

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES, CHANGING LIVES

2025 Special Olympics Health Report



Special Olympics
Health

MADE POSSIBLE BY **Golisano** FOUNDATION



Special Olympics Health activities are supported by many sources, including in the United States by Grant Number NU27DD000021 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with \$18.1 M (64%) financed with U.S. Federal funds and \$10.2 M (36%) supported by non-federal sources.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025, Special Olympics Health strengthened, scaled, and accelerated programming. The movement reached more athletes and families, improved data quality and accountability, and elevated the voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in healthcare—helping ensure they are seen, heard, and served worldwide.

The Healthy Communities model, in which Special Olympics Programs implement PATH to Health Equity programming, expanded in global reach. **This year, Belize, Brazil, Ecuador, Jamaica, Newfoundland, and Saskatchewan joined the existing Programs to create 160 Healthy Communities sites.**

At the Golisano Foundation's 40th Anniversary celebration in Rochester, NY, seven new Global Golisano Health Leadership Award recipients were honored for their work advancing health equity for people with IDD. Sargent Shriver Global Messengers Margaret Turley and Yeruult Batbayar oversaw the award presentation.

The cash and value-in-kind (VIK) funding secured in 2025 reflect a strong investment in scaling inclusive health work worldwide. In total, \$32,212,222 in cash contributions were secured and an additional \$30,815,815 was secured in value-in-kind (VIK).

PREVENTION

Program quality and growth were the focus in 2025. Regional training on early childhood development and expansion of health promotion-focused e-learning strengthened program quality. In March, **over 2,000 children were engaged in the largest World Games activation of Young Athletes in Special Olympics history.** The Young Athletes app reached over 2,200 users globally, expanding access to high quality early childhood resources.

Reinforcing global standards and consistent fitness models, Fitness Implementation Guide trainings were conducted in all regions. New lesson plans for High 5 for Fitness were launched, providing developmentally appropriate fitness resources for youth ages 8-21. The Fitness app went live with an initial reach of 1,542 users in the U.S. Athlete Recovery Areas were integrated into all major Games, supporting readiness and recovery. **And the SONA Move Challenge engaged 400 participants across 36 Programs with 80% of participants reporting increased confidence in physical activity and healthy eating.**

ASSESSMENT

Healthy Athletes® conducted 105,486 screenings globally; a 7% increase compared with 2024. The screenings generated 4,685 urgent and 18,757 non-urgent referrals and 8,632 pairs of prescription eyewear were

provided at no charge. Over half of all screenings are now digitized, facilitating future scale up.

At the Special Olympics World Winter Games Turin 2025, Healthy Athletes 2.0 was offered across 7 disciplines; **883 athletes from 77 delegations received 1,854 screenings, generating 960 referrals and 150 pairs of prescription eyewear.** To support future expansion, 22 Mentors and Clinical Director candidates were trained from Europe Eurasia and Middle East/North Africa.

TRAINING

Workforce development remained a top priority. This year 21,127 clinicians and students were trained at Healthy Athletes events. Beyond events, 24,508 clinicians and students received training, and Community Health Worker training expanded to 1,958 participants globally. **The Golisano School of Health Sciences recorded 10,711 completed health courses,** while Inclusive Health Fundamentals now reaches 148 schools—supporting broader adoption of inclusive practices in education and clinical training. And, to increase uptake globally, low bandwidth versions of the Inclusive Health Fundamental modules were released in all Special Olympics official languages.

HEALTH SYSTEMS

Special Olympics continued elevating the presence and voices of people with IDD in

major global fora in 2025. The land mark report, *Focusing on the Invisible*, was released publicly in September. The report comes out of the groundbreaking global initiative Rosemary Collaboratory and its development was overseen by experts from WHO, UNICEF, Clinton Health Access Initiative, and from across the Special Olympics movement. Findings culminated in four key recommendations for policy change with feasible steps governments are urgently asked to act on. **“Give us a say and the supports we need to use our voices, claim our health, and live our best lives”** says David Duncan, Chair of the Special Olympics Global Athlete Leadership Council who helped shape and steer the report. Special Olympics was also invited by WHO to join the foundational committee of the Disability Health Equity Network, reinforcing its role in shaping inclusive health systems globally.

ACTIVATING FOR AWARENESS

Communications amplified reach and visibility. Special Olympics Health generated **2,495 global media mentions, reaching a combined 5.81 billion readership and an estimated \$56.08M in advertising equivalency.** Social content expanded to 327 health-focused posts, generating 2.24 million impressions and 50,010 engagements, with average engagement rates rising from 1.47% in 2024 to 3.33% in 2025. The athlete-led launch post for *Focusing on the Invisible* was the top-performing health post of the year, with 470,880 impressions and a 21% engagement rate.

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Evaluation strengthened evidence and improved programs. **Project ALL STAR enrolled 165 athletes across six U.S. Programs,** expanding in-person fitness assessments and wearable-based physical activity tracking while building a pipeline for manuscripts and dashboards. Early childhood evaluation launched baseline data collection in 23 classrooms, and a Family Health Education pilot in Vermont and Louisiana (27 family units) showed significant decreases in BMI for both athletes and caregivers. Work on the Health Passport progressed through literature review, framework development, and stakeholder engagement to inform a new mobile tool supporting people with communication challenges in health encounters.



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES MAP

Healthy Communities work was newly initiated in 4 countries and 2 Canadian provinces (Belize, Brazil, Ecuador, Jamaica, Newfoundland, and Saskatchewan), bringing the total number of sites where Healthy Communities has been initiated up to 160. This surpasses the goal Special Olympics had of reaching 150 Special Olympics Programs by the end of 2026.

Healthy Communities addresses health inequities through the P.A.T.H. to health equity framework:

PREVENTION

Ongoing programs that promote health, fitness, child development, and social-emotional health. It is a lifespan approach, from Young Athletes to older adults.

ASSESSMENT

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

TRAINING

Curricula and training for the health-care workforce, focused on inclusion and improving quality of care delivered to people with IDD.

HEALTH SYSTEMS

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

62 NORTH AMERICA

- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California (Northern/Nevada)
- California (Southern)
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming
- Belize
- Canada - Alberta
- Canada - British Columbia
- Canada - Manitoba
- Canada - Newfoundland
- Canada - Northwest Territories
- Canada - Nova Scotia
- Canada - Ontario
- Canada - Prince Edward Island
- Canada - Quebec
- Canada - Saskatchewan
- Jamaica
- Trinidad and Tobago

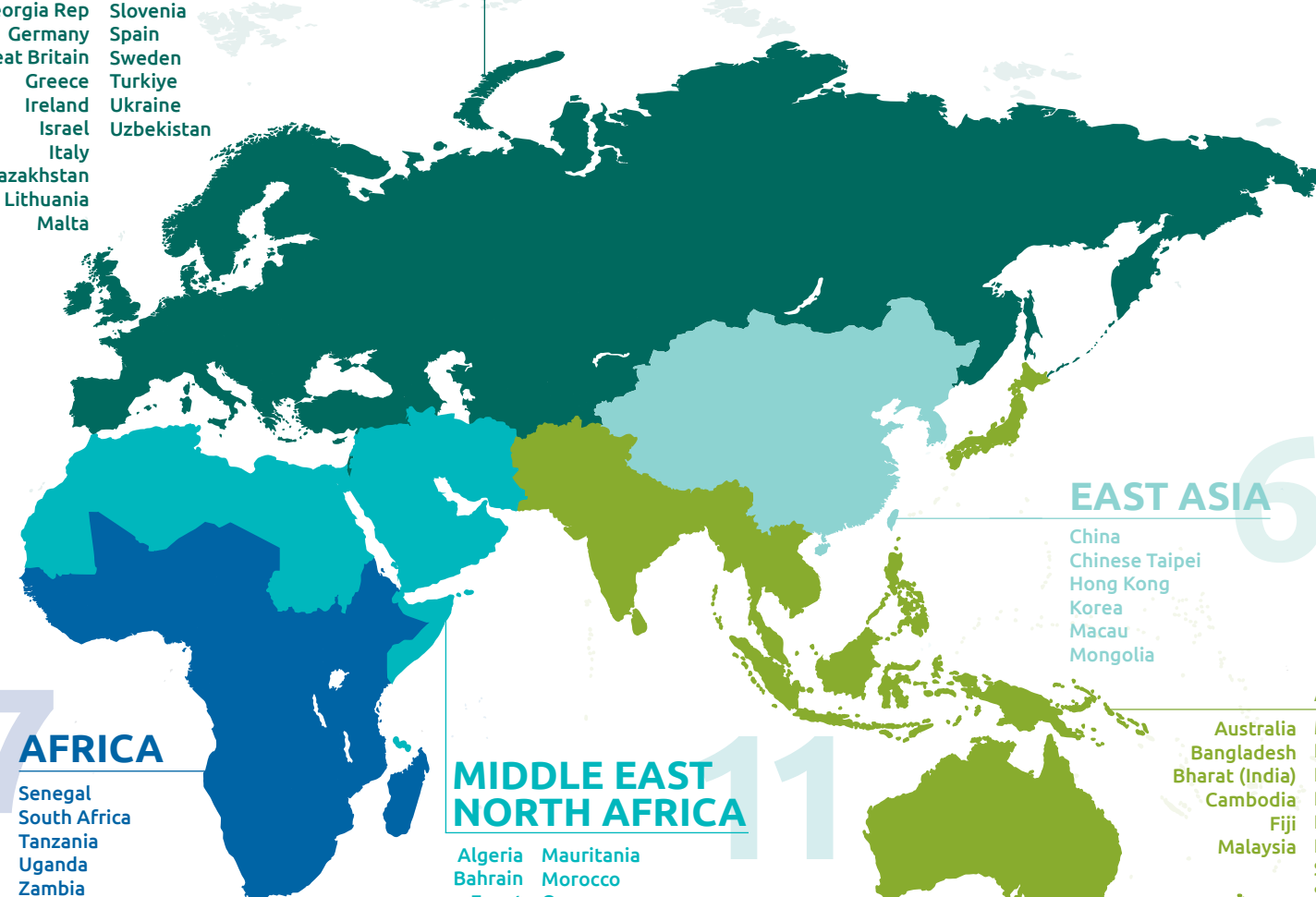


17 LATIN AMERICA

- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Puerto Rico
- Venezuela

30 EUROPE EURASIA

- Albania
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bosnia Herzegovina
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- France
- Georgia Rep
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Greece
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Kazakhstan
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Turkiye
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan



17 AFRICA

- Botswana
- Cote D'Ivoire
- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mauritius
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

11 MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA

- Algeria
- Bahrain
- Egypt
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Oman
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates

6 EAST ASIA

- China
- Chinese Taipei
- Hong Kong
- Korea
- Macau
- Mongolia

17 ASIA PACIFIC

- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Bharat (India)
- Cambodia
- Fiji
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Nippon (Japan)
- Pakistan
- Papua New Guinea
- Samoa
- Serendib (Sri Lanka)
- Thailand
- Timor Leste
- Vietnam

160 PROGRAMS

GOLISANO HEALTH LEADERSHIP AWARD EVENT

October 2, 2025

In October, Special Olympics presented the prestigious Global Golisano Health Leadership Award to the 5th cohort of global health leaders. The award is the highest Special Olympics honor for health partners. The ceremony was held during the Golisano Foundation's 40th anniversary celebration in Rochester, NY and was an opportunity to recognize not only the honorees but the enduring partnership between philanthropist Tom Golisano, the Golisano Foundation, and Special Olympics.

