

# Level 2 Alpine and Snowboarding



- This training is to certify coaches as Level 2 coaches for Alpine Skiing and Snowboarding.
- Certification (or recertification) is good for **3 years** from date completed.

# Level 2 Alpine and Snowboarding



This training will cover the following sections:

- Events
- Rules
- Registration and the divisioning process
- Alpine and Snowboarding resources.

Included is the Coaching Athletes training that will prepare you to use your sport-specific knowledge in coaching athletes with intellectual disabilities.

# Coaching Special Olympics Athletes



- For veteran Special Olympics coaches, this course serves as a reminder of the essentials of coaching.
- For new Special Olympics coaches, this course will help prepare you for your first role in coaching Special Olympics athletes.

# Coaching Special Olympics Athletes



The better the **coach** ...

the better the **experiences** ...

the better the **athlete!**



**Above:** A Special Olympics coach talking with a tennis athlete

**Left:** Special Olympics coach giving high fives on the sideline

# Course Overview

This course will cover specific topics related to:



## 1 - The Athlete



## 4 - Managing the Program

## 2 - Teaching & Training

## 3 - Preparing for & Coaching During Competition

# Unit 1 - The Athlete

Important Considerations concerning Special Olympics Athletes



## Psychological Considerations (*Learning*)



Medical  
Considerations

Social  
Considerations

# Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations



## **Motivation** – helping athletes maintain interest

- May have shorter attention span; harder to keep “on task”.
- May be motivated more by short-term rather than long-term goals.
- May learn better with more frequent positive reinforcement.

## **Perception** – helping athletes understand the sport in which they are participating

- May have impairments in sight or hearing.
- May have difficulty focusing attention on the appropriate object or task.

# Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations



**Comprehension** – helping athletes remember and perform the skill they have learned

- May find it difficult to understand verbal explanations of skills.
- May find it easier to learn through visual demonstrations.
- May have difficulty in understanding complex explanations.
- May take a longer time between learning multiple pieces of information.
- May have difficulty generalizing skills learned in one situation to a different situation.
- Written instructions may be more helpful than verbal, depending on the situation.



# Unit 1 - Psychological Challenges



<b>Psychological Item</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Action</b>
Perception	Easily distracted by noise	Control surroundings
Motivation	Easily discouraged, or having a feeling of failure	Focus on positive communication
Comprehension	Difficulty learning from verbal explanation or long instructions	Add demonstrations of skills, keeping instructions clear and concise

# Unit 1 - Psychological Challenges



## Motivation

- Challenge – Easily discouraged, or having feeling of failure
- Action – Point out positive things when the athlete is doing well

## Comprehension

- Challenge – Learning from verbal explanation or long instructions
- Action – Add demonstrations, hands-on walkthroughs of skills, keeping instructions clear and concise

## Perception

- Challenge – Easily distracted by noise
- Action – Control surroundings

**Right:** Athlete running by a crowd at track and field.



# Unit 1 - Medical Considerations



## Down Syndrome

- Approximately 10% of individuals with Down Syndrome have a condition called Atlanto-axial instability.
- This condition may cause possible injury if they participate in activities that hyper-extend or radically flex the neck or upper spine.
- Prohibited sports – equestrian, gymnastics, diving, pentathlon, butterfly and dive starts in swimming, high jump, alpine/snowboarding, squat (powerlifting) and soccer.



**Right:** Two athletes celebrate at swimming.

# Unit 1 - Medical Considerations



## Medications

- Understand that athletes may be taking medications that have physical side effects.
- Consult with head coach or head of delegation if concerns arise.

## Seizures

- The number of Special Olympics athletes with seizure disorders is higher than traditional athletes.
- Tasks to remember when assisting an athlete having a seizure:
  - Assist to a safe space around them;
  - Protect their head and neck; and
  - Lay on their side.

