



Dear Parents and Guardians,

For more than 40 years, Special Olympics Texas (SOTX) has been committed to our mission of providing year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with other families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. As the needs of our athletes have evolved, we have heard and responded to families seeking to prepare their youngsters for the opportunity to participate in training and competition when the time for them to do so arrives. As a result, Young Athletes™, which promotes our mission, was developed in 2005.

Young Athletes™ is for athletes both intellectually disabled and their typically developing peer mentors. Young Athletes™ focuses on developing fundamental motor tracking and eye-hand coordination through physical play. This participation-based program also introduces the child to the world of sports and begins to prepare them for SOTX competition. Young Athletes™ is an introduction to Unified Champions providing inclusive experiences with peer partners that may lead to participation in Unified Sports and Unified Champion Schools. Parental consent is needed as these SOTX athletes are considered Athletes in Training (AIT) and can be a part of Young Athletes™ until age 8, when they begin competition in traditional Special Olympics.

Your child has been selected to participate in Young Athletes™. Attached is a Parental/Guardian Release Form. Please fill it out completely and return to your child's teacher. This will allow for your child to participate in this exciting program.

If you would like more information about Special Olympics Texas or Young Athletes™, please visit our website at www.sotx.org, or call **800.876.5646**.

Director of Outreach and Families
Special Olympics Texas

Special Olympics Texas

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