The event was attended by Mr. Golisano and members of the Golisano family, Special Olympics Chairman Dr. Tim Shriver, Special Olympics CEO Mary Davis, Chief Inspiration Officer Loretta Claiborne, as well as key Golisano Foundation partners from across New York and Florida. The evening was hosted by Sargent Shriver Global Messengers Margaret Turley (Ireland) and Yeruult Batbayar (Mongolia).



DR. SIMEON AFOLABI

Clinical Director, Healthy Hearing – Special Olympics Nigeria

For over 25 years, Dr. Simeon Afolabi has served as an audiologist in public and private sectors across Nigeria. As the Founder and CEO of BSA Speech and Language Centre and a Healthy Hearing Clinical Director for Special Olympics Nigeria, he has expanded access to inclusive audiology services for individuals with IDD. He has organized over 30 Healthy Hearing screenings in rural and urban communities across five of Nigeria's six geopolitical regions. He also champions inclusive health training nationwide, training an estimated 700 healthcare professionals and 1,000 medical students to provide audiological care for people with IDD, strengthening communication skills and inclusive practices.



PROF. DR. TOH TECK HOCK

*Regional Clinical Advisor, Health Promotion – Special Olympics Asia Pacific
Clinical Director, Health Promotion and MedFest – Special Olympics Malaysia*

Dr. Toh Teck Hock is a pediatrician committed to ensuring that all children can access the support they need to thrive. His approach emphasizes the power of both community-level engagement and country-level partnerships to create inclusive health systems. In 2006, he co-founded Agape Center in Sarawak, Malaysia, a children's developmental clinic focused on early diagnosis and early childhood intervention. He serves as a Clinical Director for Health Promotion and as a Regional Clinical Advisor for Special Olympics Asia Pacific, while also contributing to national IDD inclusion policies by serving on committees in the Malaysian Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.



DR. SHAMSIYA MURAT

Clinical Director, Opening Eyes – Special Olympics Mongolia

Dr. Shamsiya Murat, a pediatric ophthalmologist in Mongolia's only public children's hospital, has worked for over 25 years to improve eye care for children. Since becoming involved with Special Olympics in 2015, she has supported initiatives aimed at improving healthcare access and care for children with IDD and their families. Dr. Murat translated and distributed the eye screening guidelines published by Special Olympics, which are now widely used by medical professionals in Mongolia. She has also organized trainings to help health professionals deliver inclusive services by raising awareness, reducing stigma, and fostering empathy in clinical settings. Through early diagnosis and compassionate care, her work has helped prevent vision loss and address critical health concerns among individuals with IDD.



ULSTER UNIVERSITY – NORTHERN IRELAND

Ulster University has supported and strengthened Special Olympics Ireland health programming since 2013. The university has helped improve healthcare access for Special Olympics athletes and people with IDD by educating students and building strong community partnerships. They equip students with skills to address the needs of individuals with IDD by integrating IDD-focused modules into several degree programs, including medicine, nursing, and allied health professions. The university has also collaborated with regional health authorities to develop community-based health initiatives that prioritize individuals with IDD and with schools to promote whole-school approaches to fitness.



DR. MARÍA TERESA BARÁN WASILCHUK

Minister of Health - Paraguay

Dr. María Teresa Barán Wasilchuk serves as the Minister of Health in Paraguay. Since taking office, she has made inclusive health a national priority, driving significant progress in practices and policies to better serve people with IDD. Dr. Barán's leadership has positioned Paraguay as a model for how health systems can become more inclusive when they prioritize the needs of individuals with IDD, with the Ministry of Health initiating a three-year strategic collaboration with Special Olympics Paraguay to address health disparities faced by individuals with IDD.

GOLISANO HEALTH LEADERSHIP AWARD EVENT CONTINUED

October 2, 2025



DR. YOUSEF ALAWADHI

*Regional Clinical Advisor, Special Smiles - Special Olympics Middle East North Africa
Regional Clinical Director, Special Smiles – Special Olympics Kuwait*

Dr. Yousef Alawadhi is driven by service and community. Dr. Alawadhi has been involved in the Special Olympics movement since 2019, after attending the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi. Following the Games, he established Special Olympics Kuwait's first Special Olympics Healthy Athletes discipline, Special Smiles. Dr. Alawadhi then expanded the scope of healthcare available to athletes, leading the establishment of seven Healthy Athletes disciplines within Special Olympics Kuwait. He's also been a vital force in donating and securing medical equipment for Special Olympics Kuwait, including by forging a partnership with Philips Sonicare to provide electric toothbrushes to athletes free of charge.



DR. KELLYE KNUEPPEL

*Regional Clinical Advisor – Special Olympics North America/Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Foundation
Opening Eyes® Program
Clinical Director, Opening Eyes – Special Olympics Wisconsin*

Dr. Kellye Knueppel has been an integral part of growing the Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Foundation Opening Eyes® discipline of Healthy Athletes® for over 24 years in her home state of Wisconsin, across North America, and around the world. Dr. Knueppel has overseen 9,381 Opening Eyes screenings, delivered over 8,000 pairs of glasses, and trained hundreds of healthcare professionals and students. This work has improved the quality of life for athletes in big ways and small. Beyond Wisconsin, Dr. Knueppel has volunteered in the Opening Eyes Program at 9 Special Olympics World Games. Her passion for vision care coupled with her belief in the transformative power of sport has fueled the immeasurable impact and joy she's brought to athletes and healthcare professionals globally.



MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA

Regional Highlight

In 2025, Program staff in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) Region forged new country-level partnerships and held significant training events.

Through their involvement in Rosemary Collaboratory, Special Olympics Morocco has helped launch the Coalition for Health Rights of People with Intellectual Disabilities. The national initiative has a stated mission to advocate for accessible, inclusive, and rights-based health systems supported by strong laws and public policies.

In Mauritania, staff expanded their efforts beyond the capital and to the city of Kiffa, where they provided a training to more than 100 healthcare students and providers for the first time. Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, a collaboration between Special Olympics and the Health Ministry helped train nearly 530 health professionals in cities across the country.

The year also saw some exciting firsts: Special Olympics Algeria and Kuwait conducted Healthy Young Athletes screenings for the first time, in November and December. Finally, and most notably, **Special Olympics Morocco hosted the first-ever Regional Health Messenger Training for Aging Athletes, welcoming 12 athletes from 8 countries for**

sessions tailored to the 40+ year age group. The participants and Programs are excited to continue growing the work of helping athletes remain healthy while aging.



Fatima lost 22 pounds since beginning her Fit 5 journey.

Encouraged to lose weight more than three years ago, **Special Olympics Algeria athlete Fatima Zahra found the Fit5 program both simple and motivating.** She and her family loved it so much that they decided to implement its routines at home, turning healthy habits into a daily lifestyle. With guidance from her dedicated coach and the unwavering support

of her mother, she embraced the activities with remarkable enthusiasm. According to her most recent weight measurements, taken at Healthy Athletes on November 30, **Fatima lost 22 pounds since beginning her Fit 5 journey.** This milestone reflects her hard work, discipline, and positive attitude.





PREVENTION

2025 METRICS: PREVENTION

OF NEW YOUNG ATHLETES

INTERNATIONAL (JAN-DEC)		UNITED STATES (AUG-JULY)	
Y4 TARGET	REPORTED	Y4 TARGET	REPORTED
16,000	27,224	10,000	19,951
170% complete		199% complete	

OF FAMILY ATTENDING HEALTH FORUMS/HEALTH EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL (JAN-DEC)		UNITED STATES (AUG-JULY)	
Y4 TARGET	REPORTED	Y4 TARGET	REPORTED
8,000	12,452	8,000	6,185
155% complete		77% complete	

OF ATHLETES IN FITNESS

INTERNATIONAL (JAN-DEC)		UNITED STATES (AUG-JULY)	
Y4 TARGET	REPORTED	Y4 TARGET	REPORTED
40,000	39,733	80,000	65,377
99% complete		82% complete	

EARLY CHILDHOOD & FAMILIES

Eye on the Outcome: Children with IDD Make Health and Developmental Gains

In 2025, Special Olympics deepened its commitment to holistic early childhood development (ECD) through a focus on program delivery that ensures fidelity, consistency, and measurable impact for children and families.

Quality implementation of Young Athletes served as the foundation for ECD programming growth and sustainability, with a strong focus on quality training throughout the year.

Two major regional trainings in the past year focused on ECD. In December 2025, Special Olympics Morocco hosted 11 Programs across the Middle East North Africa region, including one new to the work, while the East Asia region trained 70 coaches, teachers, and Program staff in April 2025. Both trainings focused on key resources, like the Young Athletes Lesson Plans, Inclusive Adaptations, and

Healthy Young Athletes. In-person training was complemented by virtual trainings that strengthened Special Olympics Program staff's understanding and quality implementation. These included a Young Athletes staff onboarding and Child and Family Health program model course.

YOUNG ATHLETES AT THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD WINTER GAMES TURIN 2025

In March 2025, Young Athletes made history at the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy with the largest Young Athletes activation ever at a World Games. The hybrid activation **engaged more than 2,000 children across Italy, bringing inclusive early childhood play to life through both in-person participation at the Games and virtual engagement with schools nationwide.**

CHILD & FAMILY HEALTH

The Child & Family Health model continues to offer an innovative approach to supporting the health and development of children with IDD by providing direct intervention, family education and support, and access to community healthcare services. In 2025, eight new Programs implemented the model – Arkansas, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Colombia, Kansas, Malaysia, Namibia, and Portugal. Having now been implemented across 25 Programs, the model allows for adaptation for implementation in school and community settings. In Colombia, the program was implemented with 60 children in a local preschool, reaching families with children as young as two and filling critical country-level gaps in health and family education services.