# Unit 1 - Medical Considerations



## Physical Disabilities

- Some athletes also have physical disabilities which may affect the sports they can participate in.
- Special Olympics has events for individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or other assistance.
- Muscle strength may be needed for a sport and some athletes may not have the strength for that sport.
  - This might be due to lack of use or a permanent disability.
  - This will change how you as a coach approaches helping this athlete.

# Unit 1 - Medical Considerations



## **Autism**

- Approximately 20% of athletes have an autism diagnosis
- Approximately 50% of people with autism are non-verbal

## **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**

- These athletes may consistently function better on performance tasks compared with verbal tasks. The more concrete the task, the better the performance.
- These athletes may tend to have attention and memory deficits and often display poor judgment in identifying right from wrong.

# Unit 1 – Medical Considerations Table



<b>Diagnosis</b>	<b>Consideration</b>
Down Syndrome	Family should ensure the athlete is screened for Atlanto-axial instability (see medical if necessary)
Seizure Disorder	Be prepared to protect and observe the athlete should a seizure occur and minimize adverse affects
Autism spectrum disorder	Understand that athletes will engage in self-stimulatory behavior (hand-flapping, jumping, etc.), and that it is not necessarily a problem
Attention deficit/hyperactivity (ADHD)	Shorten drills and provide one-to-one assistance when needed
Fetal alcohol syndrome	Demonstrate clear performance tasks

# Unit 1 - Social Considerations



## Economic Status

- May lack financial means to participate.
- May not have access to independent transportation.

## Social Skills

- May lack basic interactive skills.
- May lack language interpretation.

## Recreation at Home

- May lack physical activity.
- May lack encouragement/motivation.

**Right:** Basketball team huddles up for a breakdown





# Unit 1 - Social Considerations



All the following social considerations may impact an athlete's participation in Special Olympics:

- Inappropriate responses to social situations
- Extreme lack of endurance
- Lack of access to transportation

Our challenge as coaches is to develop a full understanding of our athletes and what they bring with them to a Special Olympics program.



**Left:** Caddie congratulates an athlete at a golf competition.

# Unit 2 – Teaching & Training the Athlete



**Top Left:** Basketball coach talking to team on sidelines

**Bottom Left:** Coach discussing strategy with an athlete



**Top Right:** Athlete getting prepared for powerlifting competition

**Bottom Right:** Coach getting athlete ready before track race



# Unit 2 - Organizing a Training Session



There are many ways to organize a training session for Special Olympics athletes.

There is considerable value in developing a consistent training routine that provides familiarity.

## **1. Warm-Up and Stretching**

- Specific to the sport
- Similar in every practice session
- Involve athletes in leading activity

# Unit 2 - Organizing a Training Session



## **2. Skills Instruction**

- Break skills into smaller tasks
- Involve as many athletes at a time as possible
- Practice skills directly related to competition

## **3. Competition Experience**

- Simulating game situations
- Work towards what the competition will look like

## **4. Cool-Down, Stretch, and Reward**

- Play a game related to the sport
- End each training with a cool-down activity and stretching

# Unit 2 - Training Sequence



1. Break down skills into small tasks or steps.
2. Put together tasks to form skills.
3. Use drills and activities that always involve many athletes.
4. Practice skills in situations that are related to the game or event.



**Above:** Athlete and trainer working on alpine skiing.

# Unit 2 - Training Sequence



<b>Step</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Consideration</b>
Tasks	Performing important parts of competition	Break down into individual parts
Skills	Performing series of tasks effectively that are necessary to perform a sport	Focus on the most important tasks for the sport
Application	Repeatedly demonstrate sport tasks in different situations	Provide game-like drills in practice
Competition	Putting essential sport skills into practice	Provide scrimmage opportunities in practice



# Unit 2 - Communication



Communication is key to immediately reinforcing desired behavior.

