner that works best for them, while maintaining a quality training experience.

Training Clinicians and Students at Non-Healthy Athletes Events

Globally, 5,138 clinicians and students were trained at non-Healthy Athlete events (update from 2,750 reported at mid-year). One way in which clinicians and students were trained was through the Learning Management System (LMS). Of those trained this year, 280 were through the LMS. SO-Asia Pacific used the LMS most frequently for training, followed by SO-Europe Eurasia. The most popular courses were Introduction to Intellectual Disabilities (n=83) and Special Olympics Health (n=42). Two other courses which were popular this year were the FUNfitness Volunteer Training (n=37) and Supporting Families Through the Intellectual Disability Diagnosis (n=29). Outside of the LMS reach, other education and training was hosted by Special Olympics Programs and staff at various community sites.

For example, in May 2022, staff from Special Olympics Papua New Guinea trained 51 healthcare workers and hospital staff at the Port Moresby General Hospital in the nation's capital. The goal was to equip staff to better support patients with ID seeking care at the facility. In June, the hospital invited them back to conduct more training in subsequent months, and 40 more were trained in July.

Special Olympics and CBS Sports Radio show JRSportBrief joined forces to embark on a tour of university campuses across the United States with the aim of educating students on the importance of inclusive health. The tour, which spanned 11 weeks, saw host JR Jackson visiting 11 universities, speaking to nearly 500 faculty and students, producing 11 segments on CBS Sports Radio, and appearing on 300 syndicated shows. The tour spanned from New York to Oregon, and south to Georgia, Louisiana, and Arizona. The in-person audience included medical, nursing, pharmacy, dental, and public health students and faculty. The radio segments, which reach over 50 million people, featured medical and dental faculty, students and Special Olympics athletes who emphasized the need for health professionals to receive training in providing equitable healthcare for people with intellectual disabilities. The initiative served as an important effort to educate the next generation of health leaders, as well as the general public on the need for inclusive health.



Special Olympics and CBS Sports Radio show JRSportBrief joined forces to embark on a tour of university campuses across the United States with the aim of educating students on the importance of inclusive health.



Health care professionals in Nicaragua receive training from Special Olympics on how to provide quality care.

Interprofessional modules will train healthcare professional students through the Golisano Virtual University.

Golisano Virtual University

Year 1 progress with Golisano Virtual University includes the development of the first five interprofessional modules for healthcare professions students, collectively titled Inclusive Health Fundamentals. These modules lay the groundwork for a continuing education model with four stages for interprofessional education (IPE). As seen in the Educational Strategy for health professions students, the Inclusive Health Fundamentals is the first step followed by interprofessional education with clinical simulation, specialty-based training and finally an immersive fellowship experience.

lealth Professions Students			SO Inclusive Healt Fellow	
		Inclusive Health Specialty-based Concepts	Intensive, experiential learning experience based at regional, state or SOI	
	IPE Clinical Introduction	Advanced specialty- based concepts and experiences focus-	headquarters locations. Experience	
Inclusive Health		ing on a variety of	focused on policy,	
Fundamentals	Case study models using clinical	key clinical specialties, i.e.	advanced clinical practice, research	
Core concepts for	simulation and/or	Pediatrics, Women's	and leadership	
beginning health	IPE case review	Health, Mental	related	
professions students	simulation	Health, etc.	to Inclusive Health	

Inclusive Health Fundamentals

Module 1: Introduction to Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Module 2: Models of Disability
Module 3: Health Promotion
Module 4: Effective Communications
Module 5: Common Physical and Mental Health Challenges

These modules will be piloted in Spring 2023 at one international and five U.S. institutions (Rush University - Illinois, University of California-Davis, Daemen University - New York, St. John Fisher University - New York, University of Minnesota, and South East Technological University - Ireland). Expansion within the SOLA region (Universidad del Desarrollo - Chile, Universidad Cientifica del Sur -Peru) as well as universities in Maryland, Oregon, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania is expected for the Phase 2 pilot in Fall 2023.

