



Special Olympics
Delaware

COACHING MANUAL

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What is a Coach?

Like any amateur coach, the Special Olympics Delaware (SODE) coach is responsible for teaching the Special Olympic athletes sports and life skills, and to engrain in them a competitive spirit that defines any true athlete. In addition to instructing, a coach might be called on to serve the role of friend or mentor.

The Special Olympics coach is a leader and recognizes that he/she holds a position of trust and responsibility in a program that deals with a formative period of a person's development.

The Special Olympics coach has the understanding, patience and the capacity to work with children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Above all else, the coach realizes that he/she is helping to shape the physical, mental and emotional development of athletes on his/her team.

The heart of Special Olympics is what happens between the coach and athlete. It is the coach more than any other individual who controls the situation in which the athletes can benefit. The coach and athlete share a common interest in the game, a desire to excel, and a determination to win. Athletes often idolize their coach, not because he/she is the most successful in terms of wins and losses, but because the coach is a source of inspiration and understanding.

Above all else, the Coach is sensitive to the mental and physical abilities of the athletes and recognizes that the game is a vehicle of training and enjoyment, not an end in itself.

Special Olympics Coach's Oath

“In the name of all coaches, we shall follow written and verbal instructions of Special Olympics officials at all times, have our athletes at the appropriate events and activities at the proper time and abide by the rules and policies, in the spirit of sportsmanship.”

Coach Criteria

Roles & Responsibilities of a Coach

The Special Olympics coach is responsible for:

- 1) *Selection, assessment and training of Special Olympics athletes.*
 - a) **Selection:** The Special Olympics coach will recruit athletes and properly complete and submit all required medical and registration material by established deadlines.
 - b) **Assessment:** The Special Olympics coach will assess each athlete to determine the appropriate individual and/or team skill level for training and competition in selected sports. Coaches shall ensure that athletes compete in events within their sport that challenge their potential and are appropriate to their ability. Safety should always be the first priority when selecting levels within a sport.
 - c) **Training:** The Special Olympics coach will develop an individualized training program for each athlete and team. The program shall include proper and appropriate instruction in fundamental skills, conditioning and competition rules. The training sessions/practices will be offered at least once per week for eight weeks. Ideally, coaches should conduct practices twice per week for 10 weeks.
- 2) *Understanding and abiding by the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.* Coaches shall be knowledgeable about all current Special Olympics and National Governing Body competition rules and regulations applicable to their sport and shall prepare their athletes prior to competition in accordance with those rules. Rules are reviewed on coaches' calls, at coaching clinics and are available online.
- 3) *Knowing and understanding the sport being coached.* Every coach shall abide by the letter and spirit of the rules and be responsible for conducting him or herself in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- 4) *Executing the moral and ethical responsibilities and duties of a coach.* All coaches must abide by the Special Olympics Coach's Code of Conduct. Coaches shall be honest and instruct athletes to compete with maximum effort in all preliminary trials and/or finals.
- 5) *Providing and maintaining a safe and secure physical environment, including the use of acceptable and safe equipment while training and competing.* Coaches shall place the health and safety of Special Olympics athletes above all else.
- 6) *In team sports, matching athletes on the same team according to size, strength and ability.* Team coaches shall ensure that all athletes participate in every game, regardless of ability. Coaches are responsible for assuring that the reported assessment and preliminary or qualifying scores for their athletes accurately reflect the ability of their athletes and the team as a whole.
- 7) *Informing athletes of the inherent risks associated with a specific sport.*
- 8) *Ensuring acceptable supervision and maintain an adequate volunteer-to-athlete ratio during practice sessions and at events.*
- 9) *Establishing an emergency action plan that includes procedures for emergency medical support, postponements or cancellations, crisis communication and incident and accident reporting.*
- 10) *Providing appropriate medical support at all times. Air on the side of caution.*

11) *Maintaining accurate records – most importantly, completing an incident/injury report should one occur.* Always air on the side of caution and fill the form out, regardless of your opinion of the severity of the injury or incident.

Special Olympics Coach's Code of Conduct

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and mandates that all coaches must agree to observe the following code:

Respect for Others

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, coaches, other volunteers, friends and spectators in Special Olympics.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- I will be a positive role model for the athletes I coach.

Ensure a Positive Experience

- I will ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is positive.
- I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athlete's ability at all preliminary and finals competitions in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

Act Professionally and Take Responsibility for my actions

- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in the sport (athletes, coaches, opponents, officials, administrators, parents, spectators, media, etc.), and encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competition.
- I will refrain from any form of personal abuse towards athletes and others, including verbal, physical and emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes in my care and report to the proper authorities.

Coaches who do not conduct themselves in a professional manner, or who are offensive by action or language toward athletes, other coaches, volunteers, opponents, officials and/or spectators, may be prohibited from coaching.