There are several key words that begin with a “C” which address what a coach should say:

- Clear
- Concrete
- Concise
- Consistent
- Command-oriented



**Left:** Coach and athlete share a high-five at first base  
**Below:** Coach and athlete having a conversation while at alpine skiing



# Unit 2 – Communication



<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Sport Example</b>
Clear	Use word that are easy to understand	“Swing the bat” Softball
Concrete	Connect words to something defined	“Jump forward” Long Jump
Concise	Use a few key words that cue a desired action	“Go to the free throw line” Basketball
Consistent	Use the same word or phrase for the same action	“Breathe” Swimming
Command-Oriented	Use words that reinforce a desired action	“On your mark. Set. Go.” Track and Field



# Unit 2 - Levels of Assistance



Each athlete needs to be met where he or she is.

It is important to use the appropriate level of instruction and assistance.

- Athletes with lower abilities may need more assistance
- Verbal assistance should always be paired with a demonstration
- Physical assistance may be needed to help an athlete get positioned



**Above:** Coach demonstrating the grip of a golf club to an athlete

# Unit 2 - Levels of Assistance



<b>Level of Assistance</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Sport Example</b>
Verbal	Tell the athlete what to do	Footwork: “run forward to the line; then stop”
Demonstration	Show the athlete the what to do	Basketball: have athlete watch while someone else shoots a free throw
Partial Physical Assistance	Place the athlete in the proper position	Golf: coach adjusts the athlete's hands on the golf club with the correct grip
Full Physical Assistance	Help the athlete through the entire motion of the skill	Bowling: coach moves the athlete’s arm through the entire bowling movement

# Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior



A coach may often have certain expectations of an athlete that may not be realistic ... not because the coach does not care, but because the coach does not understand or appreciate the differences that may exist.

When an athlete shows inappropriate behavior, it may not be defiance, acting out or silliness.

These behaviors may simply reflect the person and/or what is operating in the moment.

# Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior



<b>Athlete Behavior</b>	<b>Strategies to Improve Learning</b>
Swimmer has a short attention span	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Focus on a stroke for short periods of time</li><li>2. Provide multiple activities focusing on same task</li></ol>
Basketball athlete yells if they miss a shot	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Emphasize the other parts of the game</li><li>2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop, then evolve to shooting at a hoop</li></ol>
Bowler doesn't wait their turn	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is</li><li>2. Emphasize that the bowler will always follow the same person</li></ol>

# Unit 3 - Preparing & Coaching for Competition



A key goal of Special Olympics is to provide an opportunity for all athletes to experience success in competitions.

A Special Olympics athlete can benefit from many aspects of a competition, but nothing should be as important to the coach as the focus on the participation in the competition itself.

This section highlights ways to improve the quality of an athlete's competition experience.

# Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition



## Registration

- Provide accurate team roster information, qualifying times, and skills assessment scores.

## Official competition rules

- Make sure that you know the Official Special Olympics Rules.
- Teach your athletes the rules and, during training, phase out your verbal reminders about rules.
- At competition, coaches may have little or no opportunity to assist athletes when they are not following the rules. (A coach cannot be on the track with them!)



**Right:** A poly hockey official calls 'no goal'

# Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition



## **Supervision**

- Why are non-coaching support members important? There is a lot going on outside of the actual competition, including:
  - Transportation
  - Lodging (need for same-sex supervision)
  - Social activities
  - Multiple events to supervise
  - Awards ceremonies
- Create a supervision document that has athletes covered in every part of the competition

# Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition



## Travel and overnight

- Discuss overnight concerns with parents or group-home supervisors.
- Distribute a simple checklist of items to bring for athletes
- Make sure that all special medication needs are understood.
  - Coaches may have to assist with handling medications, so be sure to always have all medical forms and information readily available.
- Arrange an effective rooming situation that limits possible clashes between athletes



# Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching



## **Guidelines for success**

- Teach responsibility & independence
- Help athletes understand what to wear and what to expect on competition day
- Teach athletes how to maintain appropriate behavior at a competition
- Arrive early to allow time for putting on uniforms, a warm-up and stretching routine and focusing on the competition.
- Encourage maximum effort in practice and competition

# Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching



## Guidelines for success

- Let athletes compete without direct supervision
  - Allow athletes to make mistakes and help them learn from them
- Make any official protests calmly
  - If you think there is a valid reason to protest the outcome, do so in a calm manner, and **not involving athletes in disputes.**
  - Help athletes deal appropriately with winning and losing.
  - Focus on effort made, recognize accomplishments and new skills that were performed and taking something positive away from **every** experience.

