

Level 2 Powerlifting



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

Level 2 Powerlifting



This training will cover the following sections:

- Rules of competition
- Events
- Weight classes
- Powerlifting 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



Psychological Item	Challenge	Action
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



Diagnosis	Consideration
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



Step	Challenge	Consideration
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



Criteria	Description	Sport Example
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



Level of Assistance	Description	Sport Example
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



Athlete Behavior	Strategies to Improve Learning
Swimmer has a short attention span	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Focus on a stroke for short periods of time2. Provide multiple activities focusing on same task
Basketball athlete yells if they miss a shot	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Emphasize the other parts of the game2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop, then evolve to shooting at a hoop
Bowler doesn't wait their turn	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is2. Emphasize that the bowler will always follow the same person

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

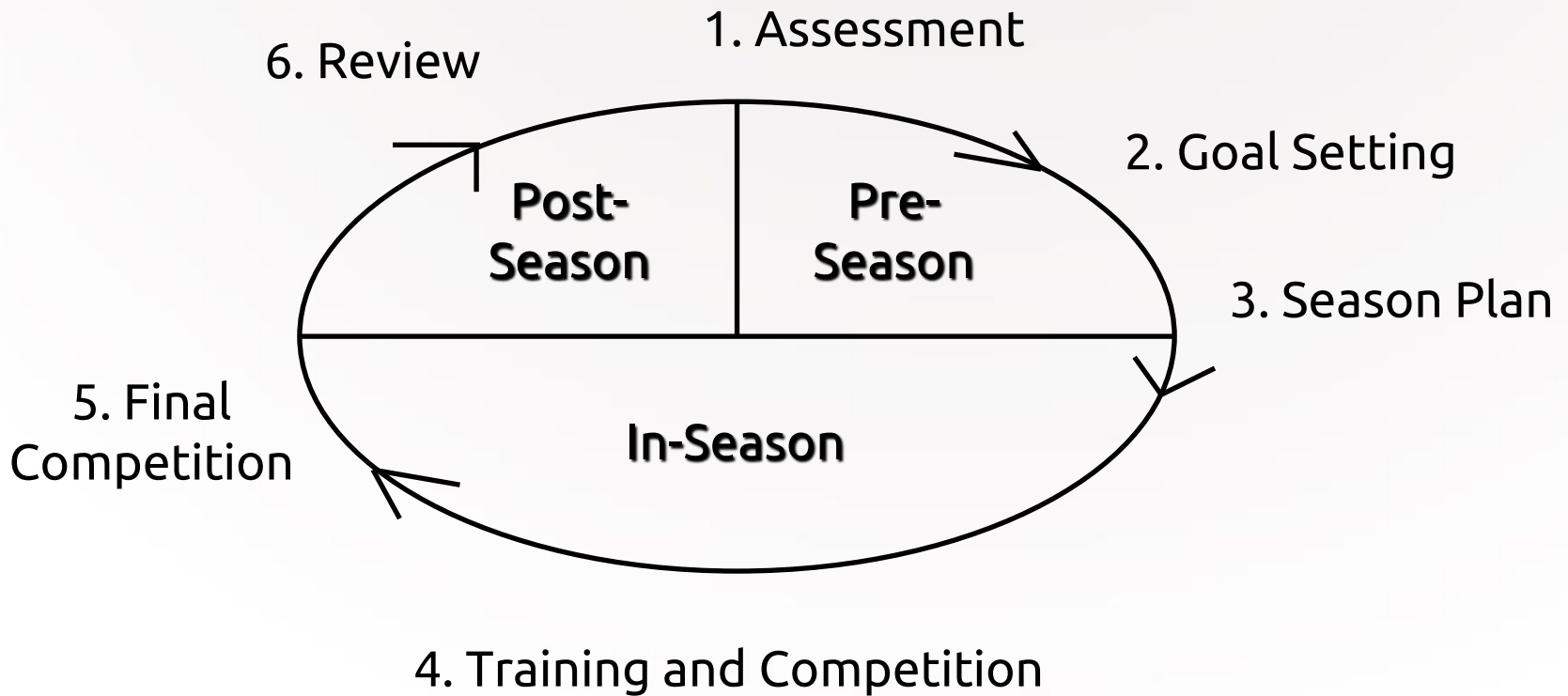
Unit 4 – Managing the Program



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

Powerlifting

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](#).

Rules of Competition



General

- Athletes must be a minimum of 14 years old to participate.
- A non-supporting lifting suit shall be worn at competition.
 - Suit straps must always be worn over the shoulders.
 - The suit shall be one-piece and form fitting.
 - A T-shirt must be worn underneath the lifting suit.
- Weight belts can be worn outside the lifting suit.

