Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding

The Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding training is designed for Special Olympics Minnesota coaches who would like to become a Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding coach and/or for volunteers who would like information about Special Olympics Minnesota Alpine & Snowboarding. This training counts as Level 2 certification and/or recertification for three years from the date this training is completed.

This training will cover Special Olympics Minnesota's Alpine & Snowboarding events, rules, competitions, the divisioning process, registration and alpine & snowboarding resources.

This training will also include the Coaching Special Olympics Athletes training.



Coaching Special Olympics Athletes

Coaching Special Olympics Athletes prepares Special Olympics coaches to use their sport-specific knowledge in coaching athletes with intellectual disabilities. This course meets the Special Olympics standards and competencies for coach certification. For veteran Special Olympics coaches, this course serves as a reminder of the essentials sometimes forgotten after years 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**!





Course Overview

This course will cover specific topics related to:

1 - The Athlete

3 - Preparing for& Coaching DuringCompetition



2 - Teaching & Training

4 - Managing the Program





Unit 1 - The Athlete

Important Considerations concerning Special Olympics Athletes

Psychological Issues (Learning)

Medical Issues



Social Issues



Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations

Motivation – helping athletes maintain interest

- May have shorter attention span; harder to keep independently "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 (*Understanding*)

- May find it difficult to understand purely verbal explanations of new skills. Often find it easier to learn through visual demonstrations and physical prompts.
- May have difficulty in understanding complex, multi-part actions or explanations.
- Often take a longer time between learning one piece of information and the next (learning plateau)
- Less able to generalize skills learned in one situation to a different situation.

Memory

 May need frequent repetition and reminders in order to remember concept or skill

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Unit 1 - Psychological Challenges

Each psychological item has it's challenge and action:

Psychological Item	Challenge	Action
Perception	Easily distracted by noise	Control surroundings
Motivation	History of neglect & negative reinforcement, feeling of failure	Focus on positive, appropriate reinforcement, catch the athlete doing well
Memory	Difficulty applying skills in different environments	Practice in different settings
Comprehension	Difficulty learning through verbal explanation only	Add demonstrations and/or physical manipulation



Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Down Syndrome

- Approximately 10% of individuals with Down Syndrome have a condition called atlanto-axial instability, which is a mal-alignment of the cervical vertebrae C-1 and C-2 in the neck. 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 lift and soccer.

Medications

- Understand the physical side effects of an athlete's medication
- Very important to know the medications athletes are taking





Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Seizures

- Incidence tends to be higher with Special Olympics athletes
- Athlete safety to minimize the adverse effects of a seizure

Physical Disabilities

- Some athletes also have physical disabilities which may affect the sports they
 can participate in or the methods of teaching a coach must use. Special
 Olympics has events for individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or other
 assistance.
- Muscle strength may be needed for particular sports and some athletes may not have the strength for those sports. This is often due to lack of use rather than a permanent disability.





Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Autism

- 20% of athletes exhibit one or more of the autism spectrum disorders
- Over arousal





- These athletes consistently function better on performance tasks compared with verbal tasks. The more concrete the task, the better the performance.
- Tend to have poor verbal comprehension skills, despite being comfortable and chatty around people. These athletes will also tend to have attention and memory deficits and often display poor judgment in distinguishing right from wrong.



Unit 1 – Medical Consideration for each Action

Action	See the challenge that correlates with the appropriate action.
1 Down Syndrome	Ensure the athlete is screened for atlanto- axial instability
2 Seizures	Be prepared to protect the athlete and minimize adverse affects
3 Autism spectrum disorders	Control and/or block self-stimulatory behavior and set up a behavior support plan
4 Attention deficit/hyperactivity	Shorten drills and provide one-to-one assistance when needed
5 Fetal alcohol syndrome	Provide concrete performance tasks



Unit 1 - Social Considerations

Social Skills

- May lack basic social/adaptive skills due to a lack of opportunity or training
- Lacking communication and positive interaction with others

Recreation at Home

- Lack of physical activity
- Lack of encouragement

Economic Status

- May lack financial means
- May not have access to independent transportation





Unit 1 - Social considerations

All of the following social consideration(s) may impact an athlete's participation in Special Olympics:

- Inappropriate responses to social situations
- Physical inactivity being modeled
- Lack of endurance
- Lack of access to transportation

Our challenge as coaches is to develop a full understanding of our athletes and the strengths and weaknesses they bring with them to a Special Olympics program. By doing so we can begin to develop a training and competition program that they will benefit from and enjoy.



Unit 2 – Teaching & Training the Athlete















Unit 2 - Teaching & Training the Athlete

There are many ways to organize a training session for Special Olympics athletes. Because of some of the things previously identified concerning comprehension and memory, there is considerable value in developing a consistent training routine that provides familiarity, stability, and comfort.



Unit 2 - Organizing a Training Session

Component and Details	Layout of Drill or Activity
Warm-Up & Stretching	Specific to the sport, repetitive and involve athletes in leading activity
Skills Instruction	Break skills into smaller tasks, involve many athletes at a time and practice skills related to event situations
Competition Experience	Scrimmage, simulate event/game situations and work towards what the competition will look like
Cool-Down, Stretch, & Reward	Playing a game related to that sport and ending each training with a cool down activity and stretch



Unit 2 - Training Sequence

Competition

Application



Skill

Task

The key is to break down skills into small tasks or steps; tasks are then put together to form skills. Use drills and activities that involve many athletes at all times. Practice skills in situations that are related to the game or event. Break skills down into small steps.



