

Pick-Me-Up Training Guide



*Stay healthy, connected and positive
while having FUN!*

Special Olympics
New Hampshire



Special Olympics New Hampshire Pick-Me-Up Training Plan

How to use this Guide

Share in the joy of sports with your child! Young Athletes is a sport and play program for children ages 2 to 7 with and without intellectual disabilities (ID). Young Athletes activities make it fun and easy to continue your child's learning at home as well as prepare them for a future in sports.

We all can use a pick-me-up every now and again. Whether athletes are 2 or 92, we know the value in a future where strength, courage and commitment are needed to be healthy as well as train for sports. We know the meaning of teamwork, whether involvement is in an individual or team sport.

We have shown, time and time again, that the Special Olympics oath *"Let Me Win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt,"* is not just a saying; it is a way of life. Now more than ever, **LET'S BE BRAVE IN THE ATTEMPT.**

Now to begin.

- On your mark!** ... This is the **Warm Up**.
 - Read through this Pick-Me-Up Training Guide for Young Athletes and open the box of Young Athletes Family Activities Flash Cards.
- Get set!** ... In this **Training** phase, the athlete will set the pace; you will help with challenges.
 - In the beginning, you may want to choose only one of the Skill Areas to focus on that day.
 - As the athlete progresses, let the athlete choose one activity from each Skill Area to do 3 out of 5 days.
 - As the athlete improves, the athlete will continue to choose multiple activities for each Skill Area and complete them at least 3 of 5 days.
- Go!** ... This is the **Competition** phase, applying what the athlete has done and recognizing self-improvement.
 - Connect with others and share their progress and success with a call, text, email, or social media.
 - Use the Poster and Tracking Charts near the end of the Guide to show their success as well as motivate them to keep at it.
- Awards Ceremony** ... is the **Cool Down**.
 - How did they do? Recognize them and let them feel good about their efforts

This training guide is set up to be preparation for year-round sports training and competition when the young athlete reaches age 8. The training is to keep our minds and bodies healthy, positive and ready for participation in sport. Competition for this age group is with themselves.

The preparation for sport is key; having fun is the means.

Look through this Training Guide, and you will see different activities to choose from. Start with one day at a time. Try some of the activities; see which ones your child enjoys. Work at THEIR pace and remember to challenge them. The value of effort cannot be overstated.

Skill Areas

We are using the **Young Athletes At Home Training Program** as well as areas of Fit 5 to help young athletes train and achieve personal bests, expanding their fitness and healthy living at home, so that they will be even more prepared when they reach age 8. The **Young Athletes At Home Training Program** consists of four Skill Areas.

1. *EXERCISE* is the movement and physical activity portion of the program.
2. *NUTRITION and WATER* refer to choices of food from meats and beans to fruits to vegetables to grains and dairy. The athlete needs to drink a lot of water throughout the day to fuel their bodies to provide maximum efforts.
3. *HEALTHY HABITS* consist of setting good examples, washing hands frequently, brushing teeth, etc.
4. *PICK-ME-UP or WELLNESS* is about acts of kindness, positive thinking, staying connected, and sharing! What young athletes think and feel and what they do to help themselves and others is just as important as when they are physically active.

To begin, this Young Athletes At Home Training Program has suggested activities from the Young Athletes Activity Guide and Young Athletes Family Activities Flash Cards to reach each Skill Area. Check the Special Olympics New Hampshire webpage (www.sonh.org) regularly for new ideas, tips and activities.

Tracking

You will be able to record what the young athlete does on two Tracking Charts. The first is a poster to record what the young athlete did in one day. The second is a Weekly Exercise, Nutrition and Water, Healthy Habits, and Pick-Me-Up Chart. Copy it so that they will have a fresh chart each week. Post it on your refrigerator, recognizing their efforts and sharing them with the rest of your family. Post it so that the young athlete can be proud of their efforts and accomplishments.

Leave a message at (603) 624-1250 ext. 42 and let Nicolle Egan know what and how your child is doing. When you reach the Skill Areas of participating at least 3 days a week, eating 3 total fruits/vegetables and drinking water throughout the day, and completing a pick-me-up activity at least 3 days a week, you will receive a special certificate.

Support

- If you have any questions or need copies of any of the materials, please contact Nicolle Egan at NicolleE@sonh.org or (603) 624-1250 ext. 42.
- Support will come from parents or extended family members.
- Additional support and information about Training Tuesdays will come via the SONH website (www.sonh.org).

Remember: we are expanding our fitness and healthy living at home so that we will be even more prepared when we go back to our Young Athlete program and our next event.