YOUNG ATHLETES APP

In 2025, the Young Athletes App reached 2,231 total users, expanding access to high-quality early childhood resources for families globally. The Phase 3 evaluation of the app was completed in 2025 and findings demonstrated strong perceived impact, with **82% of caregivers reporting support for their child's development, 65% noting increased play with their child, and 75% expressing satisfaction and willingness to recommend the app.** In addition to continued technical enhancements, Special

Olympics established a strategy to embed the Young Athletes app into early childhood health and education systems through participation in the Georgetown University Thrive Center Innovation Hub Fellowship. This work resulted in the Young Athletes App Implementation Toolkit, which positions health providers as a key entry point for connecting new families to the app and equips Special Olympics Programs with tailored messaging to support outreach and partnership development.

athletes and caregivers together to build nutrition knowledge and support sustainable behavior change at the family level. With strong outcomes and impact, Phase 2's completion led to the finalization of the Family Health Education model, and the work is now primed for global launch and growth.

"Having all these experts under one roof gave us a holistic understanding of how to care for our children, and now I know exactly where to seek medical and social support. **I'm thankful I attended because I'm more informed and confident as a parent.**"

– Amini, parent of a Special Olympics Kenya athlete on their experience at a Family Health Forum for children and families in July 2025

FAMILY HEALTH EDUCATION

In 2025, Special Olympics advanced the impact of its family health education programming through both global resource development and evidence-based implementation. New, structured Family Health Forum resources on Positive Parenting were successfully launched across Programs, including Kenya, Hong Kong, and Mongolia, equipping families with practical strategies to support their child's health and development across all stages of life. The global resource expansion was complemented by the completion of Phase 2 of the eight-week Family Health Education model, which brings



FITNESS

Eye on the Outcome: Athletes Live Active and Healthy Lives

Building on resources launched in 2024, all seven regions received targeted trainings on the Fitness Implementation Guide, which reinforced clear standards, current programming models, and consistent approaches to quality fitness programming worldwide. This focus on quality implementation defined initiatives like Special Olympics Europe Eurasia's Inclusive Healthy Lifestyle Groups in Schools project, a three-year EU-supported project that concluded in October 2025 and **reached more than 6,000 students across 290+ schools in Estonia, Greece, Poland, and Berlin, Germany with inclusive education on nutrition, physical activity, and health literacy.** Complementing this work, Special Olympics Asia Pacific expanded year-round Unified Fitness Club programming in Malaysia and Vietnam through external grant funding from Lululemon reaching nearly 1,000 individuals with IDD and demonstrating measurable improvements in cardiovascular health, strength, flexibility, and physical activity for athletes and family members alike.

In 2025, deepening partnerships within the fitness and physical activity field also built capacity for Special Olympics to create more inclusive physical activity spaces for people with IDD. For example, the renewal of the partnership with the International Federation

of Adapted Physical Activity (IFAPA) was featured at the International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity (ISAPA) in June 2025, where Special Olympics led a Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) demonstration and training for adapted physical activity professionals. This year, Special Olympics also focused on designing and delivering fitness

Special Olympics conducted seven regional Fitness Captains Train-the-Trainers, resulting in the training of **1,333 new Fitness Captains throughout the year and bringing the lifetime total to 2,233.**

programming that responds to the diverse needs of athletes across the lifespan. After two rounds of pilots, the launch of the High 5 for Fitness Lesson Plans exemplified this approach by supporting developmentally appropriate fitness opportunities for youth ages 8–21, yielding high satisfaction among educators. Additional work began to support aging athletes and athletes with mobility challenges.

FITNESS APP

In 2025, Special Olympics strengthened its use of technology to extend the reach and

consistency of fitness programming, with a focus on scalable and engaging digital programming. Following successful MVP (minimum viable product) piloting, Version 1 development was completed and piloted by 11 Special Olympics Programs and 430 athletes between August and October 2025. The pilot found athletes were able to easily use the app and connect to a wearable device. The leaderboard and tracking of different healthy habits were highlighted as two favorite features in the app. The Fitness App launched publicly in July 2025 and grew to 1,542 users by year end. Engagement accelerated with the **first large-scale in-app fitness challenge, SONA Move, which reached 409 participants across 36 US state Programs – 70% of whom were athletes – with nearly 79% tracking activity for 30 or more days. Survey results underscored the app's impact, with 80% of participants reporting increased confidence in physical activity and healthy eating, and 77% indicating they would participate in a future fitness challenge.**

FITNESS AND SPORT INTEGRATION

One of the key successes of fitness in 2025 was deeper integration with sport to ensure holistic support for athletes and equipping of coaches to promote overall health through sport experiences. Special Olympics

advanced this integration through targeted coach training, including the launch of an e-learning course focused on physical activity and physical literacy. Athlete Leadership also remained central through the Fitness Captains program, with trained Fitness Captains leading warm-ups and cool-downs and sharing health education tips with teammates during and beyond practice. In 2025, Special Olympics conducted seven regional Fitness Captains Train-the-Trainers, resulting in the training of **1,333 new Fitness Captains throughout the year and bringing the lifetime total to 2,233.** Major Games further reinforced the connection between sport and fitness. Building from the successful Performance Station concept, in 2025 Athlete Recovery Areas were introduced at the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin (March 2025), the Unified Volleyball World Cup in Poland (October 2025), and the Special Olympics Unified 3x3 Basketball World Cup in Puerto Rico (December 2025). These spaces were integrated into the competition space and supported athlete health and recovery through muscle relief, mobility support, and mind-body readiness.



LATIN AMERICA

Regional Highlight

In the Latin America Region, Special Olympics Paraguay and the Paraguayan government continued to lead the way in strengthening health systems for inclusion. The national legislature declared an action plan for healthcare for people with IDD to be in the national interest. Among the first steps in the action plan was to **begin implementing a training course entitled, "Inclusive Health: Accessible Health Care for People with Disabilities."** Special Olympics Paraguay developed the course with the Ministry of Health and National Institute of Health, and it is anticipated that beginning in 2026, it will become a mandatory training for all national public health employees. The Program also hosted a forum with the Ministry of Health and its office of ocular health, focusing on comprehensive screening and healthcare for people with autism.

Beyond these partnerships, Special Olympics Paraguay continued to run Healthy Young Athletes (HYA) programming, this time partnering with the General Pediatrics Hospital of the region of Acosta Ñu. Special Olympics Paraguay expects this to open doors to a future HYA collaboration directed at hospital resident doctors.

The past year also saw HYA expand to Special Olympics Colombia, who hosted two HYA events in the Medellín metro area in partnership with the Carla Cristina Foundation, screening a total of 57 children. Clinicians successfully referred one child to a cardiologist at a major hospital, and 14 children are currently receiving follow-up care through public health services after clinical volunteers found them to be at risk for acute malnutrition.

Special Olympics Chile expanded their health programming from 5 to 7 states within the country. Having sent new Clinical Director (CD) trainees to the 2024 Latin America Games, they launched Healthy Hearing and Opening Eyes in 2025. **Nearly 90% of their Clinical Directors led at least one Healthy Athletes event in 2025, logging more than 4,000 screenings in total.**

Jessica Cardona competes as a swimmer with Special Olympics Colombia. At an Opening Eyes event near the city of Medellín, her vision exam and prescription resulted in a new pair of glasses that have significantly improved her quality of life and sport abilities. Jessica says, **"My glasses have helped me a lot for going out and about, and they help me so much in sports. My headaches have started to go away, and they've taken away my eye strain. I really like them!"**





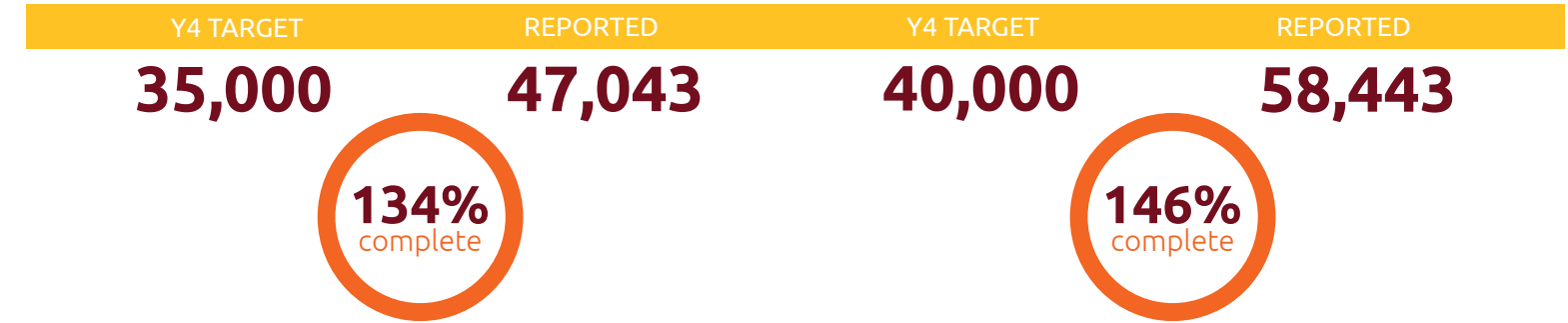
ASSESSMENT

2025 METRICS: ASSESSMENT

OF HEALTHY ATHLETES SCREENINGS

INTERNATIONAL (JAN-DEC)

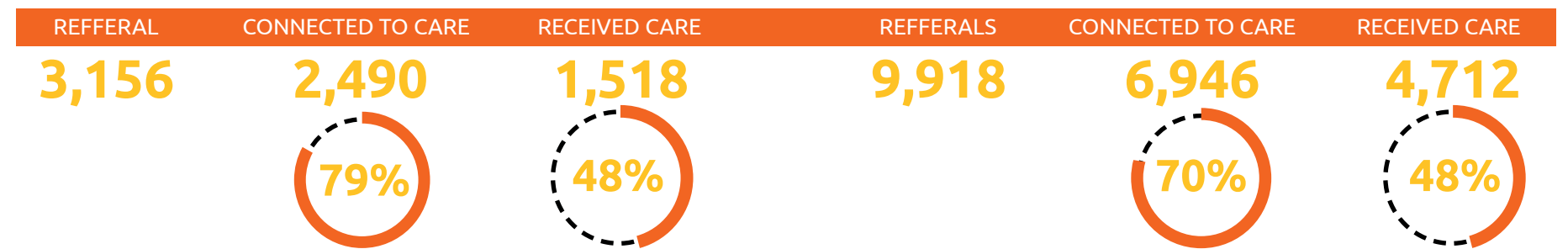
UNITED STATES (AUG-JULY)



FOLLOW UP CARE REPORTED (INTERNATIONAL)

URGENT

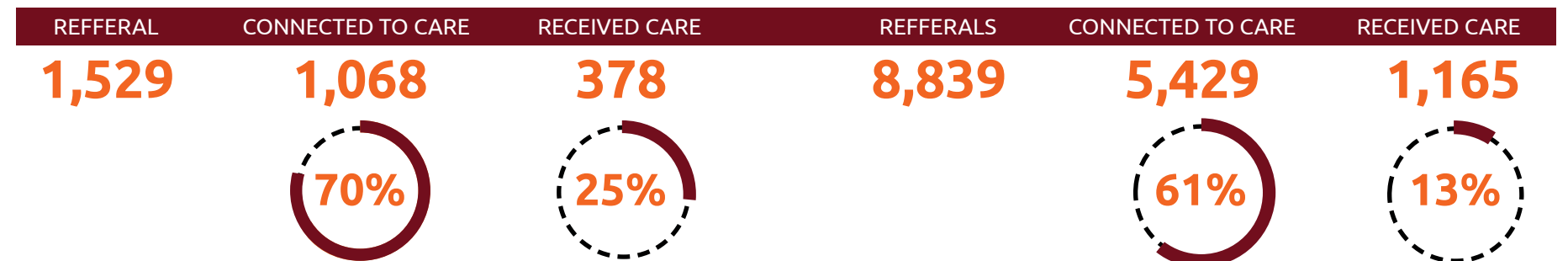
NON-URGENT



FOLLOW UP CARE REPORTED (UNITED STATES)

URGENT

NON-URGENT



HEALTHY ATHLETES®

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

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® provides accessible, evidence-based, inclusive health screenings and referrals for individuals with IDD. The program delivers screenings in nine distinct health disciplines, spanning head to toe, to address the unique health needs of Special Olympics athletes. Screenings that identify health issues or risks of preventable conditions lead to guided referrals, that Program staff and care coordinators use to connect athletes to appropriate follow-up care in their home communities.

