



# Special Olympics New Jersey **Young Athletes**

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# What will be discussing?

## *About Young Athletes*

- *Skill development*

## *Goals of Young Athletes*

## *Where can you find Young Athletes*

- *Homes*
- *Community*
- *Schools*

## *What's included in your home kits*

- *Equipment*
- *Activity Guide*

## *Activities in the program*

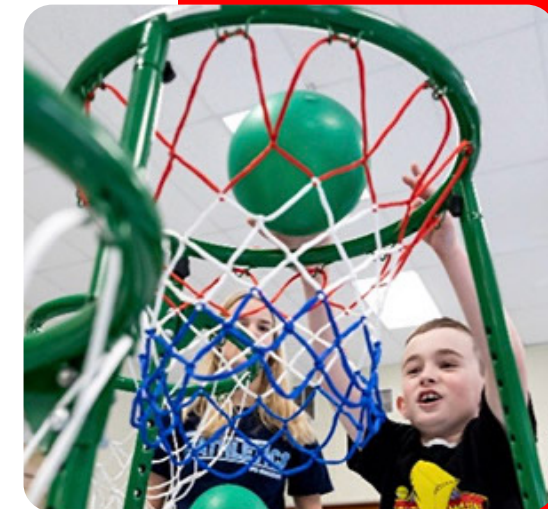
## *SONJ Return to Activity Guidelines*



# About Young Athletes

Young Athletes introduces Children with and without intellectual disabilities (ID), ages 2 through 7 to the world of Special Olympics New Jersey.

- Inclusive **sports play** that teaches skills like balance, jumping and kicking
- Learn **social skills** like taking turns and playing with a teammate
- Build **self confidence**
- **Play as a family** and meet new friends



# Skill Development

**There are number of skill areas in Young Athletes that help children learn movements they will use in sports and daily life**

- Foundational Skills (strength, flexibility and body awareness)
- Walking & Running
- Balance & Jumping
- Trapping & Catching
- Throwing
- Striking
- Kicking





# Goals of Young Athletes Program

## Support

- Support social inclusion and inclusive play

## Encourage

- Encourage children with and without intellectual disabilities to learn & play together

## Provide

- Provide children with activities and games that meet their skill and ability level

## Empower

- Empower family members to see their child's abilities and future potential



# Where are Young Athletes?

Home

Community

School



# Young Athletes in Homes

**The best combination of sport and play that allows you to engage with your child in the comfort of your own home**

- Family oriented
- Receive free Activity Guide
  - English and Spanish
  - Explore number of activities
- Receive free kit to use at home
- Review Family Resources page
  - Watch our videos for more ideas on ideas and activities to at home

***Encourage new athletes and families, coaches, volunteers to get involved and continue to grow by transitioning athletes to community and school programs and beyond Young Athletes***



# What's Included?

## Individual Home Kit Equipment

- Bars and bricks to create hurdles and balance activities.
- Balls – all sizes, types
- Scarves
- Hoops
- Cones
- Floor markers

## Activity Guide

- Available in English and Spanish
- Explore ideas and activities





# Activities in the Program

## Foundational Skills

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Obstacle Courses
  - Bridges and tunnels
  - Inchworm wiggles
  - Parachute games
  - Scarf games



# Activities in the Program

## Skill: Walking & Running

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Follow the leader
  - Relay races
  - Side stepping
  - Change directions: straight line, zigzag, backwards
  - Start & stop command or whistle
  - Over and around blocks/hurdles/markers



# Activities in the Program

## Skill: Balance & Jumping

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Frog jumps
  - Hurdles
  - Star jumps
  - Balance beam activities
  - Follow the coach or Simon says



# Activities in the Program

## Skill: Trapping & Catching

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Rolling ball – stopping with one foot or both hands
  - Stationary under hand and overhand toss
  - Bounce catch
  - Encourage to use both hands and work on hand eye coordination





# Activities in the Program

## Skill: Throwing

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Overhand and underhand
  - Use visuals like floor spots or markers for feet placement
  - Teach balance and proper posture techniques