The second step of the educational strategy is focused on providing interprofessional clinical simulation experiences. Clinical simulation laboratories are included in most U.S. medical and nursing schools as well as a growing number outside of the U.S. This past year, Special Olympics partnered with Special Olympics Arkansas to pilot the first clinical simulation case studies using Special Olympics' athletes as standardized patients. This creates an employment opportunity for Special Olympics athletes while providing real-world cases for the health professions students. Students can learn to perform clinical interviews and gain valuable experience working with people with IDD. Phase 2 in the fall semester 2023 will include the addition of the University of Maryland and possibly several universities in Pennsylvania. The Special Olympics Latin America region (SOLA) has also requested to be included in the next phase of clinical simulation pilots in Peru and Chile.

In the second half of 2022, SOI partnered with Project Implicit out of Harvard University with plans to develop an Implicit Association Test (IAT) on the topic of Intellectual Disability. Project Implicit was started in 1998 to educate the public on bias and to allow members of the public to assess their own implicit bias on a variety of topics. Several years ago, Project Implicit created an IAT on the topic of disability, however it is focused on physical disability. When contacted by SOI with the inquiry around development of an intellectual disability IAT, the researchers at Project Implicit were very excited to partner with us on this important topic. This project is ongoing with the hope that the IAT on intellectual disability will be available for the public to take in late Spring 2023. Initially, the IAT on intellectual disability will be listed as one of the Featured Tasks on the Project Implicit website. It will then be listed on Special Olympics' new Learning Management System for all learners interacting with the content. This test will be included in Special Olympics' curriculum development by allowing for students and clinicians to take this test in order to be more aware of their own potential bias around the care of and interaction with people with intellectual disabilities. This will allow for a jumping off point for faculty who might choose to require students to take this IAT prior to starting the curricular series.



Health Professionals in Rwanda are trained on how to provide quality care to people with ID.



Health care professionals in Rwanda (top), Ireland (middle), and Nigeria (bottom) received training on how to provide quality care to people with ID.

Training Community Health Workers

To include non-clinical health care workers, Special Olympics has developed and piloted a Community Health Worker (CHW) training Program to equip these individuals with information on how to provide inclusive health to people with IDD. In the past year, refinements and edits have been made to the training based on feedback from the pilot. Information has been shared with the Regional Health Managers and recruitment for interested Programs and regions to participate in a Train the Trainer has begun and will continue through 2023. In the spring of 2023, a Train the Trainer (TTT) model will be developed to train facilitators to deliver the CHW training in their communities. Eventually, this information will be available online within the Golisano Virtual University. Currently, Special Olympics Programs are signing up to participate and expand training opportunities for Community Health Workers in their regions. These interested Special Olympics Programs include Ireland, Senegal, Colombia, Bolivia, Montenegro, Kenya, Botswana, Uganda, and several U.S. state Programs.

Building the Golisano Virtual University Online Experience

An integral component of building capacity for interprofessional education rapidly and widely is the development of the Golisano Virtual University (GVU) online platform. In the second half of 2022, the Clinical Education Team worked with the Digital Health Team to begin to identify technical requirements and needs for each type of learner persona (students, healthcare providers, and non-licensed providers) for the new GVU learning management system (LMS). In early 2023, the teams will be working with a consultant to identify several organizations which provide a learning management system platform which can meet the GVU requirements. Ultimately, a final firm will be selected by mid-year, and then the initial transition will be outlined to move existing and new courses onto the new LMS. All current health education courses will eventually migrate to the new LMS, with the first courses projected to be available on the new LMS by the third and fourth quarters of 2023.

Additionally, in late 2022 and early 2023, Special Olympics began to research potential e-learning and instructional design firms to assist in the development of engaging, interactive online learning modules. Three were selected to demonstrate their work products and abilities, as well as prepare bids for upgrading the existing and future modules. Special Olympics is currently in the contracting process with ELB Learning, who has worked with companies such as Roche, Pfizer, GM, and Disney to create engaging training modules. It is anticipated that all the Inclusive Health Fundamentals modules will be updated and ready for the Phase 2 pilot to be held in fall 2023. The next phase of work will be to update the Clinical Director online training modules and the first of the health specialty-based modules. Emerging research after the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that e-learning has the potential for more innovative educational strategies, and the more engaging the content, the increase in learner uptake and knowledge retention. Engaging activities, including gamification and videos, decrease passive participation by requiring learners to utilize the skills they are learning to interact with the training. Highly interactive modules also mimic the way most learners engage with content online, from short and focused experiences to the opportunity for social collaboration.
Health Systems Strengthening







Health Messengers activated





Special Olympics Romania Health Messenger Darius Boghiu delivers remarks at the Leaders Through Sport National Conference.

