



Special Olympics Illinois

Special Olympics is a global organization that unleashes the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sport, every day around the world. Through programming in sports, health, education and community building, Special Olympics is changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities solving the global injustice, isolation, intolerance and inactivity they face. Special Olympics Illinois provides opportunities for 22,000 athletes, 45,000 volunteers and thousands more people statewide through 18 Area programs in all 102 counties of the state. Special Olympics began in Illinois with the first games at Soldier Field in July 1968. There are now more than 4.5 million athletes in 170 countries.

OUR MISSION

Provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

OUR REACH

- 22,003 traditional athletes (children and adults) with intellectual disabilities
- 20,473 Young Athletes™ ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities
- 45,000 volunteers and coaches
- 179 competitions each year
- 19 Olympic-type sports
- Programs in 18 Areas, each coordinated by an Area Director and a volunteer committee
- Dynamic sports and corporate partnerships

OUR SOLUTION

- **REAL SPORTS:** Deliver high-quality training and competition in an inclusive culture that stresses athletic excellence, rewards determination, emphasizes health and celebrates achievement.
- **ATHLETE HEALTH:** Promote the overall well-being of people with intellectual disabilities via programs that ensure ongoing access to quality, community-based health care services, highlighted by free health screenings at Special Olympics competitions, games and other venues.
- **TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION:** Equip young people and adult influencers with effective tools and training to create sports, classrooms and community actions that produce friendships and acceptance, driving positive attitude and behavioral change.
- **BUILD COMMUNITIES:** Marshal resources, implement diverse programming and act as a convening power of stakeholders to drive positive attitudinal and behavioral change toward people with intellectual disabilities in communities statewide, strengthening the fabric of society.