

Special Olympics goal is to double participation in the Young Athletes™ program by 2015.

We encourage you to join us in helping children develop skills and confidence and linking families to Special Olympics.

Giving children with disabilities a chance to learn, grow and have fun with typically developing peers and family members is not just nice to do, it is important! During the early years we have the opportunity to impact lifelong success for athletes—both on and off the playing field. In turn, Special Olympics athletes make our communities better by sharing their gifts.

They make us better too, by revealing the champion in all of us. Join us for this transformative experience.

OUR MISSION

Special Olympics provides 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.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Athlete name: _____

Athlete birthdate: _____



SpecialOlympics.org/youngathletes



Learn . Grow . Have Fun



Early Childhood



Children's FoundationSM

Special Olympics Young Athletes™ is an early childhood sports play program for children aged 2 to 7 years old that includes games, songs and other fun physical activities .

Our young athletes learn basic sports skills like kicking and throwing a ball and playing with others. Children with and without disabilities play together. Families also have the opportunity to get involved in the fun and connect with the Special Olympics community of support.

While young athletes practice their sports skills they gain motor skills like balance, flexibility, strength and coordination. In fact, in a recent study, children with developmental delays who participated in a structured 8 week Young Athletes™ program showed significantly more motor development than those who did not participate. Not only that, but their teachers and parents also reported improved confidence, language skills, and social skills. Another benefit was families played more together at home and in the community.

Young Athletes™ is easy to get started, fun for all, and a great way to boost confidence and expectations. It can be offered at home, in schools or in the community using Special Olympics resources and simple sports equipment (e.g. balls, hoops, cones). Like all our Special Olympics Programs it raises awareness and promotes inclusion and acceptance.

Children with intellectual disabilities have the opportunity to learn, grow and have fun because of you—their families, teachers, coaches, volunteers, early intervention specialists and sponsors. Your commitment to expanding the Young Athletes™ program at home, in the community and in schools is what makes the biggest difference in children's lives.

Visit our website for access to resources and more information at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

“ When my baby was born and I found out that he had intellectually disabilities, my world fell apart and my plans for my son were in tatters. At Young Athletes™ I see him move about, perspiring, smiling, mixing freely with others and not holding on to tail end of my skirt all the time. It makes me cry tears of happiness and restores my hope that he can be independent one day. Now I dare to dream and plan to play baseball with my son when he grows up. ”

*--Mrs. Misae Katsumata
Japan*