# Unit 4 – Managing the Program



## **The successful Special Olympics coach is:**

- Knowledgeable about the sport and coaching
  - Knowledge of the sport and how to teach it is essential if coaches are to help athletes and truly benefit from their Special Olympics experience.
  - Successful coaches are constantly looking for opportunities to learn more about the sport.
- Knowledgeable about Special Olympics
  - Special Olympics has a clear mission, philosophy, and rules that have been developed through years of worldwide experience.
  - A better understanding of the mission will benefit your athletes.

# Unit 4 – Managing the Program



## **The successful Special Olympics coach:**

- Recruits and trains assistant coaches
  - Assistant coaches can be recruited to provide one-to-one attention
  - Assistant coaches are the most useful when they are trained and are a part of the planning process at practice
- Recruits and trains athletes
  - A coach is also a promoter and recruiter, hopefully trying to expand their team to more possible athletes
- Assists with appropriate sport selection
  - Picking a sport that is both age and ability appropriate for their team

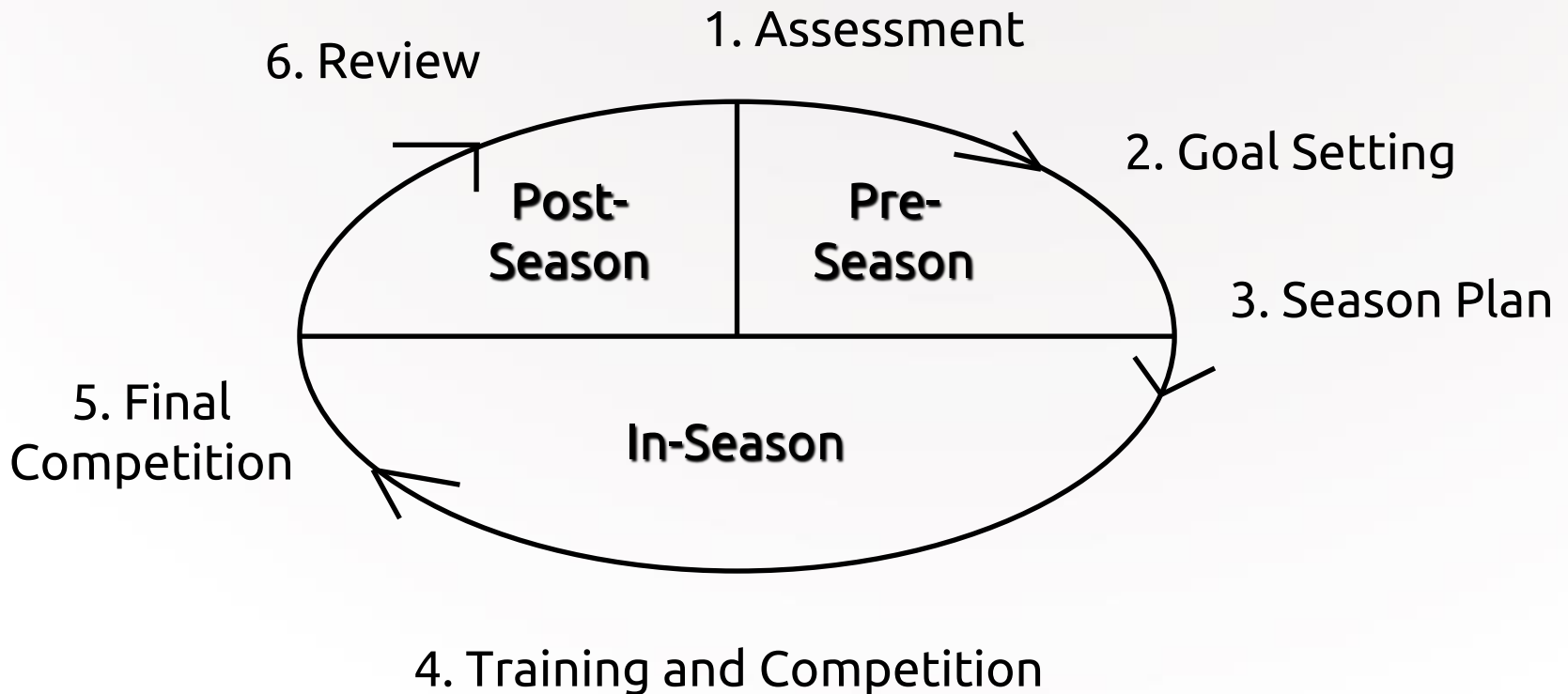
# Unit 4 – Managing the Program



## **The successful Special Olympics coach:**

- Offers activities for all ability levels
- Puts a priority on safety
- Involves families and providers
  - This includes educating families and providers about the benefits of Special Olympics, as well as appropriate nutrition and training at home
- Assists with community inclusion
  - Improves social skills and creates opportunities to spread information about Special Olympics

# Unit 4 – Preparation





# Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding

# Special Olympics Minnesota Coach Ratio



Athletes	Level II	Level I		Athletes	Level II	Level I
1-4	1	0		33-36	3	6
5-8	1	1		37-40	3	7
9-12	1	2		41-44	3	8
13-16	1	3		45-48	3	9
17-20	2	3		49-52	4	9
21-24	2	4		53-56	4	10
25-28	2	5		57-60	4	11
29-32	2	6		61-64	4	12

- All Coaches and Unified Partners must complete the Level 1 training prior to participating with a team.
- Level 1 certification requires a Volunteer Application and Level 1 online training and both items are found [here](#).



# Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding Event Descriptions