Eye on the Outcome: Health organizations and systems address the health needs of people with ID

In 2022, Special Olympics continued work at all levels to strengthen health systems to be more inclusive of people with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics has continued to build the case for inclusion, the tools to help others include, and the reputation of the Special Olympics movement as a key partner and strategic player in disability health.

Special Olympics Athletes Leading the Way to Stronger, More Inclusive Health Systems

Health Messengers have increasingly been front and center: acting as role models for their peers and inspiration for their communities, raising the awareness of those throughout the health system about the needs of people with intellectual disabilities, and advocating for solutions that will help health systems meet those needs.

Inspiring their Peers and Communities

- Special Olympics Romania Health Messenger Darius Boghiu has been involved in various activities and giving advice to other athletes on how to live a healthy and happy life. He proposed an anthem to be sung in trainings: "If you want to be well/Take a tasty apple with you/And you'll be full of energy!"
- Special Olympics Papua New Guinea athlete leaders Pauline Paul, Japhet Narrey, Donald Soor, and Siosi Sebastain were the masters of ceremony during a Family Health Forum in September 2022. In addition to introducing the different speakers, they also demonstrated some physical activities during a presentation of Fit 5. During Healthy Athletes screenings in October, these athletes helped run the event—ushering parents and guardians that were coming in with their athlete, taking the height measurements and readings from the scale for athletes, and registering the attendance of those who came to the event.
- Special Olympics Ireland Health Messenger Margaret Turley celebrated the end of her Inclusive Research Fellowship with Special Olympics. She collaborated on the *Special Olympics: Supporting families of Special Olympics athletes during COVID-19* project, alongside Aida Mohajeri, Ed.M., a fellow from the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness. Together they co-created and disseminated a survey of families of Special Olympics athletes to understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, how Special Olympics helped them stay connected to the movement, and an understanding of the resources and support that Special Olympics can provide to families moving forward. In October 2022, Margaret and Aida co-presented on this project and the power of inclusive research at the Irish Global Health Network Conference in Dublin, Ireland.

Special Olympics Samoa Health Messenger Saleilua Matautia was one of two finalists from the Asia Pacific region for the Golisano Health Leadership Award. Saleilua has been active as a Health Messenger for two years. His activities include helping translate Fit 5 resources into the local language, leading indoor and outdoor fitness and Fit 5 classes, conducting warm-up sessions, and encouraging athletes' siblings, parents, and coaches to prioritize healthcare for every athlete. Saleilua was the first Health Messenger to receive a nomination at this level.

Raising Awareness in the Health System and Advocating for Solutions

- Special Olympics Pakistan Health Messenger Jasmine Sharif started off the year with great momentum in February 2022. As part of a (virtual) side event to the Global Disability Summit 2022 called "Global health: strengthening disability inclusion in mainstream health services", Jasmine shared her experiences and expectations for the health sector along with two other individuals with disabilities. Other speakers at the event included representatives of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), UNICEF, the WHO, and representatives of the governments of Bangladesh, the Philippines, Uganda, and the United Arab Emirates.
- In July 2022, Special Olympics Mozambique collaborated with WaterAid Mozambique to conduct a safety and accessibility audit on handwashing facilities built in public spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. The headquarters offices of Special Olympics and WaterAid had been working towards this collaboration, including revising WaterAid's accessibility audit tools to address disability accessibility considerations, since at least 2021.

Edmiler Loforte, an SOM athlete, participated in the audit together with other people with disabilities. Edmiler emphasized that the lack of proper signages indicating the location of the handwashing facilities created a barrier for him to access the handwashing facility. He was not aware of the facility until he participated in the audit. He recommended that facilities should be clearly marked to enable all people, including people with intellectual disabilities, to access the facilities and use them. Edmiler also highlighted the importance of the availability of guiding information regarding the use of hand-washing facilities for people with intellectual disabilities.