Coach Certification Program

SODE is dedicated to coaching excellence. In support of that commitment, the Coach Certification Program has been developed. Through this program coaches will be able to enhance their skills while helping athletes reach their potential.

SODE believes the Coach Certification Program:

- Is significant to achieving the goal of maintaining quality training and competition opportunities for athletes.
- Is critical to educating coaches in maximizing the safety of athletes and minimizing risk and liability to the SODE organization and its volunteers.
- Will benefit new and experienced coaches through the review of sports rules and introduction of new coaching techniques.
- Will better recognize the commitment and efforts of coaches statewide.

Teams will be required to have certified coaches based upon appropriate ratios at training and competition. Coaches will be required to be certified in each sport they coach.

| <u>Cert. Level</u> | <u>Cert. Components</u> | <u>Who Needs?</u> |
|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Class-A Volunteer Form/ Background Screening Team Volunteer Orientation Protective Behaviors | Team Volunteer |
| 2 | All of Level 1 Components Sport Conference Call (valid for 1 year) Attend/Request Sports Training School | Head Coach Assistant Coach |

Certification Recognition:

| | |
|---------|------------------|
| Level 1 | Team T-Shirt |
| Level 2 | Logo Coach Shirt |

Certifications are good for three (3) years unless noted above. Every coach in SODE must be certified as coach in the sport they oversee. Programs will not be allowed to compete without a certified coach.

Coach Training Schools

SODE will conduct up to one training school each year in each county for our most popular sports. Based upon geography and attendance, we may combine these schools to maximize resources. Training schools will be determined by need and sports participation.

If teams are unable to attend the state-sponsored training school they may request a training school to be held at their practice. If a training school is held at your practice all coaches who are on the coaching staff must be in attendance. The dates to request a training school by are listed on the Training and Competition Chart (page I in the Appendix). All requests must be received by the date listed and must be submitted to Mark Wise (302-831-4669 or mwise@udel.edu).

Team Composition

Athlete to Coach Ratio

All teams must adhere to the below ratio of athletes to coaches or they will risk not being able to participate. If a team needs a different ratio that request must be submitted when registrations are due.

Individual Sports: 4:1 Minimum of 1 Level 2 Coach per sport

Team Sport Roster Sizes

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Basketball | Minimum: 7 | Maximum: 10 | Coaches: 2-3 |
| 5 v 5 Soccer | Minimum: 7 | Maximum: 10 | Coaches: 2-3 |
| Volleyball | Minimum: 8 | Maximum: 12 | Coaches: 2-3 |
| Softball | Minimum: 12 | Maximum: 16 | Coaches: 3-4 |
| Flag Football | Minimum: 7 | Maximum: 10 | Coaches: 2-3 |

Team Volunteers (Level 1 Certification) may take the place of assistant coaches for chaperoning purposes and to fill the 4:1 ratio. Level 1 Team Volunteers will not have the privileges of a certified Level 2 coach. (i.e. Not allowed in competition area).

Team Composition

Teams should be comprised of Athletes and/or Unified Partners that fit the following criteria:

1. ***Similar Age.*** Age groups are determined by the sport and should be the first determinant when forming a team.
2. ***Similar Ability.*** Athletes and/or Unified Partners should be of similar ability on each of the teams that are formed.

Based on the above criteria teams must be placed in one of the following divisions and must adhere to the basic premise of the division. Divisions allow for meaningful competition opportunities for all ability levels.

UNIFIED DIVISIONS

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Basketball-3:2 | Mimic SOI compositions |
| Volleyball-3:3 | No Rules in place restricting play |
| Soccer- 3:2 | Athletes must be capable physically and emotionally to handle this level of play. |
| Softball- 5:5 | Partners & Athletes should be of similar ability |
| Flag Football- 3:2 | |

TRADITIONAL DIVISIONS

Athletes must be capable of playing the sport
Able to compete meaningfully on a team
Similar ability players
Majority of athletes will fall here

TRAINING DIVISIONS

Bridging the gap between skills and team sports
Can be Unified or Traditional
Lower ability athletes but beyond skills
Unified Partners may be used according to rules of each level and should be of similar ability

Level 2: MODIFIED GAME

Basketball(4:1) *Softball(8:2)*
Soccer(4:1) *Flag Football(4:1)*
Volleyball(4:2)

Level 1: TEAM SKILLS COMPETITION (Lowest ability level)

Basketball(4:1) *Softball(8:2)*
Soccer(4:1) *Flag Football(4:1)*
Volleyball(4:2)

SKILLS COMPETITIONS

Individual Competition Only

Available to those not ready for Traditional Team
Lower ability learning skills for sport
Can be in skills and on Training Division Team

Unified Teams

Unified Sports embraces the philosophy and principles of Special Olympics. Unified Sports teams are organized to provide meaningful involvement for all participants. Every teammate should play a meaningful role and have the opportunity to contribute to the team, which ensures a positive and rewarding experience for everyone.