- Glide
  - Non-gated 10-meter course for beginning skiers.
  - For athletes that enter the Glide, this is their only event
- Slalom, Giant Slalom, and Downhill are the three events that skiers will compete in if they are not doing the Glide
  - Athletes will compete at their skill level within the categories of:
    - Novice
    - Intermediate
    - Advanced

# Warming Up



- It is very important to spend time warming up prior to exercising
- All practices should include a warmup and cool down
- Three types of warmups:
  - **Passive:** Increasing the body temperature
    - Wearing warmup pants over uniform shorts
  - **General:** Performing major muscle group movements
    - Jogging or running
  - **Specific:** Copies the actual event
    - Bench press without weight before weightlifting

# Rules of Competition



- All athletes must wear an appropriate helmet for ski racing during training and competition.
- Athletes may not receive physical assistance when skiing on the course
  - Verbal encouragement or direction is allowed
  - Coaches can assist during warm up and during pre-race runs but **cannot** be on the course during the timed race



# Rules of Competition

- **One-Minute Rule:** athletes that move out of the general direction of the course (fall, miss a gate, lose a ski, etc.) will have 1 minute to re-enter the course.
  - Athletes that fail to adhere to one-minute rule or receive physical assistance will be disqualified from that run
  - Athletes who are not able to re-enter the course on their own within one minute should be removed from the course by their coach.



**Right:** An athlete skiing with a fence behind



# Rules of Competition

## **Start Command** - 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, GO!

- Timer begins when the athlete's foot crosses the start line
- Starting referee may assist in forward momentum of the athlete

## **Performance Standards**

- Coaches will need to evaluate the ability of each skier to determine the appropriate level for competition.
- A maximum time limit of 3 minutes will be set for all intermediate and advanced events in order to keep at a timely pace.
- Athletes that cannot complete the course in the allotted time should be registered for the next lower level of competition. SOMN staff may move an athlete to a different level for safety reasons.