Edmiler went on to share his experience of the audit alongside José Chiluvane, the Senior Project Manager at WaterAid Mozambique at the SIWI World Water Week conference in August 2022. The session, titled *"One billion opportunities for universal access to WASH,"* was organized by SOI, World Bank Group, UNICEF, WaterAid, HelpAge, IDA, and SIDA.



Athlete leader Raphael Ottoase (Papua New Guinea) trains doctors at Port Moresby General Hospital on how to provide quality care to patients with ID. Raphael has been a patient at this hospital and was able to share his personal experiences.



Health Messenger Kayte Barton (Special Olympics Minnesota) with Dr. Susan Mayne, Director of the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, at the White House Conference on Hunger Nutrition, and Health. • In October 2022, Special Olympics Ireland Health Messenger Una Coates presented at the *International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership and International Initiative for Disability Leadership* conference. This activity was a part of SO Ireland's partnership with Mental Health Ireland.

Health Messengers were important protagonists in Special Olympics' relationship with the Missing Billion Initiative (MBI) in 2022. MBI is a time-bound (2030) catalyst for system change that aims to transform health systems to ensure better access and outcomes for people with disabilities, and truly achieve universal health coverage.

In 2022, Missing Billion Initiative (MBI) launched a report focused on driving action by governments and other health system actors to eliminate the barriers that people with disabilities face to accessing healthcare and achieving the best attainable standard health. In April, Special Olympics Wisconsin athlete and staff member Edward Kastern was interviewed by MBI and Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) as part of their efforts to understand what a functioning and effective health system would look like for persons with disabilities.

MBI invited Special Olympics to participate at two launches of their reports, with Health Messengers in spotlighted roles. The global launch of the 2nd Missing Billion report occurred alongside the World Health Summit in Berlin in October 2022. Special Olympics Germany Health Messenger and staff member of the B23 LOC, Reynaldo Montoya was able to share his experiences, his recommendations for an inclusive health system, and his invitation to the Games with more than 50 global health leaders, including Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist at WHO; Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, Former Prime Minister of New Zealand; and Dr. Wilhelmina S. Jallah, Minister of Health of Liberia. In November 2022, Special Olympics Kenya Health Messenger and staff member Joshua Agare shared remarks at the MBI regional launch in Nairobi.

On September 28, 2022, the United States federal government hosted the second-ever White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. The first such conference was over 50 years ago. At the conference, Health Messengers Kayte Barton (Special Olympics Minnesota) and Kayla Cornell (Special Olympics Michigan) were able to share their experiences with members of Congress, federal civil servants, and representatives of important players in the private and non-profit sectors. For example, Kayte spoke with Dr. Susan Mayne from the Food and Drug Administration about the importance of having food labelling available for online food shopping and making labels easier for people with intellectual disabilities to understand. Kayla, who works for a branch of the YMCA outside of the many hats she wears at Special Olympics, was excited to share ideas with representatives of YMCA of the USA about how the two organizations can partner to improve the health of people with ID.

Stronger Together: Leveraging Partnerships to Strengthen and Scale Health System Inclusion

Special Olympics Programs reported 3,071 partnerships in 2022. Partners operate on health at various levels—individual, community, societal, and international—and bring different value to the work.