Indicators of Meaningful Involvement

- Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
- Teammates participate according to the rules of competition.
- Teammates have the ability and opportunity to contribute to the performance of the team.
- Teammates understand how to blend their skills with those of other athletes, resulting in improved performance by athletes with lesser ability.

Meaningful involvement is not achieved when certain team members (usually partners) . . .

- Have superior sports skills in comparison to their teammates.
- Serve predominantly as on-field coaches rather than teammates.
- Control most aspects of the competition during critical periods of the game.
- Do not train or practice regularly and only show up on the day of competition.
- Lower their level of ability dramatically so that they do not hurt others or control the entire game.

Athlete Training

Just as professional, collegiate and scholastic athletes participate in pre-, in- and postseason training programs, it is important for the Special Olympics athlete to embark upon a similar training program in preparation for competition.

Sport training is designed to improve the athlete's physical fitness and skill level in various sports. Training programs are developed and directed by an athlete's coach following an individual assessment of that athlete's skills and abilities.

Through Special Olympics training, an athlete learns the importance of proper warm-up, cool-down, and strength and fitness training. Additionally, an athlete improves in sports skills by progressing toward measurable goals at his/her own pace. Proper training reduces sports injuries and increases safety awareness in sports. Finally, because training is required of all athletes, events will match a trained athlete against another trained athlete, thus creating equitable competition.

It is imperative that coaches ensure athletes receive the necessary and proper training in order to fully achieve the maximum benefit from participation in sports.

Prior to beginning a training program, all participating delegations and athletes must have the required forms on file at the State Office. Dates for when these forms are due are listed in the Appendix (*Page I Training and Competition Chart*).

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Athletes: | Valid Medical Form |
| Unified Partners: | Class-A Volunteer & Unified Partner Form |
| Team Volunteers: | Level 1 Certification Requirements met |
| Coaches: | Level 2 Certification Requirements met |

Within the training and competition structure, the rules of participation and advancement are as follows:

- Delegations must train for 8-10 weeks prior to competition.
- Delegations must train a minimum of one hour per week, although we encourage two hours. This may be done during one or more training sessions.
- Each training session should consist of:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Warm-ups and stretching | 10 minutes |
| Review of previously learned skills | 20 minutes |
| Introduction of new skills | 25 minutes |
| Game situations | 20 minutes |
| Conditioning | 10 minutes |
| Cool-down | 5 minutes |

Training Tips & Guidelines

Here are just a few tips and guidelines that will make your practices run more smoothly and enable you to get more accomplished in a shorter period of time.

Coaches are encouraged to utilize a Special Olympics Coaching Guide for each sport they coach. Information on how you can obtain these guides as well as a list of additional resources is listed in the Appendix (*Page VI Sports Resources*).

- Preseason:** What are your goals for the season?
Have practice facilities scheduled and secured ahead of time.
Make sure you have the proper equipment.
Distribute a practice and competition attendance policy.
Distribute a practice and competition schedule.
Communicate your philosophy and expectations verbally and in writing.
Get parent/guardian emergency contact information.
- Plan:** Utilize the model on the previous page for setting up the practice.
(*Practice Plan Template is in the Appendix Page II*)
Utilize assistant coaches in developing your plan.
Develop your plan prior to practice.
Focus on certain skills not every skill.
Keep the interest level high by varying drills.
Limit the amount of standing around.
Visit or contact other coaches for ideas.
Make it fun.
- Arrive early:** Make sure all physicals are on site.
Make sure practice area is free from obstruction and debris.
Set-up or mark areas you will be using.
Be clear to parents what time you will be finished.
- Instruct:** Use the four basic types of instruction:
- Verbal, short explanations with key terms.
 - Demonstration by coach or an athlete who has mastered the skill.
 - Physical prompt to begin the skill.
 - Physical assistance. This will not be allowed at competition so should only be used when the other three have not been successful.
- Teach what to do without emphasizing what not to do.
Keep group activity numbers low to maximize movement.
Teach to all ability levels.
Utilize assistant coaches.
Emphasize sports rules and correct when not following rules.
- After practice:** Bring the team together for a quick recap and team cheer.
Announce the next practice or meeting.
Have the players be responsible for equipment.
Be accessible to parents for questions.
Be the last to leave. Make sure everyone has a ride and has left.

*Utilize the Athlete Behavior Characteristics and Strategies to Improve Learning
Appendix Pages VII-VIII*

Safety at Practice

Supervisory Planning

Coaches are responsible for the safety and well-being of athletes during Special Olympics training, competitions and events. The coach is required to be familiar with all medical, medication and dietary precautions or conditions related to athletes under their supervision.

The coach needs to provide appropriate supervision for all practices and events. Any other personnel or volunteers should be properly trained and supervised in their work with the athletes. Suitable credentials are recommended for those who are involved, such as Special Olympics and National Governing Body (NGB) coaching credentials and cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first-aid certification.