# Correct Gate Passage



A gate has been passed correctly when both the competitors' ski tips and both feet have passed across the gate line. This may be done in one of three ways:

- On the correct order of the course
- The athlete may go past the gates, climb up the hill and come back down through the gates
- The athlete may go past the gates, climb up the hill and break the plane from below the gates without repassing through them.



# Correct Gate Passage

If a competitor loses a ski without committing a fault, then the tip of the remaining ski and both feet must have passed the gate line.

- The start and finish lines are the same as a gate line.

If a competitor removes a pole from its vertical position before both the competitors' ski tips and both feet have passed the gate line, the ski tips and feet must pass the original gate line.

- The gate line will be marked in the snow.

**Below:** Athlete working through poles on the alpine course.



# Alpine Helmet Regulation



- Under the new regulations, helmets must bear a CE mark and conform to recognized and appropriate standards such as CEH.Din 1077, ASTM F2040, SNELL S98 or RS 98.
- In order to attest that a helmet fulfills all FIS requirements, it must have a conformity label affixed by the manufacturer in a non-removable way, at the back of the helmet, in a position where it is not covered by the goggle strap.
- The conformity label must contain the text “Conform to FIS Specifications RH 2013”.
- For more information visit [SOI’s Alpine Ski Rules](#) (page 6).



# Alpine Helmet Regulation



Please check helmets before the season begins. The quota request will have a check box confirming you checked the team's helmets.

If following this rule is a financial challenge for your team, please connect [sports@somn.org](mailto:sports@somn.org) to potentially apply for the LETR Scholarship to help cover costs.

# State Competition



## **Glide/Slalom/Giant Slalom**

- Course inspection will be allowed prior to timed runs.
- During this time, athletes can slowly ski the course by side slipping or snow plowing.
- Coaching is allowed on the course at this time.
- Glide, Slalom and Giant slalom consist of two timed runs.
  - Combined times for each run will determine the results
  - All athletes with two times will be placed above athletes with only one time, DQ or not finishing a run
  - If a time is not recorded, participation will be awarded

# State Competition



## Downhill

- Course inspection will be allowed prior to timed runs.
- Event consists of one timed run. If a time is not recorded, participation will be awarded.



**Left:** Snowboarding athlete stretching before a run

**Right:** Two skiers having a good time at a competition



# Divisioning



## **Alpine & Snowboarding Divisioning** (3-8 athletes per division)

- **Ability** – Novice, Intermediate or Advanced Level
- **Divisions** – The point of divisions is to give every athlete a chance to get first place

## **Registration**

Registration is done online by Heads of Delegation or Head Coaches. If you need help with registration, please contact [sports@somn.org](mailto:sports@somn.org).

- If an athlete has a visual impairment or otherwise needs assistance, please include that with the registration.

When a coach registers a delegation, they must submit the following:

- Event and level for each athlete
- Coaches on each team

# Winter Games Competition Details



- Lift tickets: all participating athletes and registered coaches that meet the Coach Ratio total will receive complimentary tickets.
- Family members, spectators and additional coaches will need to purchase lift tickets if they wish to ski.
- Course inspection will occur prior to timed runs.
- Please do not allow athletes to free ski between events.

# Practice, Skill Development & Resources



- Special Olympics Minnesota wants to make sure that you have confidence in your knowledge of the alpine skiing and snowboarding rules
- On the next slide, you will find links to many resources that can help with the training and skill development for athletes.

**Left:** Athlete makes their way down a ski hill.

# Practice, Skill Development & Resources



## **Special Olympics Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding Resources**

[Special Olympics Minnesota Alpine Skiing Page](#)

[Special Olympics Minnesota Snowboarding Page](#)

[Alpine Coaching Guide](#)

[Snowboarding Coaching Guide](#)

## **For additional resources and tutorials:**

[Alpine Skiing](#)

[Snowboarding](#)

For any questions regarding Special Olympics Minnesota alpine skiing and snowboarding please contact [sports@somn.org](mailto:sports@somn.org).