Healthy Athletes continued to expand in 2025, particularly through the scaled piloting of Healthy Athletes 2.0. This updated programming integrates evidence-based screening tools, standardized referral criteria, and an enhanced electronic health record system. **In 2025, Special Olympics Programs worldwide conducted 105,486 Healthy Athletes screenings, generating 4,685 urgent and 18,757 non-urgent referrals for follow-up care due to identified health concerns or preventable risks. Additionally, 8,632 pairs of prescription eyewear were provided to athletes at no charge.** Of all screenings completed in 2025, 50.2% were digitized (48,621 HAS 1.0; 4,286 HAS 2.0), either live during a screening or within 90 days following a Healthy Athletes event. This

increased digitization improved the quality of available data, supporting evaluation and planning for continued program growth.

Healthy Athletes also served as a cornerstone of health engagement at the 2025 World Winter Games in Turin, Italy. The Games offered Healthy Athletes 2.0 across seven disciplines, including three delivered digitally. To strengthen capacity, 22 Mentors and Clinical Directors (CD) trained 18 new CD candidates from Special Olympics Europe Eurasia and Special Olympics Middle East/North Africa. This cohort was selected to expand leadership and improve access to health services in underrepresented areas. During the Games, 883 athletes from 77 delegations were served by 570 volunteers (250 clinicians and health professions students, and 320 general volunteers). A total of 1,854 individual screenings were completed, resulting in 960 referrals for follow-up care. Additionally, 150 pairs of prescription eyewear were distributed, addressing a common unmet need; up to 60% of athletes would benefit from an updated prescription.

In October 2025, the Healthy Athletes and Digital Health teams pivoted to secure a new vendor to complete development of the Healthy Athletes 2.0 System (HAS 2.0),

ensuring improved system functionality and data quality. This transition required postponing the planned Fall 2025 digital roll-out, leading U.S. Programs to begin implementing Healthy Athletes 2.0 using paper records. The global roll-out of Healthy Athletes 2.0 is scheduled for January 2026, with both lightweight and fully functional versions of HAS 2.0 planned for implementation later in 2026. During this transition, referral criteria

The Games offered Healthy Athletes 2.0 across seven disciplines, including three delivered digitally. To strengthen capacity, **22 Mentors and Clinical Directors (CD) trained 18 new CD candidates from Special Olympics Europe Eurasia and Special Olympics Middle East/North Africa.**

and sensitivity within Healthy Athletes 2.0 were re-evaluated to better prioritize referrals, improving accuracy and ensuring that referral volume remains manageable for Program staff and contracted care coordinators. These improvements aim to strengthen follow-up processes and ensure athletes receive the care indicated by their screening results.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

Referral follow-up is a critical component in ensuring comprehensive, closed-loop care for Special Olympics athletes. Of the 23,442 total referrals generated through global Healthy Athletes screenings in 2025, 40% were confirmed to have access to follow-up care, and 33% of those were confirmed to have received the necessary treatment. While progress continues, referral completion remains an area requiring focused attention to ensure that athletes' health needs are consistently met after screenings. To strengthen access to care, Special Olympics Programs continue to build community partnerships and develop inclusive provider directories that connect athletes to local, affordable health services.

In 2025, Special Olympics expanded its ongoing care connection initiative with National Care Advisors (NCA), assigning nurse case managers to directly support athletes and their families in navigating the US healthcare system and closing the loop on their Healthy Athletes referrals, all at no cost. **The initiative which served six U.S. Programs in 2024, supporting referrals across five Healthy Athletes disciplines, nearly doubled in the number of participating Programs (11) and supported referrals in seven disciplines in 2025. Among the participating cohort in 2025, 522 athletes received referrals resulting from screenings, 171 with urgent needs and 351 with non-urgent needs. Care coordinators followed up on referrals,**

HEALTHY ATHLETES® AT SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD WINTER GAMES TURIN 2025

833

ATHLETES
from 77 delegations

1,854

SCREENINGS
completed

570

volunteers

960

REFERRALS
for follow-up care

150

PAIRS OF PRESCRIPTION EYEWEAR

were distributed, addressing
a common unmet need

ensuring connection of 355 athletes to local providers, with 75 establishing new patient-provider relationships and 129 confirming scheduled care appointments.

This work offered valuable insight into systemic barriers commonly faced by individuals with IDD. The top challenges of care coordination in 2025 differ from the barriers to care identified in prior years. Most common barriers included the inability to contact the athlete or their caregiver, difficulty finding a provider given the athlete's insurance policy or lack of an insurance policy, and difficulty communicating with the athlete's designated contact regarding the referral or due to a language barrier. NCA care coordinators also assisted with identifying new providers, securing appointments, reactivating benefits, and helping families maximize the health resources available to them.

NATIONAL CARE ADVISORS STORY

In the summer of 2025, an 18 year old athlete from Washington (U.S.) received an urgent referral through Special Olympics Special Smiles® for significant dental concerns – tooth decay and wisdom tooth pain. His case was shared with NCA, to ensure he could access the follow-up care he needed.

During outreach, the NCA case manager learned that the athlete had not received dental care since 2019 and that his family believed he no longer had health insurance. After reviewing past insurance information, the case manager discovered that the athlete's Medicaid coverage had lapsed. She worked

closely with the family to submit the necessary documentation to reinstate the coverage, successfully securing backdated benefits and helping the family obtain new insurance cards and access the online insurance portal.

With coverage active again, the case manager ensured the athlete's primary care provider received updated insurance information, researched dental providers who accepted his insurance, and scheduled a dental appointment. She also provided the family with additional care options if more urgent dental needs arose before the visit.

During this process, the family shared that the athlete had a pending Medicaid Waiver application, but they were unsure of its status. The case manager contacted the state's Developmental Disabilities Administration and confirmed the waiver had been approved but was awaiting financial eligibility review. She then supported the family in completing the required paperwork to move the process forward. Through the coordinated support efforts of Special Olympics and National Care Advisors, the athlete regained essential health coverage, secured necessary dental care, and obtained long-term services that will support his continued wellbeing. This story reflects how professionalized care coordination helps families navigate complex systems and ensures Special Olympics athletes can access the care and resources they need.



NORTH AMERICA

Regional Highlight

Special Olympics North America helped further develop inclusive health programs in the Caribbean in 2025. During the 2025 Dutch Kingdom Games, which welcomed **more than 200 athletes with IDD from across the Caribbean, Special Olympics Curaçao hosted a dynamic Family Health Forum focused on healthy lifestyles, mental wellbeing, and aging with IDD.**

Families learned from a neuropsychologist who provided practical strategies to support daily routines, emotional health, and caregiver resilience. Likewise, a medical doctor specializing in elderly care shared expert guidance on supporting aging individuals with IDD. The response was so strong that both keynote speakers were invited to present again at a parents' evening at a special education school.

In Canada and the USA, Special Olympics Programs have continued to strengthen health systems for inclusion. In Ontario, Healthy Communities initiatives have enabled the Program to hire dedicated fellows to help build, expand and strengthen their health provider directory database across the province, ensuring a reliable network of trained providers for athletes.

Special Olympics Minnesota (SOMN) partnered with the Minnesota Department of Health's Diabetes Department to conduct interviews with 9 SOMN athletes to understand the unique social determinants of health impacting diabetes prevention and optimal diabetes care within the disability population. The department will use the information gathered in the interviews to help inform next steps for supporting more individuals with IDD.

Jillian Sitarz is a longtime athlete, coach, and dedicated Fitness Captain with Special Olympics Minnesota, active in basketball, bowling and flag football. She serves as a Fitness Captain and coach for the Team Minnesota Flag Football team, which will compete at USA Games in June 2026. Her Fitness Captain role has strengthened her leadership skills that she initially acquired in SOMN's Global Messenger and Athlete Leadership programs and deepened her commitment to athlete-led wellness. **She feels that her role has been instrumental in preparing her to coach for the USA Games.**





TRAINING

2025 METRICS: TRAINING

CLINICIANS & STUDENTS TRAINED AT HEALTHY ATHLETES

INTERNATIONAL (JAN-DEC)		UNITED STATES (AUG-JULY)	
Y4 TARGET	REPORTED	Y4 TARGET	REPORTED
2,355	9,599	10,000	11,528
<div style="text-align: center;">408% complete</div>		<div style="text-align: center;">115% complete</div>	

CLINICIANS & STUDENTS TRAINED AT NON-HEALTHY ATHLETES

INTERNATIONAL (JAN-DEC)		UNITED STATES (AUG-JULY)	
Y4 TARGET	REPORTED	Y4 TARGET	REPORTED
2,980	7,207	9,000	17,301
<div style="text-align: center;">242% complete</div>		<div style="text-align: center;">192% complete</div>	

TRAINING

Eye on the Outcome: Healthcare Workforce is Equipped to Provide Quality Care to People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

TRAINING CLINICIANS AND STUDENTS AT HEALTHY ATHLETES

Globally, 21,127 clinicians and students (7,170 clinicians and 13,957 students) were trained at Healthy Athletes events. A

large initiative in 2024, which continued into 2025, was the update of the Clinical Director (CD) training modules to prepare for the launch of Healthy Athletes 2.0. The updated training consists of 4 modules: Introduction to Intellectual and Developmental Disability; Special Olympics Health; discipline-specific CD training, and Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). The FAQ module was updated and reformatted to match the updated CD modules, and the new training modules went live in the fall of 2025. In addition, all CD modules were translated into the five official Special Olympics languages with closed caption translation completed in December 2025.