We recommend that practices and games are covered by medical personnel, including physicians, athletic trainers, physical therapists and emergency personnel.

Prevention of Injury

Many factors contribute to the prevention of injury or the reduction of risk for injury.

Appropriate assessment of athlete readiness and skill - The coaching staff should determine a starting point for each athlete based on his readiness and skill. Motivation, interest and physical skill all contribute to the development of an action plan.

Training program for year-round fitness - The coach should work with each athlete and family to develop and encourage compliance with a year-round fitness and nutrition plan to foster and develop positive health behaviors as well as physical preparation for the activity during the season.

Sport-specific training plan - The coach should work with the athlete and family to develop an individualized sports training plan for development of the appropriate skills and conditioning for the sport.

Medical Forms - Coaches should have athletes' completed medical forms and special medical instructions at all practices and games.

First-aid kits should be available at all practices and games.

Acclimatization to extreme outdoor environments is recommended.

- Heat: Athletes should gradually adjust to exercising in the heat over a two-week period. They should exercise in light clothing whenever possible, or if heavier clothing/equipment is required, caution should be used when setting the time frames for practices. Hydration should be maintained at all practices and games.
- Cold: Athletes should adjust to the cold over a period of several days. They should learn to layer their clothing so they can adjust attire for the temperature. Hats and gloves should be worn if necessary.

- Sun or snow blindness: To prevent both sun and snow blindness, athletes should wear dark glasses with lateral shields during outdoor activities. Glasses should have ultraviolet blocking.
- Sunburn: Visors or long-sleeve shirts should be worn if athletes will be exposed to the sun during their activities. Sunscreen with a minimum SPF 15 should be used on all exposed body parts, including the nose, ears, face, lips and any bald spots on the scalp.
- Wind: Wind can cause an increase in chills, dry skin and eye irritation. Glasses will provide some protection, as can eye drops or artificial tears. Lip balm maintains moisture of the lips. Proper clothing will provide protection from skin irritation and chilling.

Field of Play

The field of play should be checked before and after all practices and events for any obstacles. The playing and out-of-bounds areas should be clearly marked and free of obstacles, obstructions, surface holes or divots and debris. All areas should be dry and indoor facilities must have proper ventilation, especially in warm climates.

Other areas to be used by players, such as locker rooms and showers, should be reviewed for safety and accessibility. Floors should be properly drained and have non-slip surfaces.

Areas utilized by spectators, families and other nonparticipating players should be assessed for safety and accessibility.

First Aid Kits

All teams must have a properly stocked First Aid kit at all practices. Kits can be obtained from SODE by submitting the equipment request form.

Include in the kit any personal items such as medications and emergency phone numbers or other items that will specifically benefit your team. Check the kit regularly, including expiration dates and replace any used or out-of-date contents. It is recommended that all first aid kits include the following:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each)
- 1 blanket (space blanket)
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of non-latex gloves (size: large)
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each)
- 1 pair athletic training scissors
- 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)

- 5 sterile gauze pads (3 x 3 inches)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- oral thermometer (non-mercury/non-glass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- tweezers
- first aid instruction booklet

These are the supplies that are needed for any basic and/or minor situation **IF THE COACH IS PROPERLY TRAINED!** We recommend coaches take a basic first aid course to receive general knowledge and procedures. SODE offers this course at various times throughout the year.

Treatment of Basic Sports Injuries:

WHEN IN DOUBT CALL 911. SAFETY FIRST!

Accidents happen, especially during sports. While it may be possible to limit the number and severity of injuries with injury prevention strategies, one wrong step or a collision on the field can result in a sudden, painful injury. When this happens, you need to be prepared to act quickly.

The primary goal of sports injury first aid is to stop activity and prevent further injury or damage. Most sports injuries that require immediate treatment are called "acute injuries." These injuries occur suddenly and generally cause the following symptoms or conditions:

- Pain and swelling
- Cuts and abrasions
- Fractures
- Sprains or strains
- Concussion

With an acute injury, it's usually obvious what caused the injury (rolled ankle, etc.), but nonetheless, determining the exact cause of the injury is an important part of making quick treatment decisions.

The first treatment for most acute soft tissue injuries (bruises, strains, sprains, tears) is to prevent, stop and reduce swelling. When soft tissue is damaged, it swells or sometimes bleeds internally. This swelling causes pain and loss of motion, which limits use of the muscles.

Soft Tissue Injury Step-By-Step:

The primary treatment to stop swelling of injured soft tissue is with the R.I.C.E. method: rest, ice, compression and elevation. The procedure to follow for any soft tissue injury is:

- Stop the activity immediately (Rest).
- Remove the athlete from the competition area, unless neck or back injury is suspected. If such an injury has occurred, do not move the athlete and call 911.
- Wrap the injured part in a compression bandage (Compression).