On Your Mark; Get Set; Go! ... **GET STARTED TODAY!**

The Young Athlete At Home Training Program



Benefits include:

- Improvement in motor skills
- Preparation for sports and school
- Contribution to social and emotional learning
- Motivation and acceptance through inclusive play
- Development of daily skills for an active, healthy life

This Guide includes

- How to play at home
- Activity tips for young athletes
- Nutrition and water considerations
- Building healthy habits through healthy play
- Adding Pick-Me-Up activities for their wellness

Playing at Home

The activities your child is learning are found in the Young Athletes Activity Guide and Young Athletes Family Activities Flash Cards. Several of these activities are included in this Guide. Participating in these activities at home will continue the Young Athlete's skill development. Activities are fun and easy to do at home.

Starting

- Set aside 20-30 minutes a few times a week to participate at home, so that your child gets to participate at least 3 times a week.
- Choose 2 or 3 activities to play at a time.

Playing

- Utilize play activities your child enjoys or would enjoy.
- Use items you have at home for equipment, such as toys, cans of vegetables or fruit, empty water bottles and towels.
- Choose activities that match the space you are in and the number of people playing.
- If playing inside, choose a space that is comfortable and big enough to play safely.
- If playing outside, play in an area with borders. Set up cones or markers to show boundaries.
- Celebrate your child often. Say things like, "You did great at ..." or "I'm proud of you when ..." that are specific to their accomplishments.
- Have fun!

There's no failure in Young Athletes, so try new skills and play often. Repetition is the key to skill development; the more you play, the more confident your child will get.

Find more ways to play at home at SpecialOlympics.org/YoungAthletes.

Activity Tips

Young Athletes' activities, found in the Activity Guide, on the Young Athletes Family Activity Flash Cards, and here, support 8 key Skills Areas.

- Choose different activities from the same skill area to develop each skill. As your child gets more confident, try more difficult activities.
- Be creative with activities to meet your child's needs. Play in groups with other family members to teach team play and acceptance. Ensure that you involve activities for the individual who cannot walk.

Skill Areas

- **Foundational Skills** help teach health, fitness and awareness of self and surroundings.
 - Act out words while saying them to help your child build connections.
- **Walking and Running** activities allow children to explore and engage in play and learning.
 - Encourage your child to look where they are going and keep their hips and feet facing forward to improve balance and coordination.
- **Balance and Jumping** activities help children climb stairs, walk on uneven surfaces like grass or sand, and build up to jumps and leaps.
 - Have your child look at a still object (you, a picture or a toy) to help them balance.
- **Trapping** (stopping a ball with the body) **and Catching** (stopping a ball with hands) skills improve hand-eye coordination.
 - Choose a ball your child can trap and catch. Use smaller balls as your child gains confidence.
- **Throwing** requires strength, flexibility, balance and coordination, as your child learns to grip and let go of objects.
 - Help your child practice stepping forward with the foot opposite their throwing arm.
- **Striking** an object with a hand or another object helps develop hand-eye coordination.
 - Start with large balls and still objects, which are easier to strike than ones that are small or moving.
- **Kicking** helps develop foot-eye coordination and balance.
 - Have your child practice keeping their eyes on the ball before kicking, and on the target as they kick.
- **Advanced Sports Skills** combine movements into more complex activities. These activities combine different skills into sports like football and softball. If your child needs more practice with one skill, returning to the activities from that skill area can help them build up to these activities.

Reach Exercise Skill Area



Foundational Skills

- Scarf Games:
 - Encourage children to follow the movement of the scarf with their head and eyes.
 - Drop the scarf and encourage children to “catch” the scarf with their hand, head, foot or other body part.
- Bridges & Tunnels:
 - Adults and children make tunnels by touching the ground with their feet and hands, sending their hips into the air. Other children crawl through the tunnels.
 - Adults and children make bridges by getting down onto hands and knees. Other children try to climb over the bridges.
- Obstacle Course:
 - Set up a basic obstacle course with any equipment you have, for example, hoops, beams, chairs or benches.
 - Introduce various concepts as the children complete the course, including: on and off; over and under; fast and slow.

Walking & Running

- Follow the Leader:
 - Encourage children to “follow the leader” as you walk in different ways (like slow, fast or march) and move different parts of your body (like arms up or arms out).
 - Then encourage children to take turns as the leader.
- Run and Carry
 - Encourage children to “follow the leader” as you walk in different ways (like slow, fast or march) and move different parts of your body (like arms up or arms out).
 - Then encourage children to take turns as the leader.
- Heavy Feet – Light Feet
 - Have children run from one end of the room to another with “heavy feet”, or lots of stomping noises.

- Then have children run back with “light feet”, running on their toes and being as quiet as possible.