The blended learning format continues to be the standard of training new CDs. New CD candidates complete a pre- and post-module assessment, complete the 4 online modules, then are matched with a strong CD who has led several quality events in their discipline. The candidate shadows the CD for a Healthy

Athletes screening from start to finish, to complete their training. In late 2025, Regional Health teams committed to a new CD training target: fully training 80% of CD applicants within one year and having 80% of fully trained

"...being part of such a new and unique initiative was a rewarding experience, offering important lessons and insights into how we can strengthen our approach to inclusive and preventive healthcare."

– Dr. Tashi, a Healthy Athletes clinical volunteer in Bhutan

CDs lead an event within their first year. This new goal will support a stronger linkage between CDs trained and more athletes served through the expansion of Healthy Athletes screenings in all Special Olympics Regions. In preparation for the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, 18 new CDs and 22 existing CDs from the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia and Middle East North Africa Regions.

Dr. Tashi, a HA clinical volunteer in Bhutan, had this to say about their experience: "It was a valuable opportunity for me, though the task

was not without its challenges. In the process, I witnessed many medical conditions that require urgent attention, reminding me of the pressing need for timely interventions. I cannot fault individuals for missing regular checkups, as barriers in healthcare accessibility and the limitations of our system continue to pose significant obstacles. Despite these difficulties, being part of such a new and unique initiative was a rewarding experience, offering important lessons and insights into how we can strengthen our approach to inclusive and preventive healthcare."

TRAINING CLINICIANS AND STUDENTS BEYOND HEALTHY ATHLETES EVENTS

Community Health Worker (CHW) training continues to expand, with 1,958 Community Health Workers trained globally, an increase of almost 25% from 2024. Of those trained, 926 were trained using materials developed by the Special Olympics Health team and 1,032 through other methods/materials. Special Olympics Mongolia trained the most CHWs

(n=145) using Special Olympics developed materials, while Special Olympics Costa Rica also trained 145 CHWs using other materials/methods. In North America, Indiana trained 203 CHWs using training materials developed by the Indiana Complex Care Coordination Collaborative, while Washington trained 30 CHWs using Special Olympics developed materials. Twenty-three individuals completed the CHW online training via the Golisano School of Health Sciences, with 16 in the United States and Canada, and individual learners from Bangladesh, Brazil, Germany, Great Britain, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa.

The Golisano School of Health Sciences continues to be a draw for learners to access online training, with 10,711 Health courses completed. The most course completions took place in North America (with 8,053 in the US and 596 in Canada and the Caribbean) and 2,062 in all other regions. The most popular courses were Introduction to Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (n=2,161), Fitness for the Sport Coach (n=617), and Sports Nutrition for Coaches (n=407). The Inclusive Health Fundamentals has expanded and now reaches 148 schools, with continued growth outside of the US. **There are 38 schools outside of the US, with 6 in Canada, 13 in Latin America, 7 in Europe Eurasia, 5 in Middle East/North Africa, 4 in Asia Pacific, 2 in Africa, and 1 in East Asia.** In addition to translation of the Inclusive Health Fundamentals, which was completed in 2024, low bandwidth versions of the curriculum are now available in all Special Olympics languages to increase access in remote regions with

low or unstable internet connection. In the partnership with HealthStream, there were an additional 1,516 Inclusive Health Fundamentals course completions in the US, Canada, and the Caribbean.

In 2025, several clinical specialty educational modules were released, which include: Medical Nutrition Therapy; a three-module Life Transitions series covering support needs from birth to death; and, for providers and students in the United States, two modules covering an Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Communication Needs and the Americans with Disabilities Act. A new module, Understanding Sensory Differences, is under development with plans to be completed by mid-2026.

Special Olympics continues its efforts in the pursuit of accreditation to offer continuing professional education credits, which will increase support and education offerings to healthcare providers. Updates continue to the Learning Management System (LMS) to improve navigation around courses in the learners' preferred language, bandwidth, and/or continuing professional education courses. Together, these resources and updates will increase the uptake of training resources, improving access to inclusive health education materials worldwide.

21,126

CLINICIANS AND STUDENTS were trained at Healthy Athlete events

24,508

CLINICIANS AND STUDENTS were trained independently of Healthy Athlete events

Through the Golisano School of Health Sciences,

10,711

Health courses were completed, with the most course completions in SONA

ASIA PACIFIC

Regional Highlight

In 2025, the Asia Pacific Region made significant strides supporting early development for children with and without IDD. The Region recruited and engaged more than 7,000 new Young Athletes, supported in part by an additional grant from UPS Foundation. **Special Olympics Malaysia launched its first Child and Family Health model, wherein a cohort of 100 Young Athletes engaged in weekly activities and experienced a Healthy Young Athletes (HYA) screening, and their families engaged in multiple Family Health Forums. The HYA event was conducted by Dr. Toh Teck Hock, recipient of the Global Golisano Health Leadership Award.**

The Region also launched MoveFit, supported by a Here to Be grant from Lululemon, implementing two cycles of a 12-week structured fitness program in Malaysia and Vietnam. The initiative engaged nearly 1,000 people with IDD and 462 families across 28 sites. It involved five days weekly of physical activity and nutrition and hydration education. **MoveFit yielded encouraging health outcomes: post-program assessments of 816 athletes and 405 family members indicated that 61% of all participants decreased blood pressure, and in Vietnam, 85% of people with IDD increased their days of moderate physical activity compared to baseline measures.**

MoveFit also expanded collaboration with universities and schools. A total of 84 fitness coaches received training in inclusive practices, building long-term community capacity. University students volunteered as fitness coaches, and several schools are now planning to integrate MoveFit into their curricula. Three special education centers in Malaysia have already committed to continuing the program independently.

Nguyen Dinh Toan, a Vietnamese athlete, participated in MoveFit and developed healthy daily routines, while also building patience, coordination, and emotional connection with his family. He loves running

with his grandmother and sweating together with his dad; and over the course of the program, Toan learned to wait for his family instead of rushing ahead, turning movement into a shared rhythm.

Toan's grandmother has arthritis but insisted on walking every day with her grandson. Toan's family chronicled their journey together, noting changes in mood, energy and bonding. Toan's story demonstrates how physical activity in a loving environment can bridge generations and bring out the best in everyone.

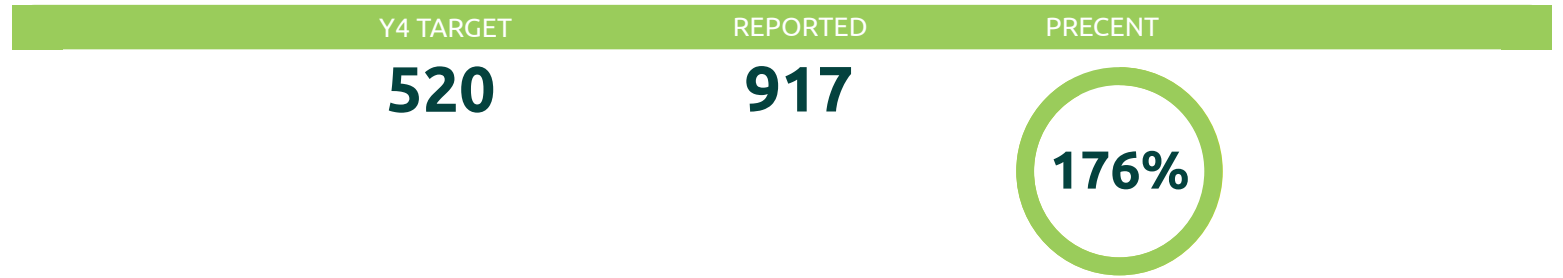




HEALTH SYSTEMS

2025 METRICS: HEALTH SYSTEMS

NEW HEALTH MESSENGERS TRAINED INTERNATIONAL AND UNITED STATES



HEALTH MESSENGERS ACTIVATED INTERNATIONAL AND UNITED STATES



HEALTH SYSTEMS

Eye on the Outcome: Health Organizations and Systems Address the Health Needs of People with IDD.

ON THE WORLD STAGE

Special Olympics continued elevating the presence and voices of people with IDD in major global fora in 2025. David Duncan, Special Olympics Jamaica Health Messenger and Chairman of SOI's Global Athlete Leadership Council, opened the launch of the World Health Organization (WHO) Disability Health Equity Initiative at the 18th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP18). There, he shared a platform with speakers including the Minister of Culture and Equality, Norway and the Director at Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Later in the year, Valentino Vergotino, Special Olympics South Africa (SOSA) athlete and Health Messenger spoke on a Special Olympics-co-hosted session at the World Health Summit in Berlin. His distinguished co-panelists included the Deputy Director General for Global Health, Resilience, and Equality of Opportunity at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Public Policy Engagement Director at Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

Special Olympics became one of a small number of disability and health organizations

that the WHO invited to be part of the foundational committee of the Disability Health Equity Network. The Network brings together civil society organizations, governments, academia, and the private sector as part of the WHO Disability Health Equity Initiative.

ROSEMARY COLLABORATORY

The Rosemary Collaboratory health systems strengthening initiative continued with activities in ten sites, as well as the launch of the inaugural global report *Focusing on the Invisible* in September. *Focusing on the Invisible* synthesized analyses from the system-level assessments that teams completed in 2024, desk research, case studies of lived experience of people with IDD, and surveys completed by over 1,000 people with IDD and members of the health and care workforce in over 50 countries. An Editorial Review Group with experts from the WHO, UNICEF, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), and across the Special Olympics movement oversaw the report's development.

Launched via a webinar with more than 170 global attendees and amplified across various in-person and virtual fora, the global report

was translated into Spanish, French, and Arabic; and complementary resources include an easy-read executive summary of the report in four languages, a report website, and a communications toolkit with global and site-specific resources.



Daniel Michael, a Special Olympics Nigeria Health Messenger, was embedded at the Medical Rehabilitation and Therapists Board (MRTB) as part of Rosemary Collaboratory Nigeria activities to increase the presence of people with IDD in policymaking and increase policymakers' interactions with this population. The MRTB later employed Daniel as a staff member to continue representing people with IDD in MRTB activities.

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS FROM ROSEMARY COLLABORATORY SITES INCLUDE:

In April 2025, the Rosemary Collaboratory Morocco team launched a coalition of eight civil society organizations working in disability justice to actively engage in coordinated advocacy. The coalition's launch event convened senior representatives from key institutions including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Solidarity, Social Integration, and Family, and the National Initiative for Human Development. The coalition committed to two core policy priorities: advancing an implementing decree for Framework Law 97-13, which focuses on promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in Morocco, and integrating content regarding persons with IDD into health sciences university curricula.

Leveraging the longstanding relationships with government possessed by local Rosemary Collaboratory consultant CHAI Nigeria, the Rosemary Collaboratory Nigeria team trained representatives of government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) and placed Health Messengers to work in six different MDAs.