- Apply ice to the injured part for 10 - 15 minutes. Let the area warm completely before applying ice again (Ice).
- Elevate the injured part to reduce swelling (Elevation).
- Get to a physician for a proper diagnosis of any serious injury.

First Aid for Cuts and Abrasions

If the injury causes a cut or abrasion that leads to bleeding, it's important to stop the blood flow quickly. Wash the wound with soap and water, and apply an appropriate bandage until medical help arrives. A deep cut will probably require stitches.

Bleeding Injury Step-by-Step

- Stop the activity immediately.
- Put on latex-free gloves.
- Remove the athlete from the competition area, unless neck or back injury is suspected. If such an injury has occurred, do not move the athlete and call 911.
- Treat the wounded area.
- Properly dispose of soiled gauze, towel and/or uniform.
- Remove your gloves and dispose properly.
- IMMEDIATELY wash hands with soap and water.

NOTE: Any injury in which there is significant swelling, deformity or limitation of function that does not improve quickly should be evaluated by a doctor, and the doctor should release (in writing) the athlete before they can practice or compete again.

Uniforms and Equipment

Uniforms:

- SODE purchases uniforms for programs, teams and/or athletes. Uniforms will be ordered through a SODE vendor unless otherwise approved by the SODE office. ***Programs must gain approval before purchasing from an outside vendor in order to be eligible for reimbursement up to the SODE vendor price.***
- Uniform specifications:
 - Uniform tops must have the SODE Logo on them. Program logo can be placed on tops below the SODE logo and/or on shorts/pants.
- Uniforms should ONLY be worn for competition and league/scrimmage games. It is recommended to collect uniforms after each game during the season to ensure proper washing procedures and to collect at the end of the season for proper storage.
- **Deadlines for orders will be set for each sport season. Generally this deadline will be four (4) weeks prior any major event. BE SURE TO CHECK DEADLINE FOR THE SPORT WHICH YOU ARE ORDERING UNIFORMS.**
- Order forms will be provided for each sport season.
- Teams should re-use uniforms each season and only replenish or add as needed.

Equipment:

SODE will continue to provide equipment which programs need to ensure appropriate training. Requests will be accepted provided the same equipment has not been ordered recently unless the program proves additional needs for the same equipment. Equipment will be ordered through the Chapter office and an Equipment Request Form is located in the Appendix (*Page III Equipment Request Form*). Any equipment purchased by programs who then request reimbursement must have it approved prior to purchase, otherwise you risk not getting reimbursed. It is the Coach's responsibility to ensure that all equipment is utilized properly during the season and stored safely during the off-season or returned to SODE. Any equipment that is damaged when returned is the responsibility of the program and that program will pay for replacement of the equipment. The following areas should be addressed:

- *Adequate amount of equipment* - All necessary equipment should be available for every practice and event. Athletes should be able to use the equipment for warm-up and participation.
- *Well-maintained equipment* - All equipment should be checked prior to the start of practice or competition. Equipment that is routinely or occasionally used should be maintained and checked before each use.
- *Proper use of equipment* - Manufacturers develop equipment for specific uses. The coaching staff should instruct their players in the correct use of the equipment. Improper use is not only unsafe but may invalidate the warranty.
- *Proper size of equipment* - Equipment should adhere to the standard specifications designated by the sport.
- *Proper fit of equipment* - Any sport equipment should be properly fitted to each athlete.
- *Proper warranty and safety criteria* - Review of the safety criteria and appropriate use is recommended.

Competition

If planning to participate at the state level, delegations must attend any required pre-competition/leagues if one is offered in that particular sport. For sports in which a pre-competition/league is not offered, we suggest arranging scrimmages or mini-competitions with other local delegations; or setting up a competition atmosphere within one of your training sessions.

All registration deadlines must be met. Your Program Director will be able to give you pertinent dates based on the sports in which you are participating and assist you with registration procedures.

Preparing for Competition

It is the coach's responsibility to have the athletes prepared physically and mentally for the competition. This involves ensuring that all uniforms are ready, all athletes have proper footwear, all equipment is present, meals and transportation are available, and all registration entries are correct. Below are a few tips for coaches to follow before, during and after the competition.

Traveling

The coaching staff is responsible for all athletes when traveling to play and compete. The coach should review any special instructions for each player with his/her parents or guardian. Written instructions for any medications should be reviewed and taken on the trip.

The coach should make arrangements for any supplies needed (practice balls, water, etc.) as well as emergency management plans and locker room space. Important telephone numbers should be recorded in the event parents/guardians need to be contacted.

If the trip involves overnight lodging and none is provided by Special Olympics Delaware safe and accessible accommodations should be secured. Contact information should be given to all parents. Special dietary concerns should be clarified with parents and arrangements made to address them.