Rules of Competition



The Meet

- Weigh-in will be completed as athletes arrive to the competition. Divisions will be adjusted if needed.
- Head coaches will receive a powerlifting information card for each athlete when they arrive.
 - Coaches should come prepared with starting weights of all athletes for each lift they are competing in.
 - Rack height will also need to be known for squat athletes.
- The order of the events is squat, bench press, then dead lift.

Rules of Competition



The Meet

- A lifting attempt must receive a minimum of two out of three white flags from the judges to be a successful attempt.
- Coaches need to submit weight of the next attempt immediately after the athlete completes an attempt.
- Based on the number of people registered, athletes may be split into multiple flights to keep the meet running on time.
 - Flights will be determined by first attempts (low to high).
- Scores will be the maximum weight successfully lifted.

Squat



Lifter faces the front of the platform with the bar held horizontally across the shoulders.

Hands should be gripping the bar with feet flat on the platform with knees locked.

The lifter must wait for the referee's signal, then lower the body.

Then, they must recover to the upright position and remain motionless.

The referee will then give the signal to replace the bar on the rack.

Squat



Causes for disqualification:

- Failure to observe referee's signal.
- Double bouncing the bar.
- Failure to assume an upright position.
- Shifting feet laterally, backward, or forward during the lift.
- Failure to bend far enough down.

Squat



Causes for disqualification:

- Changing position of the bar after the lift has started.
- Contact of the bar or the lifter by a spotter.
- Contact of elbows or upper arms with legs.
- Failure to make an attempt to replace the bar to the rack.
- Dropping the bar after completion of the lift.

Bench



Lifter must assume the position on the bench with their head and trunk in contact with the surface of the bench.

The feet must be on the floor or on plates.

The lifter must wait for the referee's signal after removing the bar from the rack to start.

The lifter must then lower the bar to the chest and hold it motionless.

The referee will signal to press, and the lifter should press upward with an even extension of the arms and hold the bar motionless before replacing the bar on the rack.

Bench



Causes for disqualification:

- Failure to observe referee's signal.
- Any change of the position after the start signal.
- Any heaving or bouncing of the bar from the chest after it has been held motionless.
- Any pronounced uneven extension of the arms during the lift.

Bench



Causes for disqualification:

- Any downward movement of the bar while being pressed.
- Failure to press the bar to full arm's length.
- Contact with the bar or lifter by a spotter.
- Deliberate contact with the bar and the bar-rest uprights during the lift.

Dead Lift



Lifter faces the front of the platform with the bar positioned horizontally in front of the lifter's feet.

Lifter can grip the bar with either the backs of both hands facing the front, or an over/under grip.

Any attempt to raise the bar will count as an attempt.

Completing the lift will mean knees are locked straight, shoulders are in an erect position, and the bar is held motionless.

Bar can be set down after the referee signals such.

Dead Lift



Causes for disqualification:

- Any downward movement of the bar or on either end of the bar during the lift.
- Failure to stand erect with the shoulders in a locked position.
- Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.

Dead Lift



Causes for disqualification:

- Supporting the bar on the thighs during the lift.
- Lowering the bar before receiving the referee's signal.
- Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands.

Combination Events



Combination 1

- Athlete competes in both the bench press and dead lift.
- Athlete receives an award for the combination of those two scores.

Combination 2

- Athlete competes in all three lifts: squat, bench, and dead lift.
- Athlete receives an award for the combination of those three scores.

Three unsuccessful attempts in any of the lifts will result in a zero score for that lift.

Registration Details



Athletes can enter up to two individual events or one combination event.

Coaches need to submit the athlete's weight class as their qualifying score during online registration.

Please submit as accurate as possible weights, as this will cut down on re-divisioning the day of the meet.

Divisioning – Weight Classes



Weight classes for Men

111 lbs

130 lbs

145.5 lbs

163 lbs

183 lbs

205 lbs

231 lbs

264.5 lbs

264.75 or more lbs

Weight classes for Women

95.75 lbs

103 lbs

114.5 lbs

125.5 lbs

139 lbs

158.5 lbs

185 lbs

185.25 or more lbs

Practice, Skill Development & Resources



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

Practice, Skill Development & Resources



Special Olympics Minnesota Powerlifting Resources

[Special Olympics Minnesota Powerlifting Page](#)

[Powerlifting Coaching Guide](#)

For additional resources and video tutorials on Special Olympics powerlifting please visit [here](#).

For any questions regarding Special Olympics Minnesota powerlifting, please contact 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



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

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

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 Powerlifting Quiz



To take the Level 2 Powerlifting quiz please [click here](#).



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