Leaders in the MDAs expressed appreciation for how Rosemary Collaboratory had provided exposure to, and resulting understanding of, different needs of people with IDD, helping stimulate initiatives to educate service providers to make necessary accommodations, make services universal, and, where possible, tailor services to meet the needs of people with IDD.

Special Olympics participated in the Disability-20 (D20) conference in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2025. The D20 is an initiative that aims to promote a view of disability that cuts across issues dealt with by the Group of Twenty (G20), a premier forum for international economic cooperation. Special Olympics participated in a panel discussion and highlighted the recommendations from *Focusing on the Invisible*.

Special Olympics South Africa (SOSA) also participated in a workgroup on Equitable Health for All. This workgroup produced a policy brief that specifically highlights the challenges faced by people with intellectual disabilities and quotes a SOSA athlete. The D20 conference conveners submitted a "Call to Action for Disability Inclusion - A National Roadmap for Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainable Development" to the Government of South Africa which specifically references the health needs of people with IDD.

The *Focusing on the Invisible* report launched via a webinar with

170+

global attendees

Surveys completed by over

1,000

people with IDD and members of the health care workforce in over 50 countries informed the global report's development

U.S. SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING EFFORTS

Special Olympics awarded eleven U.S. organizations with subgrants aimed at transforming mainstream healthcare and health promotion systems to better meet the needs of people with IDD.

The mix of new subgrantees and organizations receiving renewed support through July 2026 includes:

Assuring Better Child Health & Development will create a report with recommendations to strengthen developmental monitoring and promote early identification of developmental delays.

Health Outreach Partners will expand healthcare provider trainings on social determinants of health screening and motivational interviewing and create a new training series on addressing transportation barriers for people with IDD.

The University of Colorado Department of Family Medicine will develop and pilot a standardized process to document disability status and accommodation needs in their electronic health records to improve identification of people with IDD, timely accommodations, and inclusion in quality improvement efforts.

The National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices will further integrate the needs of adults with IDD into the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model, as well as offer additional learning opportunities for a range of audiences to improve dementia-related diagnoses, care coordination, and post-diagnostic support for those with IDD.

Sound Generations will conduct a national rollout of an evidence-based fitness program for aging adults that has been adapted to meet the needs of those with IDD.

In addition, Lakeshore and Special Olympics completed their joint work to adapt the CDC National Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) to improve accessibility for individuals with IDD and individuals with low literacy. The adapted program supports individuals with IDD who face an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes through education on healthy eating, physical activity, stress management, and problem-solving.

CDC staff who oversee DPP quality control reviewed and approved all adapted materials for pilot use, and Special Olympics engaged multiple non-Special Olympics organizations across the United States to pilot the adapted DPP course—a process that will last through much of 2026.



EUROPE EURASIA

Regional Highlight

In 2025, the Europe Eurasia Region (SOEE) concluded the Inclusive Healthy Lifestyle Groups in Schools (IHLGiS) project, funded by the European Union (EU), which engaged over 6,000 students with and without IDD across nearly 300 schools over three years. Outcomes included the establishment of nearly 40 local partnerships, including the Ministry of Culture in Estonia, Ministry of Sport and Education in Poland, and the Ministry of Education in Greece; the **training of 154 healthcare professionals; and more than 700 parents and caregivers engaged in healthy lifestyle education.**

Region-wide, Special Olympics engaged more than 8,000 family members and caregivers in preventive health education, with delivery of Family Health Forums in 18 countries, primarily funded by Lions Clubs International Foundation.

The Region continues to grow early childhood programming. Special Olympics Austria has begun to scale up its smaller program and recruited nearly 90 new Young Athletes (YA) and 6 new YA coaches in 2025. Through a partnership with Sport Thieme, SO Austria has access to a nationwide distribution network for YA program equipment.



In September, representatives from 26 Programs participated in EU Day at the EU Parliament, and a Special Olympics group participated in a round table, attended by the EU Commissioner for Health, to discuss the new *Focusing on the Invisible* report and to highlight the IHLGiS project successes.

Finally, athletes and families continued to see the benefits of high-quality Healthy Athletes screenings.

During a screening in Malta, a clinician attending to a 16-year-old athlete detected a swelling in their optic disc, which raised acute concern about a build-up of fluid near the brain, and an urgent follow-up CT scan confirmed exactly that. The athlete underwent emergency surgery to replace a shunt, a tube that had been inserted years prior to drain excess fluid. The complex but successful surgery prevented a potentially fatal outcome.





ACTIVATING FOR AWARENESS

In 2025, Special Olympics Health generated 2,495 media mentions globally across leading industry outlets and top-tier publications, podcasts, radio, and television—including Associated Press, Yahoo! News, CBS Eye on Health, Vision Monday, ESPN, PEOPLE, and The Healthy. These mentions reached a combined readership of 5.81 billion, representing \$56.08M in advertising equivalency—the estimated cost Special Olympics would have incurred to reach similar audience numbers through paid advertising rather than earned media.

Across social media channels, videos and athlete-led content were prioritized, reflecting formats that resonate most with SOI audiences. In total, **327 health-focused social media posts were published—nearly 100 more than in 2024 (232). These posts generated 2.24 million impressions, 50,010 engagements, and an average reach of 5,990 per post.** They were shared 2,370 times, underscoring strong audience engagement and sustained interest in Health programming. Average engagement rates on Health posts nearly tripled, increasing from 1.47% in 2024 to 3.33% in 2025.

INCLUSIVE HEALTH CHANGEMAKERS SPOTLIGHTED AT THE GOLISANO HEALTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS

In the lead-up to the Golisano Health Leadership Awards (GLHA), seven documentary-style, day-in-the-life videos were created to highlight the real, measurable impact honorees are making for people with IDD in communities around the world.

These three-minute videos were the centerpiece of the GLHA ceremony. In addition to the versions shown during the event, a compilation video featuring all awardees and seven one-minute videos optimized for social media were produced. Notably, the second highest performing social post of 2025 was the one-minute video featuring Dr. Afolabi, the honoree from Nigeria. On TikTok alone, this post generated 263,010 unique impressions, bringing his powerful story to new global audiences. All the videos were widely shared throughout late 2025 and continue to serve as evergreen content.

To extend the reach of the awards, customizable press releases highlighting both the awards and each region's honoree were distributed to Special Olympics regional communications leads, helping secure media coverage in honorees' home countries. As a result, features appeared in regional outlets such as Times Kuwait and La Nación (Paraguay).

GLOBAL HEALTH REPORT TOOLKITS & SOCIAL MEDIA AMPLIFICATION

In September 2025, the global health report *Focusing on the Invisible* was published. As the report offered tailored calls to action for each site, it was essential that dissemination be both accessible and customized to local contexts.

To support this effort, 11 site-specific toolkits were developed to help Programs and advocacy partners promote the report within their regions. These comprehensive toolkits included 39 unique captions, graphics, and resources. A dedicated website was developed

to provide an overview of the report and its key findings, while directing media and other stakeholders to additional resources. The report was downloaded 482 times in 2025. Media coverage generated 609 pickups and a potential reach of 160,136,834 within the first week. Alongside the toolkits, the global social media strategy for the report centered on Special Olympics Health Messengers sharing what inclusive health means to them and calling for more inclusive health systems. The launch video featured Health Messengers from all seven Special Olympics global regions. **This athlete-led report launch post became the top-performing Special Olympics Health social media post of 2025, earning 470,880 impressions, a 281,030 reach, and an engagement rate of 21.13% – far surpassing the industry-standard TikTok engagement rate of 3-5%.**

327

health focused social media posts published

482

downloads of the Global Health Report

AFRICA

Regional Highlight

The Africa Region, as ever, led a busy 2025 featuring a variety of events.

Special Olympics Ghana held their first Opening Eyes screenings, during which nearly 25 final-year optometry students were trained to deliver dignified, high-quality care to people with IDD. OneSight Essilor Luxxotica Foundation prepared more than 35 pairs of glasses for athletes free of charge; and financial support was secured from Optometry Giving Sight to conduct the screenings and training – a feat that would not have been possible without the foundational health programming made possible by the Golisano Foundation.

In June, 50 athletes from Special Olympics Sénégal received a year of free health insurance through a partnership with insurer SAMMANTE and Ecobank Senegal, a long-standing partner. The corporate partners covered the entire cost of the premiums for the year.

Special Olympics Sénégal also hosted a nutrition forum, “Flavor and Health Without Barriers,” to mark World Diabetes Day on 29 November. Notable guests included Mr. Mamadou Lamine Faty, Director of Promotion

and Protection of Persons with Disabilities at Senegal’s Ministry of Family, Social Action and Solidarity. More than 200 athletes benefited from free diabetes screening, health education sessions about nutrition and exercise, and hands-on nutrition workshops. Special Olympics Nigeria trained 28 Health Messengers through an event with a special needs school. Additionally, the Africa Region held a conference to train nearly 25 existing Health Messengers as Health Change Champions, a specialized role that advocates for healthy habits.



Valentino Vergotine meets the President of the Republic of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa

Valentino Vergotine is a decorated swimmer with Special Olympics South Africa (SOSA) who has competed at World Games in China and Greece. Despite knee, back, and shoulder surgeries, he has continued his involvement through swim coaching and coaching clinics for bocce and floor hockey, as well as athlete leadership roles on provincial and national councils. Today, he is a Board Member of SOSA and a Health Messenger. Since 2024, he has assisted in the development of the Rosemary Collaboratory project and report in South Africa. Because of his role, Valentino had the chance to speak on the national radio station Metro FM, where he shed light on the challenges that people with IDD encounter in healthcare services. He was also invited to present at the Tygerberg Hospital Foundation in the Cape Town region, to share insights from his experiences at the World Health Summit in Berlin (October 2025, described above).





RESEARCH & EVALUATION

In 2025, Special Olympics made significant progress across longitudinal initiatives, fitness and early childhood evaluation, data infrastructure, inclusive evaluation practices, and knowledge mobilization efforts designed to translate research into action.

PROJECT ALL STAR

Momentum accelerated significantly for Project ALL STAR (Active Life and Longevity: Special Olympics Transforming Athlete Results), a longitudinal, community-engaged evaluation examining the impact of Special Olympics participation on health and wellbeing. Building on the 2024 feasibility phase, recruitment, enrollment, and multimodal data collection processes were refined, culminating in the enrollment of 165 athletes across six US Programs (Arizona, Colorado, Minnesota, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin). In-person fitness assessments were expanded, physical activity data collection via wearable devices increased, and athlete survey responses were scaled up with data captured through REDCap, a secure, web-based data management platform.

Quote from athlete & Project ALL STAR participant:

“Being part of this project makes me feel seen. When I look at my Fitbit steps or get my fitness report, it reminds me that my hard work matters—and that Special Olympics cares about my health, not just my sports.”

