



# Year-Round Sports Program

## Program Overview

At its core, Special Olympics is a sports program. We provide a year-round opportunity for people with intellectual disabilities to train and compete in sports. Those three components -- year-round, training and true competition -- make us unique in the disability community and they are important distinctions.

Our 15 sport offerings give our athletes the opportunity to be active all year long. We divide our program into four sports seasons, giving athletes the opportunity to compete in one or more sports each season. Our average athlete competes in at least three sports during the year. In 2018 we held 641 competitions. Obesity is a problem throughout the U.S. and people with intellectual disabilities are more likely than their peers to be obese. The number of competitions gives our athletes ample opportunity to become and remain physically active.

Our athletes work at their sports, training with their teams and coaches. This training is an important part of our sports program. Practice gives our athletes the opportunity to learn to take direction from a coach and work with a team. It teaches them to assess their skills and improve, and it gives them the tools they need to succeed in competition. All of these skills transfer to the classroom or workplace where our athletes are consistently more successful than their peers who do not participate in Special Olympics.

Our program provides true competition. "Everybody gets a gold medal" is a common misconception about Special Olympics. We division our athletes by age, gender and demonstrated athletic ability to give our athletes the best opportunity we can to compete for gold. But on the day of their competition they have to perform their best to win, just like any other athlete. Like the training process, this competition helps teach our athletes valuable lessons that transfer to school and work.

## Program Outcomes

**88% of athletes display increased confidence & self-esteem**

**93% of athletes enjoy better health**

**91% of athletes improve social relationships**

## Year Established

1968

## Athletes Served

10,223 (2018)

## FY 2018 Budget

\$782,000



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## Program Contact

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# Healthy Athletes Program

## Program Overview

Special Olympics International began the Healthy Athletes Initiative in 1997. The mission is to improve, through better health and fitness, the athlete's ability to train and compete. To reach this goal, programs involving dentistry, optometry, audiology, health promotion and physical therapy came together to provide services at Special Olympics events. The program provides training for health care professionals and students about the special needs of patients with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics Kentucky at the present time offers seven Healthy Athletes programs:

- Special Smiles dental screening
- Opening Eyes - vision screening
- Healthy Hearing - hearing screening
- FUNfitness - physical therapy and flexibility screening
- Fit Feet - podiatry screening
- Health Promotion - promoting healthy lifestyle choices including diet, exercise, and others
- Healthy Minds - teaching coping skills and stress management techniques
- MedFest - A one-day health fair which offers athletes a sports physical and the opportunity to receive other Healthy Athletes screenings, usually Special Smiles, Opening Eyes and Healthy Hearing

## Program Outcomes

**More than 1,300 screenings provided annually**

**326 referrals for additional medical services in 2018**

**126 free pairs of eyeglasses distributed in 2018**

## Year Established

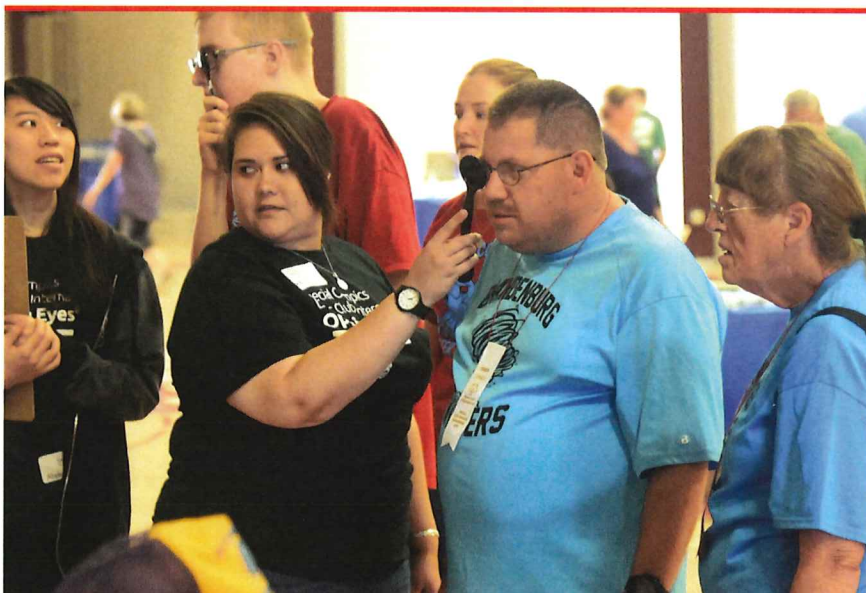
1997

## FY 2019 Budget

\$75,000

## People Served

More than 500 athletes throughout the year



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## Program Contact

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# Unified Champion Schools

## Program Overview

The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change. With sports as the foundation, the three component model – Whole School Engagement, Inclusive Youth Leadership and Unified Sports – offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create sports, classroom and school climates of acceptance. These are school climates where students with disabilities feel welcome and are routinely included in, and feel a part of, all activities, opportunities and functions.

### Unified Champion Schools promote a school climate that:

- is free from bullying and exclusion,
- combats stereotypes and negative attitudes,
- eliminates hurtful language,
- promotes healthy activity and interactions, and
- is welcoming and values the engagement of all students.

## Program Outcomes

**94% of Unified Champion Schools teacher liaisons say that UCS programs reduce bullying, teasing and offensive language in their schools**

**94% of school staff said UCS programs give students with and without Intellectual Disabilities greater opportunity to work together**

## Year Established

2008

## 2019-20 Budget

\$100,000

## People Impacted

76,000 Students at 86 Schools in 40 Counties



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### Program Contact

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