

PRESS KIT

Special Olympics Arizona



MISSION

To 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.

SERVICES



21,400+ ATHLETES &
UNIFIED PARTNERS

1076+
TRAINED COACHES

22,700+
VOLUNTEERS

95 cents of every dollar
donated goes directly to SOAZ
programming & competitions

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PROGRAMS

SPORTS & COMPETITIONS

Traditional Sports

Special Olympics first began with the traditional sports model, which is comprised of athletes with intellectual disabilities competing against one another in Olympic-style sporting events. All individuals with intellectual disabilities are eligible to participate free of charge, beginning at age eight.

Unified Sports

An inclusive program that combines individuals with and without intellectual disabilities on sports teams for training and competition. Athletes and Unified partners compete alongside one another in a meaningful role on the Unified Sports team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

BEYOND SPORTS

Athlete Leadership

Empowers athletes to develop leadership skills and utilize their voices and abilities to undertake meaningful leadership roles, influence change in the Special Olympics movement, and create more inclusive communities where they live and around the world.

Inclusive Health

Focuses on improving the physical and social-emotional well-being of people with intellectual disabilities by increasing inclusion in wellness and health care systems, programming and services, research, mainstream health policies and laws, and services for Special Olympics athletes and others with ID.

Unified Champion Schools

Promotes social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change. With sports as the foundation, the three-component model (Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth Leadership, Whole School Engagement) offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create opportunities and school climates of acceptance.

Unified Activities

A variety of inclusive activities to support inclusion in schools, communities, and at home, while offering athletes, Unified partners, families, teachers, caregivers, and others from the community a chance to engage with one another through unique in person and online programming.



BECOMING

Special Olympics Arizona

HISTORY

In 1962, Eunice Kennedy Shriver began a summer day camp at her home in Maryland to provide an opportunity for children and adults with intellectual disabilities to explore their capabilities in a variety of sports and physical activities. In 1968, the first International Special Olympics took place at Soldier Field in Chicago, IL, with 1,000 athletes from the US and Canada competing in Track & Field and Swimming. Since then, millions of children and adults with intellectual disabilities have participated in Special Olympics programs in over 150 countries throughout the world.

In 1975, the hard work and goodwill of Shriver's efforts reached Arizona.

The first Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ) competition consisted of a one-day Track & Field event with 100 athletes and 20 volunteers and today has grown to 21 sports, 436 regional competitions, and 4 statewide competitions for 21,461 athletes & Unified partners, 1,076 trained coaches, which are supported by 24,743 day-of volunteers annually.

GOAL STATEMENT

Special Olympics Arizona's goal is to empower the over 180,000 Arizonans with intellectual disabilities to be healthy, productive, and respected members of society through our year-round sports training, competitions, and support programs.

COST TO PARTICIPATE

All of our programs are provided at no cost to our athletes. This generally includes meals, lodging, uniforms, physicals, training and competition.

"Let me win, but if I cannot win let me brave in the attempt."

~ Athlete Oath



Language & Logo Usage

WORDS MATTER

Words can open doors to cultivate the understanding and respect that enable people with disabilities to lead fuller, more independent lives. Words also can create barriers or stereotypes that are not only demeaning to people with disabilities, but also rob them of their individuality. The following language guidelines have been developed by experts for use by anyone writing or speaking about people with intellectual disabilities to ensure that all people are portrayed with individuality and dignity.

APPROPRIATE TERMINOLOGY

Why is language and specific terminology important? Special Olympics prefers to focus on people and their gifts and accomplishments, and to dispel negative attitudes and stereotypes. In an ideal world, labels would not exist, but unfortunately they do and language choices can have a powerful impact on impressions and attitudes. As language has evolved, Special Olympics has updated its official terminology to use more widely accepted terminology that is more acceptable to our athletes.

- Special Olympics uses the term “intellectual disabilities.” Other terms are used around the world.
- Refer to participants in Special Olympics as “Special Olympics athletes”. Do not refer to them as “Special Olympians”, “Special Athletes” “Special Olympic athletes.”
- Special Olympics Arizona does not have “of” in the title.
- Use “person-first language.” Refer to individuals, persons or people with intellectual disabilities, rather than “intellectually disabled people” or “the intellectually disabled.”
- People have intellectual disabilities, rather than are “suffering from,” “afflicted with” or “a victim of” intellectual disabilities.
- Distinguish between adults and children with intellectual disabilities. Use adults or children, or older or younger athletes.
- A person “uses” a wheelchair, rather than is “confined” or “restricted to” a wheelchair.
- “Down syndrome” has replaced “Downs Syndrome” and “mongoloid.”
- Refer to participants in Special Olympics as athletes. In no case should the word athletes appear in quotation marks.
- When writing, refer to persons with a disability in the same style as persons without a disability: full name on first reference and last name on subsequent references. Do not refer to an individual with an intellectual disability as “Bill” rather than the journalistically correct “Bill Smith” or “Smith.”
- A person is physically challenged or disabled rather than crippled.
- Use the words “Special Olympics” when referring to the worldwide Special Olympics movement.

TERMINOLOGY TO AVOID

- Do not use the label “kids” when referring to Special Olympics athletes. Adult athletes are an integral part of the Movement.
- Do not preface Special Olympics with the word “the.” This implies that Special Olympics is a one-time, singular event rather than a year-round, ongoing program of sports training and competition.
- Do not use the adjective “unfortunate” when talking about people with intellectual disabilities. Disabling conditions do not have to be life-defining in a negative way.
- Do not sensationalize the accomplishments of persons with disabilities. While these accomplishments should be recognized and applauded, people in the disability rights movement have tried to make the public aware of the negative impact of referring to the achievements of people with physical or intellectual disabilities with excessive hyperbole.
- Use the word “special” with extreme care when talking about persons with intellectual disabilities. The term, if used excessively in references to Special Olympics athletes and activities, can become a cliché.

LOGO USAGE QUICK GUIDE

1. Only use original artwork in standard colors. Use only official master artwork files downloaded from <https://specialolympicsarizona.org/soaz-logos>. Do not photocopy, scan or attempt to redraw your own version of the mark. Color references: Use only the official colors.
2. Position the mark correctly. The standard position of the mark for print is in either the top right or bottom right corner. The symbol should sit equidistant from the nearest document edges. Consider the position of the mark relative to other elements and document edges and select the optimum lock-up option to suit.
3. Give the mark room to breathe. Leave sufficient space around the mark so that it can be clearly recognized and is not encroached upon by any other elements. The general rule is that the minimum free space around the mark should be equal to the height of the ‘O’ in ‘Olympics’.
4. Place the mark on an appropriate background. The mark should be placed on a background which does not interfere with recognition. When placing the two color version of the mark, use a white background. When placing a single color version of the mark, make sure to use a low contrast background and make sure there is appropriate contrast between the mark color and the background color

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Special Olympics "Did You Know?" Fact Sheet](#)

[Special Olympics Brand Identity Guidelines](#)

[Special Olympics Unified Sports Language Guidelines](#)