Project ALL STAR’s knowledge mobilization plan was developed, creating a pipeline of manuscripts, abstracts, infographics, and internal dashboards to share findings across scientific, programmatic, and athlete communities.

FITNESS

Fitness evaluation efforts expanded in both scale and rigor. Special Olympics Programs continued implementing the Adult Fitness Assessment Toolkit, and the Youth Fitness Assessment Toolkit was finalized and launched in 2025, expanding access to standardized, developmentally appropriate assessments globally.

A key milestone was the release of the 2024 Healthy Communities Annual Fitness Report, which synthesized global fitness data to document reach and athlete outcomes. The report informed the development of region-specific infographics, returning tailored data to Special Olympics Programs worldwide to support local decision-making and program improvement.

Evaluation of Fitness Through Sport advanced through ecological momentary assessments, coach observations, and wearable-based monitoring. Additionally, the team coordinated Inclusive Fitness training evaluations, strengthened wearable implementation, formalized data request processes, and disseminated findings through manuscripts and national conference presentations.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILIES

In collaboration with the University of Nebraska – Omaha, Special Olympics began implementation and impact evaluation of the Young Athletes Lesson Plans. Twenty-three classrooms in Nebraska and Kansas were onboarded with half the classes implementing the traditional 8-week model and the other classes implementing the expanded 30-week model. **The baseline results indicated that children with IDD had lower gross motor scores and were at greater risk for challenges with social and emotional learning compared to children without IDD. Their families also reported feeling less empowered—especially when it came to finding information about their child’s needs, having reliable support, and feeling part of a community.**



The second pilot of the Family Health Education Program (FHEP) took place in Special Olympics Vermont and Louisiana, offering eight weekly nutrition focused sessions for athletes and caregivers. Twenty-seven family units participated. Both athletes and family members showed significant decreases in body mass index (BMI) though athletes exhibited a greater decrease than caregivers. These results indicate a positive shift driven by improved nutrition behaviors, strong engagement, and practical application within family units.

Quote from Health Passport Project:

“I think that it would be good particularly if someone’s non-verbal, to have instructions in there about the best way to approach them or ask for their cooperation when you’re going to do something, especially if it’s something that’s mildly invasive or might be painful.”
-Care partner

HEALTH PASSPORT AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

The Health Passport (HSE) is a free, portable, patient-owned tool designed for use in healthcare encounters by individuals with communication challenges. The multiphase evaluation of the Health Passport tool progressed with a literature review, framework development, and early stakeholder engagement in collaboration with Thomas Jefferson University. This work is informing the design of a new mobile tool

to support people with IDD during clinical and community health encounters.

Overall, the HSE was positively received by people with IDD, care partners, and providers. While people with IDD and care partners viewed the app as widely acceptable, usable, and feasible, providers' viewpoint on feasibility was driven by whether the Health Passport could be integrated into the Electronic Medical Record (EMR). Phase 2 data showed high acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility across participants. Interestingly, providers rated these items highest. Although barriers to adoptions were raised, such as the lack of integration with EMRs, stakeholders overwhelmingly saw the HSE as filling an unmet need for this type of portable, patient-centered tool. Detailed feedback for suggestions to improve the app and make edits to adapt it for use in US-based healthcare and community service encounters were identified in Phase 1 interviews and further evaluated with ranking hierarchy for change in Phase 2.

DISSEMINATION

Manuscripts, abstracts, and reports prepared or submitted in 2025 spanned fitness, early childhood development, data system design, inclusive evaluation methods, wearable technology feasibility, and community-based research approaches. Teams collaborated across departments to ensure findings reached Special Olympics Programs, funders, clinicians, and researchers. Dissemination strategies included infographics, briefs, conference presentations, plain language summaries, and targeted communications to global Program leaders.



EAST ASIA

Regional Highlight

The East Asia Region accomplished milestone trainings in 2025. Every one of the six Special Olympics Programs in the region hosted a Family Health Forum, for a total of 1,700 family members trained. The Region also hosted a virtual Fitness Through Sport training for more than 230 coaches, as well as virtual Fitness Captain trainings for China, Macau and Mongolia. Healthy Athletes events throughout the Region achieved more than 8,000 clinical screenings. During Healthy Athletes, 268 clinical volunteers and nearly 500 medical students received training on proper care for people with IDD. Notable Healthy Athletes events included those held during Special Olympics Korea's National Summer Games, an occasion that also saw the re-establishment of Special Olympics Korea's medical committee, which had not met for several years due to capacity challenges stemming from the pandemic.

Early Childhood continued to make strides in 2025, particularly in China. Eight local community Young Athletes (YA) program sites attended a YA workshop and coach training in April. By the end of the year, 10 new program sites had been established around the country, as well as one in Hong Kong and one in Mongolia.

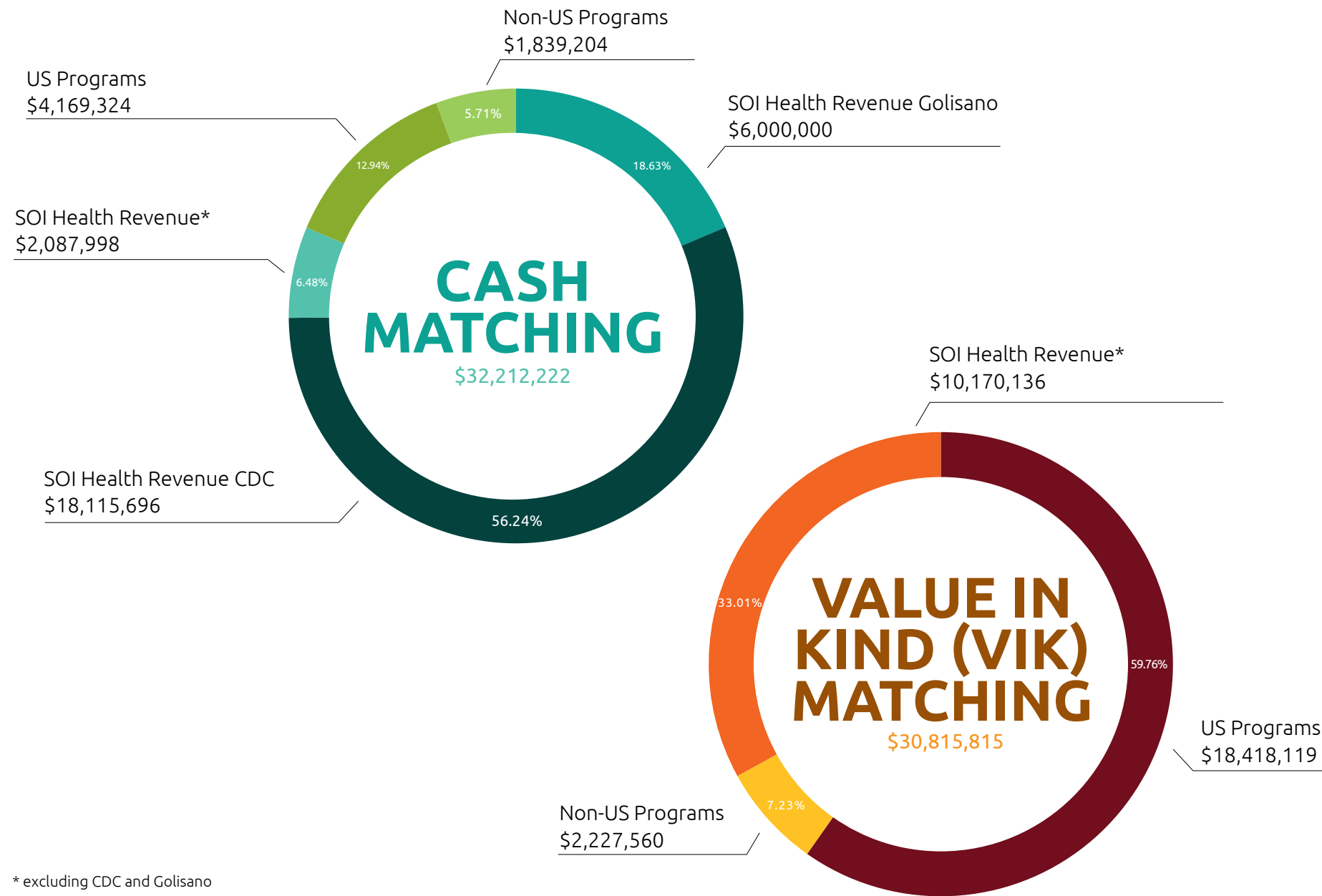
Jiarui is a Special Olympics athlete from Wenzhou, China, who lives in a home for young people with disabilities. He competes in athletics, and his other favorite activities are cycling and the treadmill. He used to frequently struggle with fine motor tasks due to vision complications, and he avoided his glasses because the lenses were an inappropriate prescription. Unsurprisingly, his blurred vision took much of the joy out of sport. At an Opening Eyes event in September 2025, volunteers from the Eye Hospital of Wenzhou Medical University changed his life with a careful, compassionate examination. After asking thorough questions about his lifestyle and sports needs, they crafted a suitable pair of lenses for him. Since receiving updated glasses, Jiarui has had the ability to pursue and enjoy his favorite sports. He is an upbeat role model in his home who memorizes the daily activity schedule and helps peers maintain their routines, whether it be exercise, drum lessons, or taking their medications.





