

What's Next?

Moving on from Young Athletes

Your child is learning, growing and changing every day. Young Athletes has provided a way for you to connect as a family, celebrate your child's accomplishments and prepare them for participation in sports.

Starting at age 6, children can start moving on from Young Athletes . . . but what comes next?

Sport Specific Training and Competition!

At Special Olympics New Jersey, we are dedicated to providing sports opportunities for your child to experience joy, demonstrate courage and share their gifts with their families and communities.

Whether on a team or training individually, we believe that the power of sport can help individuals learn about themselves and others and lead a healthy and happy life.

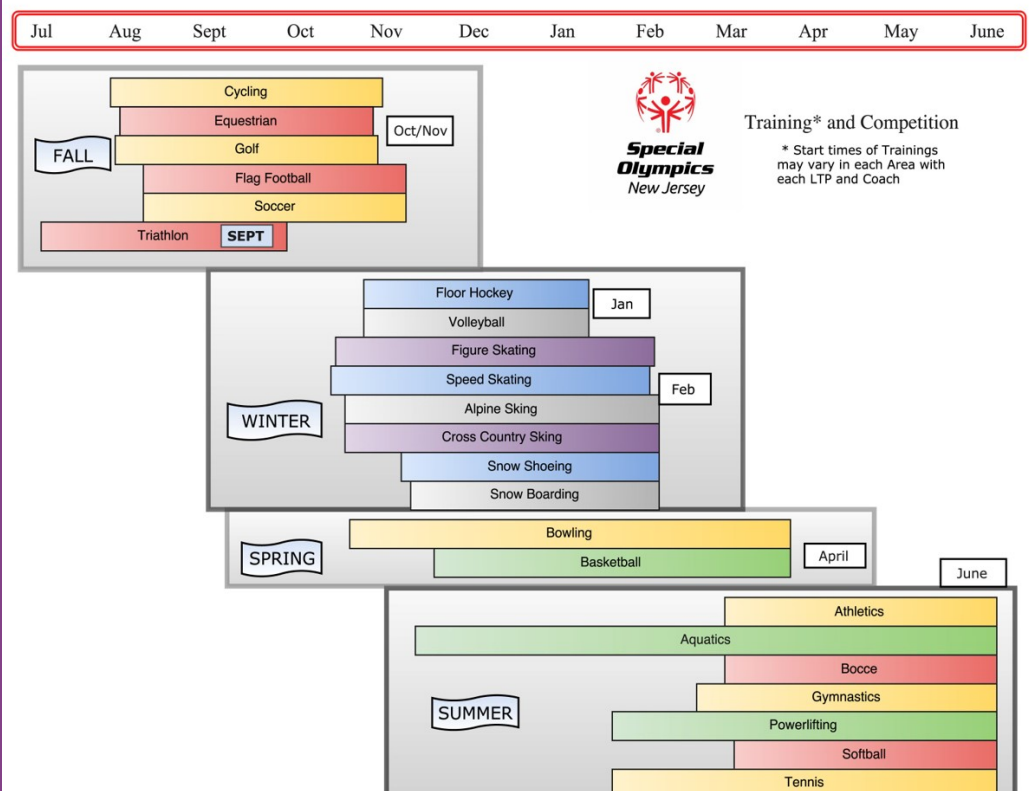
We are looking forward to helping you and your child on this exciting journey of finding the sports they love and having the opportunity to practice and compete to the best of his or her own ability.

Looking for choices?

We have a few!

Special Olympics New Jersey offers:

- **24 sports**
- **4 competitions seasons** ranging from September through June
- **Individual sports** such as track & field, cycling and figure skating
- **Team sports** such as soccer, basketball, volleyball, floor hockey and softball



Registration and Competition is NO COST

Young Athlete



- Ages 2 - 7
- YA registration form
- Gross motor activities
- Not sport specific
- Young Athletes events
- No competition
- No medals

Athlete in Training



- Ages 6 & 7
- Participation Packet including medical
- Phasing out of YA community programs
- Train with specific sport programs
- Athlete in training events
- No competition
- No medals

Athlete



- Ages 8 +
- Participation Packet including medical
- Cannot participate in Young Athletes programs or events
- Train with a specific sport program
- Can compete
- Can receive medals

Next Steps . . .



1. Complete the Athlete Participation Packet

This packet includes consent forms and medical forms that need to be completed by your child's doctor. When it is complete, make 3 copies for yourself and mail the original to the SONJ Sports Complex in Lawrenceville.



2. Find or start a Local Training Program

A Local Training Program (LTP) is a program that trains in one or more of the sports we offer. An LTP can be one coach (possibly a parent) and one athlete training in an individual sport such as golf or cycling. An LTP can also consist of more than one coach for a team sport such as soccer or basketball.



3. Start training and compete when ready

Once you contact an LTP in your area and register with them, or start your own, your child is ready to start training!

SPORT PARENT 101

Special Olympics New Jersey believes in the integrity of sports and that training effectively and safely is an opportunity to learn many things.

Expectations:

- Be prepared to travel: to practices, leagues and competitions
- Be prepared with the proper sports equipment
- Be prepared to help if needed. This can be as simple as bringing waters to practices or sending emails

Being a Sport Parent!

- Be respectful of other families, coaches and athletes.
- Lead by example! Eat a healthy diet, drink water and exercise with your child.
- Let sports be a connection with your child, not a divider.
- Don't miss practices. Get your child to practice on time. If you have to miss a practice, let your coach know as soon as possible.
- Be at competitions. Your team is counting on you.

Sports skills = Life skills!

SPORTS	LIFE SKILLS
Taking direction from a coach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening to a teacher• Taking directions from a supervisor at work
Being prepared with the proper equipment and uniform for practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being prepared with supplies and HW for school• Wearing a work uniform or dressing appropriately
Practicing with your teammates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Socializing with friends at school• Cooperating with co-workers at work• Determination and goal setting
Winning and losing games.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being in control of your emotions and reactions• Compassion for others• Pride and self confidence• Non-quitting spirit
Being part of a team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing at recess• Pride and self-confidence

No Program? No Problem!

You may find that there isn't a local training program taking on athletes in your area.

Don't worry! Here are some options:

1. Travel outside your local area if convenient
2. Approach your child's school about starting a program
3. Start a program in your area! We can help. Reach out to people in your community to help too.



How to find a Local Training Program



Click to find your area and contact the Area Director

OR



Email Andrea Moore, Young Athletes Director

OR



Email Joanne Monaco, Field Services Manager

HAVE FUN!

Sports should be FUN for you and your child. Cheer from the sidelines and encourage all athletes. Share your child's joy, relish in their courage and celebrate their accomplishments.