If housing is provided by Special Olympics Delaware and a program chooses to use other housing they may not register under the Special Olympics name nor use any funds from Special Olympics. If a program uses outside housing Special Olympics assumes no responsibility for any problems that may arise.

Please refer to the participation policies for information on Alcohol and Tobacco Policies at practice and competition.

Parents need to be advised when and where to pick up their athletes upon return and a telephone tree should be developed in case of an alteration of plans.

At the Competition

- **Be positive about competing.**
- **Respect your opponents and yourself.**
- **Always stay under control even if you are feeling mad or angry.**

Expectations of Coaches

Always set a good example for participants and fans to follow.

Instruct participants in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship and ethics a top priority.

Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the event, and display no behavior that could incite fans, teammates or opponents.

Treat opposing coaches, directors, participants and fans with respect.

Shake hands with officials and the opposing coach after each competition.

Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

Expectations of Athletes & Unified Partners in Unified Sports

Treat teammates with respect and encourage them when they make a mistake.

Treat opponents with respect; shake hands prior to and after contests.

Respect the judgment of contest officials, abide by the rules of the contest, and display no behavior that could incite fans, teammates or opponents.

Cooperate with officials, coaches, directors and fellow participants to result in a fair contest.

Do not retaliate (verbally or physically) if the other team demonstrates poor behavior.

Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.

Define winning as doing your personal best.

Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.

Before the Competition

Make final check of all equipment and athlete needs.

Be sure your athletes are warmed up, stretched and ready to compete.

Be sure to have the proper shoes for each event.

Be positive and upbeat but do not over excite.

Be sure athletes eat and drink appropriately prior to competing.

During Competition

Encourage and support your athletes, but do not yell and scream. Keep calm and offer positive reinforcement.

Restrict coaching from the bleachers to positive comments.

Tell parents to be supportive but not to coach or yell at the athletes.

Keep substitutions simple. Have substitutes ready in case of injuries or no-shows.

Commit yourself to equal playing time for your players.

Give different athletes the chance to compete in new events for which they have trained.

Be a coach who allows the athlete to progress to new levels.

Make sure that the athletes have plenty of fluids.

Athlete Flow at Competition

Coaches do not determine the flow of athletes, the games management team does. Coaches have to know the athlete flow of a specific competition to ensure that athletes are where they need to be at the time that they need to be there. For this reason, it is imperative to receive and read all pre-event information that is distributed with schedules, etc. *The athlete flow process is designed to make the athlete experience as smooth as possible from the moment your team arrives until its departure.*

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship happens when both the coach and athletes commit to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others, both teammates and opponents. Below are a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

Coaching Tips

Discuss sports etiquette, such as congratulating opponent after all events, win or lose; and controlling temper and behavior at all times.

Always commend the athletes when they demonstrate sportsmanship; consider giving sportsmanship awards or recognition after each practice and competition.

Sportsmanship is an attitude that is shown in how you and your athletes act on and off the field of play.

Competitive Effort

Put forth maximum effort during each event and always finish – never quit. Practice with the same intensity as you will need to perform in competition.

Fair Play at All Times

Always comply with the rules.

Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.

Respect the decision of the officials at all times.

After the Competition

Cool down after competition to prevent soreness.

Say "well done" or "good effort" to all of your athletes when appropriate.

Spend time reviewing the athletes' performances and prepare some useful comments for the beginning of the next practice.

Be sure to collect all the uniforms and equipment from each athlete.

COACHING MANUAL

APPENDIX

Special Olympics Delaware Training and Competition Chart

Appendix Page 1

The following are dates based upon the projected competition schedule.
Programs should use this schedule when planning their calendar of events for the year.

| Event | Sports Offered | Coaches Call | Training School Requests | Forms Due* | Training Period | Uniform Orders Due | Preliminary Scores Due | Competition Date |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Soccer Skills | | Early August | August 15 | September 1 | Mid August to Early October | September 15 | October 1 | Early to Mid October |
| Fall Sports Festival | Soccer Flag Football Volleyball 4-person Bocce LDR | Early to Mid August | August 15 | September 1 | Mid August to Mid October | October 1 | October 15 | Late October to Early November |
| Bowling | | Late September | October 1 | October 15 | Early October to Early December | November 15 | December 1 | Early to Mid December |
| Skiing | Alpine Skiing Nordic Skiing | Mid October | October 1 | October 15 | November - February | TBD | TBD | Late February to Early March |
| Basketball Skills | | Early December | December 1 | January 1 | January - February | February 1 | February 22 | Early to Late March |
| Team Basketball | | Early December | December 1 | January 1 | January - February | February 1 | February 22 | Early to Mid March |
| Roller Skating | | Early March | March 1 | April 1 | April - May | April 15 | May 1 | Mid May |
| Summer Games | Track & Field Aquatics Powerlifting 2-person Bocce Softball Tennis | Early to Mid March | March 1 | April 1 | April - Early June | May 1 | May 24 | Early to Mid June |
| Cycling Competition | | Mid June | June 15 | July 15 | July to Mid September | August 15 | September 1 | Mid September |
| Equestrian Competition | | Mid June | June 15 | July 15 | July to Mid September | TBD | TBD | Late September |
| Golf Competition | | Mid June | June 15 | July 15 | June to Mid September | TBD | TBD | Late September to Early October |

Training School Requests: If your program cannot attend one of the state sponsored sport specific training schools you must submit a request to Mark Wise (mwise@udel.edu or 302-831-4669) for a training school by the specified date above.