- Special Olympics Nicaragua conducted a training at Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University (BICU) that was so well-received that department leadership immediately took action to start the process of adding a course on intellectual disability inclusion in the curriculum. As described by the Clinical Director involved in the training: "The teaching cloister in the Department of Medicine at BICU, as well as the participating students, were very impressed. [...the presentation] planted the seed that will change the mentality of these new health professionals."
- Special Olympics Ontario has built partnerships with Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington (KFL&A) Public Health and Renfrew County Public Health. They have agreed to train all dental and optometry staff that work at their units and receive referrals from Special Olympics Ontario. Both would like to provide dental and eye screenings within schools, and to additionally target seniors with ID.
- Special Olympics Chile is working to expand its partnership with the Universidad del Desarrollo to more courses of study, including medicine, medical technology, and ophthalmology. The aim is to engage students in conducting health screenings and providing follow-up care when necessary.
- Special Olympics Australia has built strong relationships with 2 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) in 2 states (Tasmania and Queensland), as well as the South Australian ID Health Unit. PHNs work to streamline health services particularly for those at risk of poor health outcomes and to better coordinate care so people receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time. Special Olympics Australia hopes to use this partnership to strengthen the message for athletes to get regular checks by their general practitioner.
- Special Olympics Mauritania played an active role in the issuance of Law 063 in early 2021. This law provides, among other rights, health insurance for the people with disabilities, in partnership with the ministries of social affairs, health, youth and sports. The government has assigned Special Olympics Mauritania to assist its members in obtaining this health insurance. This includes providing education and awareness sessions for athletes and families on the documentation they need to present to obtain first a disability card and then a health insurance card. To date, 221 Special Olympics Mauritania athletes have obtained health insurance coverage. Additionally, the SO Mauritania team also provides follow-up to help speed the issuance of the health insurance card.
- In October 2022, the Latin American Association of Optometry and Optics (ALDOO, by its Spanish shortened form) held its annual meeting, as well as the VIII Meeting of Directors and Deans of Latin American Schools of Optometry and Optics, in Lima, Peru. A planned 20-minute awareness-raising presentation sparked such enthusiasm and urgency that it became a 90-minute action-planning session. As a follow-on from that meeting, Special Olympics and ALDOO are developing an MOU to spur the inclusion of intellectual disability content in optometry and optics curricula in countries throughout the region.



Health Messenger Peter Ispold (Slovakia) practices camera interview skills and delivering health messages while at a media training workshop.



Health Messenger Reynaldo Montoya delivers remarks at the Missing Billion launch event at the World Health Summit in Berlin, Germany.

Positioning Special Olympics as a Keystone in Disability and Health

There are an increasing number of examples of how Special Olympics Health is building on excellence in programming and adding to build up the field of disability-inclusive health.

 Inclusive Health Needs Assessment (US): Special Olympics Programs in over 20 US states undertook a project to identify training, technical assistance, and resource needs among local and state public health departments. Collectively, they gathered input from 95 adults with ID, 76 caregivers of persons with ID, and 106 representatives of health agencies through focus groups and interviews. Based on those conversations, Special Olympics developed a survey to which over 250 health agency officials responded.

Nearly half (49%) of survey respondents reported that they did not receive disability awareness training; 61% did not receive adequate training to include people with ID in their Programs and services; and 34% stated that people with ID and/or their caregivers were not engaged in the planning and delivery of services and Programs. Over half (55%) cited awareness as a factor preventing inclusive practices, and two-thirds (64%) of staff were extremely likely to include people with ID in their Programs and services if provided knowledge, skill, and technical assistance for accommodation. In 2023, Special Olympics Programs will be conducting trainings, providing technical assistance, and developing resources to help bridge the gaps identified by this needs assessment.

- *"A Step Towards Achieving Equitable Nutrition Care and Health Promotion for the Special Olympics Population"*: With the support from Special Olympics, the University of Saint Joseph in Connecticut is working to validate an existing dietary assessment tool for use with people with ID. The impetus for this study was seeing individuals referred out of Healthy Athletes screenings struggle to obtain nutrition care: professionals were willing to see athletes, but the lack of validated assessment tools affected the reimbursements provided by health insurance. The validation of the dietary assessment tool stands to enhance the delivery of reimbursable nutrition services to this population.
- World Health Organization (WHO) Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities. In 2022, the WHO developed their first ever report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities. This report was a follow-up to the 2021 World Health Assembly resolution on health for persons with disabilities and the 2011 World Disability Report. Special Olympics reviewed the draft report and submitted comments and additional data. When the report was released, it was pleasing to see that the WHO had cited Special Olympics' 2019 prevalence report and data documenting a higher rate of obesity among athletes than the general population, as well as a Special Olympics athlete's remarks at the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Conference of States Parties.

In addition to the roles, described above, that Health Messenger voices have played in shaping and amplifying the outputs of the Missing Billion Initiative (MBI). 2022 saw Special Olympics and MBI engage in discussions about how to collaborate further—moving beyond awareness-raising to action. MBI's framework and toolkit for assessing health system inclusion holds great promise as an outline for organizing the work of regional centers of excellence in inclusive health ("the Rosemary Collaboratory") and structuring the future Global Report on the Health of Persons with Disabilities.

Activating for Awareness

Special Olympics Health programming received strong media coverage in 2022 due to the team's significant focus on media and public relations.

