

OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Special Olympics develops and empowers leaders, catalyzing actions that directly benefit people with intellectual disabilities and their communities. By harnessing the power of people to change hearts, minds and behaviors, we create more cohesive and accepting civil societies around the world.

Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics provides year-round training and competitions in over **30 Olympic-type sports** to more than **5 million athletes** through **226 Accredited Programs** in **174 countries**.

EXPANDING A ROOTED PARTNERSHIP

A Partnership

Lions Clubs International has been supporting the Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes® Program for **23 years**. Since the partnership's inception in 2000, the Lions Clubs International Foundation has provided over 300,000 Special Olympics athletes with quality vision care.

In 2013, Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International expanded their partnership to include new areas of collaboration beyond vision – including **Unified Sports®, youth activation, family support, Healthy Hearing and Athlete Leadership**. Lions continue to play a key role in the success of Opening Eyes through hands-on event support.



Mission Inclusion

Successes

- ✓ Creation of the **first-ever vision care curriculum** for eye care professionals on how best to treat individuals with intellectual disabilities
- ✓ **23 Year** Partnership
- ✓ Over **400,000 athletes receiving quality vision care**
- ✓ Support for **Unified Sports®, youth activation, family support and Healthy Hearing, and Athlete Leadership**
- ✓ Creation of **15+ Champion Lions Clubs worldwide**
- ✓ Distributing **glasses, sunglasses and sports goggles to athletes**
- ✓ **14 nations** implementing **Unified with Refugees activities**

LIONS, LEOS AND SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Lions and Leos are uniquely positioned to provide support to Special Olympics athletes in a number of ways. Among many other opportunities, local Lions and Leo Clubs can participate in Opening Eyes and Healthy Hearing events, volunteer at Games, and engage in Unified Sports. Outlined below are a few ways in which you and your club might become involved in Special Olympics activities:

> Healthy Athletes® volunteer

Provide non-clinical exam support.



> Family Health Forum volunteer

Participate in Family Health Forums by serving as a guest speaker, organizer or promoter.



> Skilled Professional volunteer

Use your skills and expertise – such as photography, fundraising, medicine or First Aid, public relations, etc. – to provide support to your local Program.



> Games or Event volunteer

Serve as a volunteer during Special Olympics Games as an athlete escort, awards presenter, scorekeeper, announcer and more.



> Coach or Official

Become a Special Olympics coach and organize a team or officiate at trainings and Games.



> Unified Sports partner

Join a Special Olympics Unified Sports team and play your favorite sport with people with and without intellectual disabilities. Or, encourage your local Leos to join Unified teams and become part of the Unified Generation.



> Mentor an Athlete Leader


Provide ongoing support and encouragement to a trained athlete leader who is taking on a new role within Special Olympics.



GLOBAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS


Outlined below are metrics of success for Opening Eyes®, Family Health Forum and Unified Sports

Special Olympics LCIF Opening Eyes®




450,252

Eye Health and Vision Screenings




265,821

Prescription Eyewear



20,280


Volunteer Lions



30,151


Volunteer Professionals

Family Health Forum




606

Total Number of Family Health Forums



74,223

Total Participants (families, athletes, volunteers, other, speakers)




128

Unique SO Programs implementing FHF

- 18,168 Athletes
- 34,838 Family Members
- 2,465 Total number of speakers


462 were Lions Members

Unified Sports




34

Number of National Programs




3,304

Athletes Engaged



1,464

Leos Engaged



2,422

Unified Partners

CONTACTING YOUR SPECIAL OLYMPICS PROGRAM

All countries and states with active Special Olympics Programs are run by volunteer or full-time Program Directors. The contact details for all Programs may be found by searching for Program Locator on **specialolympics.org**.

Program leaders will be able to direct you to Special Olympics Programs in your area and can provide details of major events or exams where your involvement and support would be greatly appreciated.