*** Forms Due include Medicals, Volunteer Forms, Online Trainings, Unified Partner Forms**

Time: _____

Date: _____

Focus: _____

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Warm-up 10 Min. | |
| Review 20 Min. | |
| New Skills 30 Min. | |
| Game Situation 20 Min. | |
| Cool Down 10 Min. | |

NOTES:



Special Olympics
Delaware

EQUIPMENT REQUEST FORM

PROGRAM: _____ DATE: _____

HEAD COACH or PROGRAM DIRECTOR: _____

DAY PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____ FAX: _____

EQUIPMENT REQUESTED:

DATE NEEDED BY: _____

This equipment is the property of Special Olympics Delaware, and by signing below, you acknowledge that this equipment will be returned to Special Olympics Delaware should your program become inactive or discontinue the sport within your Training Program. You also acknowledge that if the equipment is damaged or lost it is the responsibility of the program to replace the equipment.

Signature of person equipment is received by: _____

Date equipment is received: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

EQUIPMENT ORDERED (DATE):

EQUIPMENT RECEIVED (DATE):

DATE EQUIPMENT RETURNED:

OK:

NOTES:

Athlete Safety at Competitions

While attending SODE competitions a coach is required to ensure that proper identification is worn by Athletes, Unified Partners and Coaches at all times (nametags or credentials). In case of emergency, all athletes should be easily identifiable. It is further recommended that prior to the start of each competition, coaches identify an area at which to meet should an athlete become separated from the delegation.

Below are four of the most probable safety-related situations that may occur at a Special Olympics event. Please review the procedures and share them with members of your program so that we are all prepared in the unlikely event of an emergency.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE:

AN INJURY/ ILLNESS TO A MEMBER OF YOUR PROGRAM:

- 1) Recognize that an incident has occurred.
- 2) Attend to and assess the condition of the injured party.
- 3) All incidents should be reported IMMEDIATELY to the medical personnel on site.
- 4) Request first aid assistance:
 - a) The SODE Volunteer Medical Team will be at each venue and should be your first point of contact.
- 5) In situations where there is no easy access to first aid personnel:
 - a) Contact a member of the Games Management Team via cell phone.
 - b) If the situation warrants, call 911.
- 6) ONLY trained/certified personnel should administer medical aid, if needed.
- 7) SODE medical personnel will contact Management Team members, if needed.
 - a) Management Team members will follow crisis communication plan.
- 8) An incident report should be completed and given to a member of SODE medical team.
- 9) Refer all media inquiries to the SODE director of media relations, Jon Buzby (302-831-3484 or jbuzby@udel.edu.)

A LOST DELEGATION MEMBER:

- 1) Verify that the Delegation Member was originally part of your group.
- 2) Check with other coaches to see if other commitments were made for that delegation member to attend.
- 3) Inquire on the individual's whereabouts from all other available delegation and family members.
- 4) Review all locations that you think the individual might be.
- 5) If you are at a competition or activity site, notify the on-site event security personnel. You must be able to provide the following information:
 - a) Full name of individual & which program he/she belongs.
 - b) Full physical description.
 - c) Last location seen.
 - d) Behaviors that may help determine where the individual went.
 - e) Contact information for parent/guardian if not onsite.
- 6) SODE medical personnel will contact Management Team members.
 - a) Management Team members will follow crisis communication plan.

SEVERE WEATHER SITUATION:

- 1) SODE Games Management Personnel will make an announcement that severe weather is moving into the area.
- 2) Upon hearing the announcement all delegation members, event personnel and spectators will need to seek shelter based on the directions given.
- 3) It is the responsibility of the Program Director to account for every person in their delegation if this situation were to occur. Please be sure you know where each athlete has moved to as well as a way to contact them once a decision on the continuation of the event is made.

EVACUATION OF A VENUE:

In the event an alarm goes off in a building or you hear an announcement by SODE Games Management Personnel that a building needs to be evacuated, the following procedures should be followed:

- 1) Stay calm.
- 2) Move immediately in a calm but organized manner to the nearest exit and then to a pre-designated meeting place. Follow the directions of the games management team and/or SODE staff.
- 3) Once safe, make sure that all members of your delegation are accounted for.
 - a) If a member is missing that was in the venue contact a member of the Games Management Team or emergency personnel immediately.