Altogether, there were over 8,000 media mentions worldwide covering Special Olympics Health between January and December 2022. The ad equivalency of these outlets—including major national publications, numerous radio shows, podcasts, and influential blogs with a broad global reach amounted to over \$35 million. Notable outlets that provided coverage include Medical Marketing + Media, Authority Magazine, CBS Sports Radio, FanSided, FOX Sports Radio, SiriusXM, Sports Byline USA, and TalkSPORT. Earned media efforts were focused on securing opportunities around the Global Golisano Health Leadership Awards, Super Bowl LVI Radio Row, Special Olympics USA Games 2022 in Orlando, the Unified Cup 2022 in Detroit, thought leadership pieces for major media, the Golisano Foundation Executive Director's visit to South Africa, and supporting communications efforts around Mission Moment 1.

Health Message Training

Leading up to the 2022 USA Games, the Unified Cup in Detroit, and World Games 2023 in Berlin, Special Olympics staff and athlete Health Messengers underwent an important message training aimed at strengthening their ability to communicate about the organization's health initiatives and impact. Through this training, they learned how to effectively discuss programmatic Special Olympics health work and how it serves as a model for design inclusive health policy, enabling them to confidently engage with the media, as well as existing and potential partners.

MyHealth

In 2022, Special Olympics launched an online hub of health education resources designed specifically for athletes with intellectual disabilities—providing them with visually engaging materials that allow them to learn more about their health at their own pace. This is the first time that Special Olympics has created an interactive online platform geared towards teaching people with intellectual disabilities about creating healthy habits. By providing access to this vital information in an easily accessible way, SO aims to empower athletes with the knowledge and tools they need to take control of their own health and well-being to ultimately improve their quality of life.



Special Olympics' MyHealth is an interactive platform geared towards people with ID about creating healthy habits



Special Olympics Ambassador and WWE Superstar Drew McIntyre partners with Health Messenger Daniel Fundora to speak to Super Bowl Radio Row media to bring the message of the need for health equity for people with ID

Minute Media Partnership

Special Olympics pursued a collaboration with Minute Media to expand their coverage and increase awareness about the achievements of athletes with intellectual disabilities. Minute Media provided content to showcase the abilities of Special Olympics athletes and promote the organization's mission and work in health, education, leadership, and sports. At USA Games in Orlando, Special Olympics Chief Health Officer and two Health Messengers introduced an audience of 70 Minute Media staff and reporters to the impact of Special Olympics' health work which, soon after, formed the basis of two health-themed articles in Minute Media subsidiaries FanSided and Mental Floss.

Super Bowl Radio Row

For the ninth consecutive year, Special Olympics capitalized on the Super Bowl media environment to promote the organization's mission and health programming across six days of activation. Despite a challenging hybrid Radio Row environment, Special Olympics was able to successfully charter new waters alongside partners including WWE and NFL Foundation, and a record 10 celebrity supporters including Drew McIntyre (WWE Superstar), Gracie Hunt (Miss Kansas USA), Elisabeth Rohm (actress), and Emma Broyles (Miss America 2022). This year's supporters were paired-up for Unified interviews with Health Messengers Stephanie Ching, Daniel Fundora, Justin Hunsinger, and Renee Manfredi, who were once again eager to spread the word about the positive impact the organization has had on their everyday lives, including how they continue to navigate the pandemic, keep up with their training schedules, and their dedication to leading healthy lifestyles.

Collectively, earned media interviews amassed a **potential reach of over 1.2 billion** with message saturation throughout. Media drove consumers to Special Olympics' social channels and hashtags, both on-air and through their own digital platforms, and praised the work of the organization and the accomplishments of Special Olympics' athletes across the globe.

Elizabeth: "I again think Special Olympics' north star is very much what we all need; to feel like we have a community and that we're surrounded by a spirit of never giving up. But again, back to inclusive health, in order to participate in these sports these athletes need to be at their greatest health...and there are gross disparities in the medical industry for people that have intellectual disabilities and for them to thrive and compete at their best, they need to get medical screenings. They have many more medical complications and oftentimes die before people without intellectual disabilities. So, I'm really inspired that Special Olympics approaches the athlete completely and holistically and not only creates these sports events but also educates doctors and students on how to be inclusive with health. They've trained over 300,000 people and actually Stephanie has been a part of that and talked to them and educated them herself. They've also provided over two million screenings for athletes, so they're really committed to leveling the playing field so that the athletes are as strong and healthy as possible when they have those great moments of joy and being in the community when they are participating in their sports."