Balance and Jumping

- Balance Beam
 - Encourage children to walk heel-to-toe next to a straight, narrow path marked by a chalked line.
 - Progress to having children walk directly on a line and then on a low balance beam.
- Leaping Lizards
 - Encourage children to jump forward from one floor marker to next.
 - Progress by encouraging children to run forward and leap into the air either over or onto a floor marker.
- Rock Hop
 - Set out blocks and/or floor markers and pretend they are rocks in a river.
 - Tell children to pretend there is a crocodile in the river and that they need to get across by stepping on the “rocks” without falling in the water. Increase the difficulty by having the blocks further apart or varying the size and shape of the blocks.

Trapping and Catching

- Rolling and Trapping
 - Have children sit opposite each other with legs stretched wide so that their feet touch to form a diamond shape.
 - Encourage children to roll the ball to each other and to catch or stop it with their hands.
- Goalie Drill
 - Have children stand in front of two cones that have been set up to form a goal.
 - Encourage children to stop the ball with their hands so that the ball does not roll between the cones.
- Bubble Catch
 - Ask children to stand in a circle.
 - From the middle of the circle, blow bubbles to the children and have them catch the bubbles with one or two hands.

Additional Activities

Throwing

- One-Handed Underhand Toss
 - Encourage the child to stand with bent knees, holding a small ball with one hand. Ask the child to look at your hands and underhand toss the ball into your hands.
 - Progress by having the child toss the ball into a basket, over a barrier or through a hoop.
- One-Handed Overhand Throw
 - Using the same technique as two-handed overhand throw, encourage children to use one hand, bringing their arm back and forward overhead to throw a small ball towards you.
 - Progress by having children throw the ball into a basket, over a barrier or through a hoop.
- Shoot to Score
 - Have children stand in a circle around an adult who is holding a hoop. Ask the children to pass the ball around the circle a certain number of times.
 - The child who ends up with the ball should shoot the ball into the hoop for a point.

Striking

- Ball Tapping
 - Tap a ball in the air toward children and have them tap the ball back toward you, or toward each other, with an open hand.
 - Count the number of taps before the ball hits the floor.
- Handball
 - Place a ball on a cone.
 - Have children hit the ball with a fist or open hand.
- Beginning Golf
 - Place a ball on the ground. While holding a dowel, have children stand sideways facing the ball.
 - Encourage children to strike the ball with the dowel.
 - Have children hold the dowel with thumbs pointing down

Kicking

- Stationary Ball Kick
 - Place a ball on the ground and have children stand behind it.
 - Encourage children to kick the ball toward you with the toe of their preferred foot.
- Kicking for Distance
 - For a greater challenge, encourage children to kick for distance by having them kick past various floor markers.
- Kicking for Accuracy
 - Or kick the ball between two cones or markers to score a goal.

Advanced Sports Skills

- Skipping
 - Place a series of floor markers on the ground in a straight line. Have children step onto the marker and then perform a low hop on that foot.
 - As the hopping foot lands, place the other foot on the next marker.
- Stand, Roll, Trap
 - Ask children to stand in a circle and roll a ball to each other. Have children stop or trap the ball with the bottom of their feet.
 - Make the activity more exciting by including counting or rhyming each time the ball is rolled.
- Dribble
 - Stand behind the child and assist them in bouncing a ball with two hands. Let the ball hit their hand without catching it. Provide less assistance as child's skill improves.
 - Progress to different types of balls and then progress to bouncing or dribbling the ball with one hand.

Reach Nutrition and Water Skill Area



You can help your child develop nutrition and water habits by:

- Setting a good example by staying active and eating healthy.
- Talking about healthy foods and activities during playtime.
- Letting your child help choose healthy snacks and meals.
- Eating fruit or vegetables after play instead of sugary snacks.
- Giving your child water or milk to drink, instead of soda or juice.
- Giving extra playtime or stickers as rewards instead of candy or snacks.

Reach Healthy Habits Skill Area



You can help your child build healthy habits by:

- Setting a good example by staying active and eating healthy.
- Being active with your child—walk, dance and play together as a family.
- Making time for play every day.
- Practicing Young Athletes activities instead of watching TV.
- Giving extra playtime or stickers as rewards.
- Adding songs or games to healthy habits like washing hands and brushing teeth.
- Displaying the Make Way for Healthy Play Every Day poster in your home or play area.

Find more ways to turn play into healthy habits and utilize those found in the [Young Athletes Activity Guide](#).

What's Next?

Keep exploring sports and healthy play with your child! Special Olympics provides over 30 individual and team sports to people ages 8 and older with and without intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics can help your child transition from Young Athletes to competitive sports.