ADDENDUMS

ADDENDUM A MATCHING FUNDS



* excluding CDC and Golisano

ADDENDUM B: METRICS CHARTS

	SPECIAL OLYMPICS AFRICA	SPECIAL OLYMPICS ASIA PACIFIC	SPECIAL OLYMPICS EAST ASIA	SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPE EURASIA	SPECIAL OLYMPICS LATIN AMERICAN	SPECIAL OLYMPICS MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA	SPECIAL OLYMPICS CANADA & THE CARIBBEAN	SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTH AMERICA USA	TOTAL
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
New Young Athletes with ID	5,036	6,063	129	6,618	7,105	1,517	756	19,951	47,175
Total HA Screenings	5,508	930	2,992	11,524	13,264	6,294	6,531	58,443	105,486
Athletes in Fitness	7,552	524	5,097	3,835	2,514	1,852	18,359	65,377	105,110
New Health Messengers Activated for Health Advocacy	123	24	50	98	102	60	42	561	1,060
Students Trained Outside of Healthy Athletes	313	0	89	721	1,753	703	211	5,905	9,695
Clinicians Trained Outside of Healthy Athletes	200	0	200	461	1,219	1,433	36	3,371	6,788
Clinical Volunteers Trained at HA	355	153	180	666	769	758	462	3,827	7,170
Student Volunteers Trained at HA	358	151	161	1,413	2,327	692	1,154	7,701	13,957
Community Health Workers Trained with SOI Resource	183	0	331	23	90	102	32	165	926
Community Health Workers Trained by Other Methods	90	0	179	6	385	19	30	323	1,032
Athletes Trained as New Health Messengers	158	16	25	67	97	278	13	263	917

ADDENDUM C PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

PUBLICATIONS

- Dixon-Ibarra, A., Apgar, G., Stanish, H., Watkins, J., Hanley, J., Otterbein, M., & Lincoln, A. (2025). The Road to USA Games Challenge: Evaluating Changes in Physical Activity Levels. *Palestra*.
- Dixon-Ibarra, A. M, Lincoln, A. E., Krahn, G., Hanley, J.P., Smith, A., Murray, H.A., & Rosanoff, M (in press). Navigating the Complexities of Developing a Longitudinal Health Evaluation: Creating Special Olympics Project ALL STAR. *American Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*.
- Forquer, M., Stanish, H. I., Dixon-Ibarra, A., Apgar, G., Hanley, J., Otterbein, M., ... & Lincoln, A. E. (2025). Special Olympics "Road to the 2022 USA Games" Fitness Challenge: A Process Evaluation. *PALAESTRA*, 39(3).
- Pittaway, M., Hanley, J. P., Lincoln, A. E., Dixon-Ibarra, A. M., & Foley, J. T. (2025). Global variation of low bone mineral density in special olympics adult athletes with intellectual and developmental disability—A cross-sectional study. *PLOS Global Public Health*, 5(10), e0005125.
- Smith, A., Ralston, R., Barker, R. M., Anderson, E. Z., & Christakis, D. A. (2025). The impact of a play-based early childhood development intervention on adaptive behavior skills for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *International Journal of Developmental Disabilities*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20473869.2025.2590006>

PRESENTATIONS

- Ang, P. Results from Using an IDD-Specific Health System Level Assessment in India and Pakistan. Paper presented at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.
- Apgar, G., McKeon, S., & Kearns, D. Fostering physical literacy: Tools for inclusive classrooms. Presentation at the SHAPE American National Convention. April 1-6, 2025; Baltimore, MD

- 3.** Cardona, D., Leitner, K., Wentz, A., & Anderson, M. Improving health disparities: Connecting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to comprehensive care. Presentation submitted to the American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) conference; November 19-21; Washington, DC
- 4.** Richardson, E., Morris, J., Scholle, S., Singleton, A., Weston, R., Kennedy, J. *In Pursuit of IDD-Inclusive Health Systems: Special Olympics International as a Champion of Health Equity*. Presented at the American Public Health Association 2024 Annual Meeting; October 27-30, 2024; Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 5.** Cummings, L. & Otterbein, M. Expand Your Impact: Strategies to Engage People With Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Fitness. Presentation at the 2025 meeting of the Health and Fitness Association; March 12-14, 2025; Las Vegas, NV
- 6.** Dixon-Ibarra, A., Stanish, H., Watkins, J., Hanley, J., Otterbein, M., & Lincoln, A. Evaluating health behaviors in youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Insights from the Special Olympics Youth Lifestyle Survey. Poster presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). June 23-25, 2025. Washington, DC
- 7.** Dixon-Ibarra, A., Angus, F., Turley, M., Smith, A., Murray, H., & Lincoln, A. Engaging Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities in Inclusive Research: Practical Strategies for Adapted Physical Activity Researchers. Workshop conducted at the 25th International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity. June 16-20. Kerry, Ireland.
- 8.** Dixon-Ibarra, A., Apgar, G., Watkins, J., Stanish, H., Otterbein, M., & Lincoln, A. Evaluating a Special Olympics Youth Fitness Testing Manual for Athletes with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Poster presented at the 25th International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity. June 16-20. Kerry, Ireland.
- 9.** Dixon-Ibarra, A., Trisolini, C., O'Neal, S., Hanley, J., Helsel, B., & Lincoln, A. Adherence to Physical Activity Wearables: Pilot Data from Special Olympics' Project ALL STAR Longitudinal Evaluation. Paper presented at the 25th International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity. June 16-20. Kerry, Ireland.
- 10.** Fettkether, R. & Williams, A.D. Implicit bias against people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Insights from Project Implicit. Poster presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). June 23-25, 2025. Washington, DC
- 11.** Fettkether, R. & Williams, A.D. Incorporation of Special Olympics athletes into clinical simulation as standardized patients. Issue brief presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). June 23-25, 2025. Washington, DC
- 12.** Kennedy, J., DuBois, L., Shaffner, L., Dixon-Ibarra, A., & Jenkins, A. Leveraging Data to Make Health Systems More Inclusive of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A Special Olympics Analysis of Health and Healthcare Disparities in the US. Paper presented at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.
- 13.** Khoo, S. and Rolink, P. Motives for Participation in Physical Activity Among Women and Girls with Intellectual Disabilities: A Qualitative Study Protocol for Inclusive Research. Paper presented at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.
- 14.** Lebersfeld, J. & Routh, B. Special Olympics Healthy Athletes: Mental Health Program for Individuals with IDD. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association; August 7-9, 2025. Denver, CO
- 15.** Lincoln, A., Pfeaster, C., Schickley, K., Smith, A., Murray, H., Hanley, J., Dixon-Ibarra, A., & Krahn, G. Navigating Complexity in Longitudinal Evaluation of Health Programs: The Evolution of Special Olympics Project ALL STAR. Poster presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). June 23-25, 2025. Washington, DC
- 16.** Lincoln, A., Dixon-Ibarra, A., Smith, A., Rosanoff, M., Hanley, J., Murray, H., & Krahn, G. Initial health and fitness findings from the Special Olympics Project ALL STAR longitudinal evaluation. Paper presented at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.
- 17.** Lincoln, A., Williams, A., Routh, B., Fettkether, R., Cornell, K., & Burke, H. Inclusive Health: Health Equity for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Panel presentation at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.
- 18.** Lincoln, A., Dixon-Ibarra, A., Hanley, J., Smith, A., Krahn, G. Capturing changes in social-emotional wellbeing among people with IDD and linking to sport activities of the day. Symposium presentation at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.

- 19.** Lincoln, A., Kelly, M., Barley, K., & Smith, A. Prioritizing Parents: Evaluating the Abu Dhabi-Specific Parents' Engagement Program. Paper presented at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.
- 20.** Lincoln, A., Pitchford, A., Lynch, L., & Iqbal, N. Enhancing Physical Activity and Behavior Change in People with Intellectual Disabilities Through Wearables and Digital Technology. Panel presentation at the 25th International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity. June 16-20. Kerry, Ireland.
- 21.** Lincoln, A., Watkins, J., Stanish, H., Hanley, J., Otterbein, M., & Dixon-Ibarra. Feasibility of Wearable Technology for Tracking Physical Activity in Youth Athletes with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine. May 27-31, 2025; Atlanta, GA.
- 22.** Otterbein, M. & McDaniel, E. Inclusive health and fitness: A systems, programming and environment approach from Special Olympics International and Special Olympics Kansas. Presentation. Presentation at the annual Active Living Conference; March 16-20; Kansas City, KS
- 23.** Pfeaster, C., Cornell, K., Ellingson, M., Smith, A., Dixon-Ibarra, A., & Lincoln, A. Refining health surveys for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Using cognitive interviewing in Special Olympics Project ALL STAR. Paper presented at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.
- 24.** Pittaway, M., Hanley, J., Dixon-Ibarra, A., Routh, B., Lincoln, A. Global variation of low bone mineral density in adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Poster presented at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.
- 25.** Rodriguez, K. & Rosanoff, M. Gaps between recommended and accessed care for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Poster presented at the World Physiotherapy Congress. May 29-31, Tokyo, Japan.
- 26.** Rodriguez, K. & Routh, B. Unified and Stronger: An interdisciplinary approach to care for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Presented at the American Physical Therapy Association 2025 Combined Sections Meeting; February 12-15, 2025; Houston, TX.

- 27.** Rodriguez, K., Ralston, R., & Lebersfeld, J. Championing Inclusion: Special Olympics clinical roles to support people with IDD in sport and play. Paper presented at the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Pediatrics Annual Conference; October 31-November 2nd, 2025; Colorado Springs, CO.
- 28.** Rosanoff, M., Hanley, J., & Lincoln, A. SO-Link: A registration platform for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to enhance the evaluation of Special Olympics Health Programs. Poster presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). June 23-25, 2025. Washington, DC
- 29.** Routh, B., Rosanoff, M., Hanley, J., Williams, A., & Lincoln, A. Multidisciplinary health screenings and referral coordination for Special Olympics athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Paper presented at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.
- 30.** Ryan, C., Bruder, MB., & Shahane, V. Inclusive Play and Technology: Supporting Families and Young Children with Intellectual Disabilities. Presentation at the annual Division for Early Childhood Conference; October 7-10. Portland, OR.
- 31.** Smith, A., Ryan, C., & Ralston, R. Empowering families: A cross-cultural evaluation of the Special Olympics Young Athletes mobile application. Paper presented at the 8th ISEI Early Intervention Conference; September 2-5; Lisbon, Portugal.
- 32.** Smith, A., Ralston, R., Bornman, J., Wepener, C., & Ang, P. Evaluating the impact of a holistic child and family health program: Implications for early intervention in the Asia Pacific region. Poster presented at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.
- 33.** Smith, A., Dixon-Ibarra, A., & Krahn, G. Strategies to Increase Use of Self-Report by Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (PWID). Symposium presentation at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.
- 34.** Smith, A., Ryan, C., & Ralston, R. Let's play together: Engaging families and young children with IDD in inclusive play using technology. Poster presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). June 23-25, 2025. Washington, DC

35. Trisolini, C., Ellingson, M., Krahn, G., Dixon-Ibarra, A., & Lincoln, A. Adapting goal attainment scaling for use by Special Olympics athletes in Project ALL STAR. Paper presented at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 2-5, 2025. Washington DC.

36. Williams, A.D., Fekkether, R, and Hanley, J. (2025). Mentoring Across the Professional Spectrum: Special Olympics' Inclusive Health Interprofessional Education Model. Accepted as an Issue Brief at AAIDD 149th Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, June 24.

37. Williams, A.D., Fekkether, R, and Hanley, J. (2025). Educating the Nurse of Tomorrow: Special Olympics' Inclusive Health Interprofessional Education Model. Accepted for poster presentation at the International Council of Nurses ICN Congress 2025, Helsinki, Finland, June 9-13.

38. Williams, A.D., Fekkether, R, and Hanley, J. (2025). Towards a Healthier World: Educating Community Health Workers with Special Olympics' Inclusive Health Model. Accepted for poster presentation at the International Council of Nurses ICN Congress 2025, Helsinki, Finland, June 9-13.

39. Yin, M., Return on Investment in Special Olympics Special Smiles Program. Paper presented at the IASSIDD Asia-Pacific Congress; October 13-16th, 2025; Singapore.



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