Host: "How does it feel for you when you compete at any of those sports that you like? It must give you a sense of purpose or fulfillment because it sounds to me like you love sports like I do as well."

Stephanie: "I love sports because it is really important to me in my life...I made a lot of new friends and I'm happy and I'm confident to have a healthy body and mind...[as] I am a health messenger."



Special Olympics 😎 February 11 at 11:27 AM · 🚱

We are thrilled that Elisabeth Rohm chose to roll up her sleeves and join us in the fight for inclusion. Her passion shines through during this interview with Rick Tittle from Sports Byline USA, part of her amazing contributions to this year's Super Bowl Radio Row. Listen to it in full here Shttps://www.youtube.com/watch? v=4i2i9p0HJS0&t=4s #InclusionRevolution



Mission Moment Activation

For the fourth year in a row, Special Olympics launched a powerful marketing and communication activation, known as Mission Moment, to increase awareness of the health disparities faced by people with intellectual disabilities and the need for equitable access to quality healthcare. The initiative was incredibly successful, with an in-kind media value of \$5 million and an impressive 68.79 million impressions. Additionally, the accompanying TV and video content garnered over 123,009 views, further amplifying key messages—bringing attention to an often-overlooked issue.

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2022 has been a year of global recognition for Special Olympics, as the organization has received multiple awards for impactful content promoting inclusive health.





Awards

2022 has been a year of global recognition for Special Olympics, as the organization has received **multiple awards** for impactful content promoting inclusive health. One of the major highlights was Special Olympics being announced as the recipient of the **Sharecare Emmy Award** for the video that highlights the health disparities faced by people with intellectual disabilities around the world. This video not only sheds light on the issue but also celebrates the organization's work and achievements in closing the gap in care. Additionally, Special Olympics won the prestigious **Telly Award** for the fitness campaign *School of Strength*, judged by leaders from television, streaming networks, and production companies, including Netflix, Dow Jones, celebrity Jennifer Garner, A&E Networks, Hearst Media, Nickelodeon, ESPN Films, and Vimeo. These accolades serve as a testament to the organization's ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity and accessibility in health and fitness, inspiring continued progress through compelling content.

In 2022, Special Olympics' efforts to promote inclusive health on social media have resulted in 1.3M impressions and 26K engagements, and #InclusiveHealth earner 33M impressions. On YouTube, Special Olympics Health videos that were posted in 2022 amassed over 85K impressions.



Addendum A: Match Funding



Addendum B: Metrics Charts

	Special Olympics Africa		Special Olympics Asia Pacific		Special Olympics East Asia		Special Olympics Europe Eurasia		Special Olympics Latin America		Special Olympics Middle East/North Africa		Special Olympics North America (non-US)	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Athletes in Young Athletes	4,986	10,972	27,310	6,550	5,000	529	5,155	12,353	2,000	4,476	785	3,340	170	15,048
Athletes in Fitness	11,410	7,354	8,223	721	1,156	2,616	9,653	2,038	3,000	1,324	227	1,461	3,000	32,072
Total HA screenings	2,500	8,171	2,000	2,706	500	2,673	6,000	4,238	2,500	5,755	500	3,242	2,500	1,764
# of Clinical Volunteers trained at HA	125	346	100	349	20	167	175	193	125	394	25	526	125	358
# of Student Volunteers trained at HA	125	347	100	93	25	206	175	202	125	722	25	687	125	197
Health Care Providers Trained outside of HA	600	438	650	363	250	73	400	258	500	721	200	400	1,500	11
Students Trained outside of HA	40	600	40	133	140	58	270	257	1,000	1,235	150	106	350	202
Community Health Workers trained	20	337	10	320	10	145	20	202	30	152	10	169	10	5
Health Messengers trained	85	300	85	48	12	9	275	97	50	64	70	94	85	6
Health Messengers activated	25	223	25	39	6	2	75	102	60	87	50	84	55	8

Special Olympics, Inc

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