# Activities in the Program

## Skill: Striking

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Use visual tracking cues
  - Hitting ball off tee
  - Implement racket, paddle, hockey stick play



# Activities in the Program

## Skill: Kicking

- Examples of activities you can implement:
  - Start stationary back and forth using floor markers
  - Practice using one foot
  - Use soccer, kickball, foam ball
  - Use target or goal and floor markers to kick towards



# Young Athletes At-Home Activity Program



Our At-Home Activity program offers the best combination of sport and play from the comfort of your own home. Track your activities daily using your **Activity Tracker sheets**, your **individual Home Kit**, and your **Activity Guide** to help you implement and improve your child's **gross motor skills** over the course of 8-weeks.

**This is the best program to engage your athlete and enjoy as a family!**

**Program Dates: January 10 – March 5**  
**Zoom Session: Every other Thursday, 4:00pm-4:45pm**



*Register Online*



*Request Home Kit*



*Complete Pre & Post  
Program Surveys*



*Complete Weekly  
Activity Tracker  
sheets*



*Participate in Bi-  
Weekly Zoom  
Sessions*

We hope this program allows you to see your child progress in a positive way and develops into an individual who is ready to explore further Young Athletes opportunities!

**Interested in Registering for our program? Email: [YAinfo@sonj.org](mailto:YAinfo@sonj.org)**

**Deadline to Register: December 17, 2021**



# Young Athletes in Communities

## Create opportunities for social development and team building

- 45-minute guided sport and play
  - Meet 6 – 8 times per session, 3 sessions per year
  - Led by trained coaches and volunteers
- Play Unified (sibling without a disability)

## Join a local Community Program in your Area

- Contact us for further details on how to join existing programs
- Due to the pandemic year; we are working on returning to community programming in all Areas

## How to start a program:

- Secure a location: community center, YMCA, college/university, outdoor field space, library, etc.
- Secure coaches and volunteers
- Establish dates & times
- Inform SONJ Young Athletes Manager about location, dates and times, and register your families, athletes, coaches, volunteers with all the proper paperwork



# Young Athletes in Schools

- Must be part of **Unified Champion Schools**
- **Educators** implement throughout the school day
  - Recess/during class time
- Schools can purchase young athletes kits
- **Professional Development** can be provided to *educators*
- **Guide to Inclusive Gross Motor Education and Play** provided



# Activities in the Program

## Paraeducators can:

- Model and reinforce skills
- Repeat directions
- Help with obtaining and returning equipment
- Help with assessments
- Advise/manage behaviors
- Help transition between activities
- Provide feedback to correct or affirm an activity
- Provide support for social interactions with all students in the class

### Example of a Task Card

**Student Name:** John Doe

**Skill:** Step or jump over hurdle

**Objective:** Help John attempt to step or jump over a hurdle on the floor. Can use light touch on elbow to guide him. Use floor markers for target.

**Cue Words:** Bend knees, jump with 2 feet

**Feedback:** "Great job!" and high fives



# SONJ Return to Activity Guidelines

- All athletes and participants (volunteers, coaches, unified partners) required to **wear a mask at all times** while participating in SONJ programs and events
- All Young Athletes and participants are required to register with SONJ that includes SONJ two waiver forms: **High Risk Waiver & COVID-19 Code of Conduct Waiver** and **Communicable Diseases Waiver**

*\*Schools follow protocol set in place by the district\**

**Follow this link to Register:** <https://www.sonj.org/sports/young-athletes/ya-registration/>

**For additional information please visit the Return to Activity website:** <https://www.sonj.org/sports/sonj-return-to-activity-guidelines/>



# Young Athletes Wrap up

There are a variety of ways that Young Athletes can be implemented within the *Home*, *Community*, and *School*

By implementing a variety of strategies, we can help to *promote positivity* and *gross motor education* throughout the ages of 2-7

Young Athletes focuses on the importance of *developing gross motor skills* at a young age and learning to *stay active*, all while having fun and *engaging with family and friends*



**Thank you for attending. We hope you enjoyed this presentation!**

***If you have any Questions or Comments***

***Email us at***

***YAinfo@sonj.org***