COVID-19 and People with ID: Special Olympics Responds

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Special Olympics impact across the US

**SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2018 REACH REPORT**

**ATHLETES**
- 700,000
- Male: 460,016
- Female: 240,404
- 2-7 years: 35,943
- 8-21 years: 662,999

**COMPETITIONS**
- 30,000
- Unified: 8,275
- 82 Competitions / Day
- 3 Competitions / Hour

**HEALTH VOLUNTEERS**
- 118,831
- Based on a survey of 170 trained professionals
- 91% Agree that the SO training improved their ability to communicate with people with ID
- 93% Agree that they will be able to provide better care for patients with ID

**HEALTH MESSENGERS**
- 980
- Athlete Leaders trained as Health Advocates

**FAMILY LEADERSHIP**
- 13,290
- Family members educated on the health needs of athletes

**US ATTITUDES DATA**
- 87% Agree that people with ID have a right to access healthcare
- 87% Agree that people with ID should have the same access to health services
- 64% Agree that people with ID are capable of describing symptoms to a doctor
- 9% of people agree that a person with ID will receive worse healthcare than a person without ID in their community

For every 10 athletes on a U.S. Special Olympics team:

- 8 are overweight or obese
- 7 have significant problems with flexibility
- 4 need a new prescription for eyeglasses
- 2 have some kind of eye disease
- 3 will fail a hearing test
- 3 have low bone density
- 3 have untreated tooth decay
- 1 needs an urgent referral to a dentist
Special Olympics Health: solutions for athletes

In the U.S. alone:
- Offered over 1 million health screenings
- Captured health data on 31,135 athletes with ID
- 53,247 participate in year-round wellness programming
- Trained 980 Athlete Health Leaders

COVID-19 and the health of people with ID

People with intellectual disabilities are at higher risk to COVID-19.

Significant challenges:
- lack of access to prevention & health care
- high risk conditions and group settings
- lack of trained health professionals
- policies and practices that exclude people with ID from treatments

In New York, there was a 5x higher transmission of COVID-19 and 5x higher death rate among people with IDD.
What has Special Olympics done so far?

- Postponing local and international events and travel until June 30th.
- Providing the entire Movement with COVID-19 FAQs, infographics, and online learning and stay-at-home health activities.
- Conducting weekly updates, ongoing online programming, and needs assessments.
All resources can be found online

We have created a range of health and fitness resources aimed at Special Olympics athletes, coaches, families, and volunteers around the world.

Check them out at: www.specialolympics.org/our-work/covid19

Helping athletes stay healthy: Strong Minds

All resources can be downloaded at: https://www.specialolympics.org/our-work/covid19
Helping athletes stay healthy: Fitness

Help athletes stay healthy & fit at home
The need for COVID-19 data on people with ID

- The federal government has no standard requirement of what state health departments should include as part of their reporting data.
- Race and ethnic data is missing in over 50% of COVID-19 cases federally reported.
- To address this challenge, Special Olympics is working on a survey to understand the experience of our athletes during the pandemic. We plan to use the results to better advocate for the needs of people with intellectual disabilities.
What can healthcare professionals do?

Tell-Show-Do:
1. Communicate clearly
2. Ensure that your patient with ID has their support person
3. Prepare the patient for COVID-19 testing
4. Aftercare instructions

Enroll in the Special Olympics free online course to learn how to treat patients with ID: learn.specialolympics.org

Special Olympics Health: Moving forward
Special Olympics Health: Moving forward

Even during a once-in-a-generation pandemic, we will continue to deliver high-quality programming and services in 4 critical areas—with a new focus on online learning and tools:

- Prevention and delivery
- Health and fitness
- Health workforce training
- Partnerships for policy change

The work of Special Olympics Health is made possible by the Golisano Foundation, and in the United States in collaboration with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Visit [www.specialolympics.org/health](http://www.specialolympics.org/health) to learn more.

#InclusiveHealth