SPORTS RESOURCES

Special Olympics Sports Info, Rules and Coaching Guides

www.specialolympics.org/sports.aspx

Special Olympics Delaware Sports Information

www.sode.org/sports/index.asp

Protective Behaviors: www.sode.org/get-involved/pbt.asp

Team Volunteer Orientation: www.sode.org/get-involved/online-training/index.asp

Governing Bodies

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| Aquatics | Federation International de Natacion Amateur (FINA) | www.fina.org |
| Athletics | International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) | www.iaaf.org |
| Basketball | Federation Internationale de Basketbal (FIBA) | www.fiba.com |
| Bowling | World Tenpin Bowling Association (WTBA) | www.wtba.ws |
| Cycling | Union Cycliste International (UCI) | www.uci.ch |
| Equestrian | Federation Equestre Internationale | www.fei.org |
| Figure Skating | International Skating Union | www.isu.org |
| Golf | R & A Golf Club of St. Andrews | www.randa.org |
| Roller Skating | Federation Internationale de Roller-Skating | www.rollersports.org |
| Skiing | Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) | www.fis-ski.com |
| Soccer | Federation Internationale de Football Association | www.fifa.com |
| Softball | Federation Internationale de Softball | www.internationalsoftball.com |
| Tennis | International Tennis Federation | www.itftennis.com |
| Volleyball | Federation Internationale de Volleyball | www.fivb.ch |

The International Federation for Bocce and Flag Football is Special Olympics Inc. and therefore the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for these sports shall govern all Special Olympics competitions.

Athlete Behavior Characteristics and Strategies to Improve Learning

The following chart provides coaches with information about Special Olympics athletes with different functional and learning characteristics (not labels) so that coaches can teach Special Olympics athletes more effectively. When an athlete exhibits what is generally perceived as inappropriate behaviors, those behaviors may simply be a reflection or part of the person. Inappropriate behaviors that will not be tolerated include defiance, acting out or silliness.

When possible, talk with parents, providers, teachers, former coaches, etc., about an athlete's characteristics and the successful strategies used to affect learning. Use the characteristics as a checklist. Ensure that one or more of the strategies opposite the respective characteristics are employed in each practice.

Athlete Characteristics**Strategies to Improve Learning**

| | |
|--|--|
| Learning occurs at a slower rate | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide structure 2. Provide repetition and review 3. Break down skills into smaller parts |
| Short attention span | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train for short periods of time 2. Provide repetition and review (key to gaining new skill) 3. Work one-on-one (gain full attention) |
| Resistance to change | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide clear and continuous transitions 2. Establish routines (enforce concept of flexibility) 3. Build on successes |
| Stubborn/behavior problems | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set clear rules, expectations and limits 2. Enforce rules but provide conditions for coming back 3. Reinforce acceptable behaviors |
| Verbal communication difficulties or no verbal communication | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow for additional time to express thoughts 2. Use picture boards/other assistive devices 3. Ask athlete to demonstrate or show what he/she means |
| Prone to seizures | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know signs and symptoms 2. Control atmosphere (heat, sun, sugar, etc.) 3. Inform and assure teammates when they occur |
| Poor muscle tone | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide specific exercise and strengthening programs 2. Stretch safely; do not allow athletes to stretch beyond normal joint range of motion |
| Lower pain threshold; sensitive to touch | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish eye contact when talking 2. Use softer/adaptive equipment 3. Forewarn if any touch is necessary |

Athlete Behavior Characteristics and Strategies to Improve Learning

Athlete Characteristics**Strategies to Improve Learning**

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Failure to form social bonds | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in small groups 2. Have athletes work in pairs (same pairs for several weeks) 3. Provide highly structured and least distracting environment |
| Easily overstimulated | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove or lessen stimuli (dim lights; soften sound; remove unnecessary objects) 2. Train in separate room or smaller group; gradually add people |
| Difficulty with balance or stability | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide additional assistance 2. If stretching, sit down, lean against wall or hold on to partner 3. Allow for extra time to complete a task |
| Compulsive eating | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove food from practice/competition sites 2. Provide structure and routine for eating |
| Coordination problems | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Break down drills to easier movements 2. Allow additional time with one-on-one support 3. Progress according to athlete s ability |
| Mood swings (frequency and intensity) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide structured and predictable activities 2. Set clear expectations, limits and conditions 3. Separate from group when necessary, but allow back |
| Physical limitations or impairments | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide adaptive equipment or modifications 2. Provide exercises that strengthen and stretch muscles 3. Develop gross motor and stability skills |
| Blind | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use many verbal cues 2. Provide action-specific feedback 3. Hand-over-hand demonstration may be needed |
| Deaf | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish eye contact when talking 2. Use signs, pictures or American Sign Language 3. Demonstrate what is desired |