# Healthy Athletes



- **Improve** access to health care for athletes at event-based health screenings.
  - Make **referrals** to local health practitioners.
  - **Train** and **educate** health care professionals, providers and students.
  - Healthy Athletes events are often held with sports competitions.
  - Athletes receive 2-4 hours of screenings, education and care.
  - Athletes with follow-up needs receive referrals to local providers.
  - All services are provided by volunteer health professionals and students.
- Contact Jeff Prendergast| Health Programs Coordinator [jeff.prendergast@somn.org](mailto:jeff.prendergast@somn.org)



FIT FEET  
(podiatry)



funFITNESS®  
(physical  
therapy)



HEALTH  
PROMOTION  
(better health &  
well-being)



HEALTHY HEARING  
(audiology)



MedFest®  
(sports  
physical exam)



OPENING EYES®  
(vision)



SPECIAL SMILES®  
(dentistry)



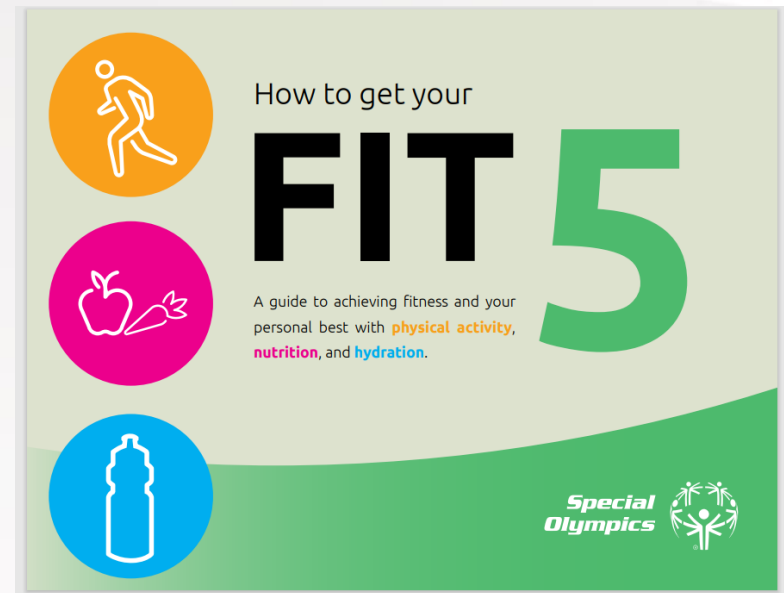
STRONG MINDS  
(emotional  
wellbeing)



# SOMN Health Programs



- **Fit5**
  - Plan for physical activity, nutrition and hydration
    - 5 fruits and vegetables a day
    - 5 bottles of water a day
    - 5 days of physical activity a week
  - Fitness cards offer exercises to challenge abilities. These can be done at practice, the gym and home.
  - Seasonal pledge challenges for teams offer incentives and resources.



Start now! Fit5 Guide and Training Cards

- Contact Lindsey Swanson | Health Programs Coordinator  
[Lindsey.Swanson@somn.org](mailto:Lindsey.Swanson@somn.org)

# SOMN Health Programs



- **SOFit**
  - Comprehensive health and wellness program focusing on four pillars of wellness: emotional, physical, nutrition, and social.
  - Resources and funds provided to delegation or organization
  - Check out more info here: [Fitness - Special Olympics Minnesota](#)
  - Contact Lindsey Swanson | Health Programs Coordinator  
[Lindsey.Swanson@somn.org](mailto:Lindsey.Swanson@somn.org)

**Above:** Athlete working on her squatting.

# Coach Recognition Item



- Each coach that becomes Level 2 certified or recertified in a sport can order one coach item per calendar year.
- Information can be found [HERE](#).
- Please note that if you have not completed a Level 2 training or recertification course, or you have already received an item for the year, you will not be shipped an item.

# Level 2 Alpine Skiing and Snowboarding Quiz



To take the Level 2 Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding quiz please [click here](#).



Thank you for volunteering your time, and best of luck with your upcoming season!