ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Special Olympics
Be a fan.

Be a fan of acceptance, dignity, and the human race.

Schools and Youth Goals

- Develop new constituencies and leaders for the Special Olympics movement – The other 97%
- Promote greater understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences in others among school-age youth
- Involve school-age youth in a variety of activities centered on Special Olympics, including participation in Special Olympics sports and events that will enable them to play a positive role in their schools and communities.

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Special Olympics Get Into It

- SO Get Into It® is a free service-learning set of resources that celebrates the diverse gifts of every student whatever his or her ability.
  - To understand, accept and celebrate individual differences;
  - To learn about and become involved in Special Olympics; and
  - To become involved in a service-learning project or activity related to Special Olympics, including participation in Special Olympics sports and events.

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Youth Activation Vision

- Special Olympics **believes** that through sports young people can make a difference in friendships, schools and communities;
- Special Olympics youth **recognize** that through sports training and competition, people with intellectual disability inspire hope, dignity and courage;
- Special Olympics **invites** youth through sports to understand and to value their peers with intellectual disabilities and empowers youth to create opportunities for and with them in sport and friendship.

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Special Olympics Model of Change

Athlete Leadership & Self-Advocacy

Youth Leadership

Inclusive Schools
- SOGII – Essay Contests
- Booster Clubs
- School Enrichment
- Global Youth Congress
- Youth Summits

Communications & Engagement
- Be a Fan – "R Word"
- Website
- Sports Experience

Schools

Traditional Sports
- Games/Tournaments
- Coaching
- Volunteers
- Fans in the Stands

Early Childhood Enrichment
- Young Athletes

Inclusive Sports
- Unified Sports
- Camp Shriver

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Project UNIFY Purpose

- **Build communities of acceptance and inclusion through engagement of young people and schools at all levels (local, state, national)**

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Project Unify Calls to Action

- **Join** the “R” word Campaign
- **Volunteer** and Play Unified Sport
- **Share** your story; organize Forums
- **Give** to your local program or developing programs

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Benefits for the Athletes

- Expand community of friends
- Feel welcomed by own peer group, improved socialization
- Recognized by peers, schools, and community

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Special Olympics Global Reach
Schools and Youth

- 3 million Students
- 20,000 Schools
- 70 Countries
- 18 languages

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Be A Fan of Unity

- ***Make Acceptance the cornerstone of learning and development***
  - Expand Special Olympics partnerships with Ministers of Education
  - Participate in Special Olympics World Games Youth Webinar with your local schools via the internet

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Benefits for Students

- Learn about intellectual disability, understand
- Volunteer; contribute to school and community
- Become better citizens
- Develop leadership, organization and communication skills
- Increase self esteem, confidence
- Share experiences with peers and become spokespersons
- Encourage school-age youth to celebrate differences and break down barriers
- Participate in Special Olympics sports and events
- Enable them to play a positive role in their schools and communities

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Benefits for the Schools

- **Free and easy to use resources**
- **Part of Global Network**
- **Citizenship or service/ volunteer requirement for student development**
- **Opportunity for recognition – positive media awareness**
- **Connection to academics and character education**

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Project Unify Approach

- Special Olympics Sports
- Special Olympics Unified Sports
- Young Athletes
- Athlete Leadership
- Camp Shriver
- SO Get Into It
- Be a Fan, “R” Word Campaign
- Special events and activities – e.g., Global Youth Activation Congress, youth policy projects

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