Reach Pick-Me-Up Skill Area



The fourth area of the SONH Pick-Me-Up Training Plan is Pick-Me-Up or Wellness ... the journaling/writing and acts of kindness activities. One of the values of journaling is that it **Reduces Stress**. For this age group, the parent will pose questions to the child and write what the child conveys. This is a good-for-you habit that lessens the impact of physical, mental or emotional stressors on their health.

Here are a few questions to start your journaling for the athlete. Focus on one question or statement that day. Help the athlete create their own journal/notebook.

1. Today, I feel great because ...
2. One thing that is bothering me is ...
3. I am grateful for the following because ...

Along with journaling is choosing an act of kindness activity. One value to these activities is that they **Boost Mood** by giving the athlete a greater sense of overall emotional well-being and happiness. This is a time when we need more sunshine in our lives. One example is calling a friend that you haven't talked with in a while; it will pick both of you up. Acts of kindness activities can include, but are not limited to, standing up and saying, "Today, I will have a good day!", volunteering to do your brother's chores; baking cookies or brownies for the family. Choose at least one for yourself and one for someone else that is appropriate for the child's age.


1. The pick-me-up activity that I choose today is ... _____
After I did it, it made me feel good because ...
2. The pick-me-up activity that I choose today is ... _____
After I did it, it made me feel good because ...
3. The pick-me-up activity that I choose today is ... _____
After I did it, it made me feel good because ...

TOTAL:
3
PICK-ME-UPS




Commit to doing one pick-me-up activity (journaling and/or act of kindness) 15 to 20 minutes a day at least three times a week to make a difference.

Make Way for Healthy Play Every Day

Young Athlete name: _____



Choose Foods that Fuel You
Make nutrient-rich snacks and meals together

-  Fruits and Vegetables
-  Whole Grains and Protein
-  Water and Milk

Nutrition and Water



Get Moving
Stay active for at least 60 minutes every day

-  Walk
-  Dance
-  Play

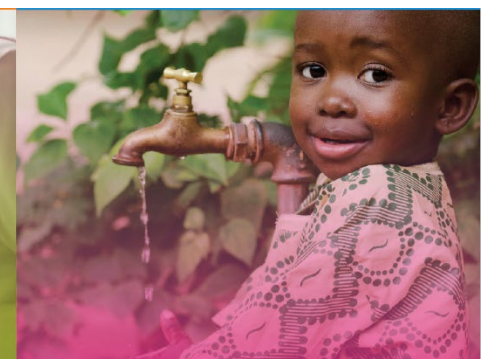
Exercise






Be Screen-Free
Have fun with your Family

-  Read
-  Draw
-  Play Outside

Pick-Me-Up



Make Healthy Habits Fun
Add songs and games to your daily routines

-  Wash hands
-  Brush teeth
-  Set a bedtime

Healthy Habits








Count with me! How many healthy play activities did we do today?

1
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7



Weekly Exercise, Nutrition, Hydration and Pick-Me-Up Tracking

Young Athlete name: _____

| Week (Dates): | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Exercise Check the box if the athlete participated in activities for at least 30 minutes today! Indicate number of minutes the athlete participated. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Minutes |
| Nutrition and Water Color in how many fruits/vegetables the athlete ate today. Color in how many glasses of water (8 oz.) they drank today. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Healthy Habits Color in how many healthy habits the athlete completed each day. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Pick-Me-Up Color in how many acts of kindness the athlete completed each day. | ○ ○ ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  |

Instructions
 Please print an original, copy this sheet each week on cardstock if possible, fill it out each day, post it on your refrigerator and copy it for the YAP coach.

Fill in the star under the particular skill area if accomplished the following:
Exercise: 3 days of at least 30 minutes of activity
Nutrition & Water: 3 days of eating at least 3 fruits and/or vegetables and drinking water throughout each day
Healthy Habits: 3 days of doing at least one healthy habit besides washing your hands
Pick-Me-Up: 3 days of adding an act of kindness to your day

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Exercise | Nutrition & Water | Healthy Habits | Pick-Me-Up |
|  |  |  |  |

Websites and Other Information to Connect with Others

Phone call or email their friends, extended family members, other Young Athletes and/or coaches.

Send a note in the mail.

Visit Special Olympics New Hampshire's webpage at www.sonh.org.

Follow us on social media when possible.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsNH/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SONewHampshire>
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/specialolympics_nh/
- Subscribe to SONH YouTube Channel: <https://www.YouTube.com/User/SpecialOlympicsNH>

Special Olympics New Hampshire | 650 Elm Street, Manchester, NH 03101 | 603.624.1250



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**



Special Olympics
Young Athletes



Special Olympics
Health
MADE
POSSIBLE BY **Golisano** FOUNDATION