Unit 2 - Iraining Sequence What's the challenge and how to fix it?

Training Sequence Element	Challenge	Action
Application	Acquire ability to repeatedly demonstrate sport competencies in different situations & environments	Provide gamelike drills or situations
Skills	Acquire ability to perform series of sport competencies effectively and necessary to perform a sport	Work on essential sport competencies to perform the sport
Competition	Acquire ability to put essential sport competencies into practice	Provide scrimmage opportunities in practice
Tasks	Acquire ability to perform essential sport competencies	Break essential sport competencies down into individual parts



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







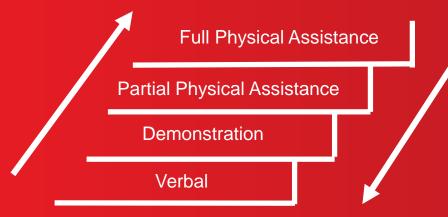


Unit 2 - Communication

Communication Criteria	Description	Sport Example
Concise	Use a few key words that cue a desired action	"Go to the free throw line" Showing an athlete where to stand on defense
Consistent	Use the same word or phrase for the same action	Coach constantly say "Breathe" – teaching an athlete when to take a breath in swimming
Clear	Use easy to understand words that have one meaning	"Swing the bat" teaching how/when to swing.
Command-Oriented	Use words that elicit or reinforce a desired action	"On your mark. Set. Go." Using this phrase for starts in athletics.
Concrete	Connect words to something defined or tangible	"Jump forward" when coaching an athlete in the long jump.



Unit 2 - Levels of Assistance





Each athlete needs to be met where he or she is and with what each individual is ready to do. It is important to use the appropriate level of instruction and assistance.

- The lower the ability athlete, the more assistance may be required
- Verbal should always be accompanied by demonstration
- Partial physical assistance may be needed to help the athlete get positioned properly
- When all else fails, take the athlete through the complete motion



Unit 2 - Level of Instruction of Assistance

Level of Instruction or Assistance	Description	Sport Example
Full Physical Assistance	Help the athlete through the entire motion of the skill	Volleyball: coach makes an adjustment to the athlete's arm swing by moving the athlete's arm through the entire spiking movement
Verbal	Tell the athlete what to do	Footwork: "run forward to the line; then return, running backward"
Demonstration	Show the athlete the proper technique	Soccer: one athlete shoots on goal while another watches
Partial Physical Assistance	Place the athlete's hands in the proper position	Golf: coach physically adjusts the athlete's hands on the golf club with the correct grip



Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior

The goal is for coaches to meet each athlete where he/she is and treat him/her accordingly. However, 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 exhibits what is generally perceived as inappropriate behavior, the inappropriate behavior may not be defiance, acting out or silliness. These behaviors may simply be a reflection or part of the person and/or what is operating in the moment.



Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior

Athlete Behavior Characteristics	Strategies to Improve Learning
Swimmer has a short attention span	 Dwell on a stroke or activity for short periods of time; provide numerous activities focusing on same task Provide different opportunities for repetition and review, which is the key to gaining new skill. Work one-on-one to gain full attention.
Basketball athlete yells if he/she misses a shot	 Emphasize the other aspects of the game besides shooting Work on shooting drills without a hoop Begin to shoot at a hoop but in a non-game setting with a one-on-one coach
Bowler doesn't wait their turn	 Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is Have the bowler wait with a coach behind the bowling area until their turn is up Emphasize the order and that the bowler will always follow the same individual



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 (including meeting new people, participating in the festivities of Opening Ceremonies and other social events, the excitement of traveling to new places and staying away from home, etc.). None of these things, however, 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 entry and team roster information, qualifying times, and skills assessment scores.
- Help the Competition Committee prepare a successful competition for your athletes by meeting their registration deadlines.

Official competition rules

- A good Competition Committee will instruct its officials/referees to enforce the Official Special Olympics Rules. Make sure you know them.
- 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!)





Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

Supervision

- Discuss the challenges associated with participating in competition away from home, and why adequate, non-coaching support personnel are needed.
 - Transportation
 - Lodging (need for same-sex supervision)
 - Social activities
 - Coaches meetings (who will supervise athletes during these?)
 - Multiple events to supervise, awards ceremonies, etc.
- Design a supervision worksheet with the essential elements covered.





Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

Travel and overnight

- Discuss overnight concerns with parents or group-home supervisors.
- Write up a simple checklist of items to bring and distribute to athletes and parents
- Make sure that all special medication needs are understood. Coaches may have to assist with handling medications. Have all medical forms and information readily available at all times.
- Work out the most effective rooming arrangements, taking into account athlete choice, behavioral and personality clashes, etc.



Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

Guidelines for success:

Teach responsibility & independence

 Assist athletes in dressing appropriately, understanding what is happening at the competition site, maintaining a focused attitude and appropriate behavior.

Arrive early

 Allow time for putting on uniforms, warm-up and stretching routine and focusing on the competition.

Encourage maximum effort in divisioning & competition

Applying the "honest-effort" rule from the Special Olympics Rule book



Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

Guidelines for success:

Let athletes compete without direct supervision

Not running down the side of the track shouting instructions, allowing the competition
officials to conduct the competition and allowing athletes to make mistakes and helping
them learn from their mistakes.

Make any official protests calmly

If you think there is a valid reason to protest the outcome, do so in a calm manner,
 following the competition guidelines and not involving athletes in disputes with officials.

Help athletes learn from winning & losing

Deal graciously and realistically with winning and losing. Focus on effort made, recognize
accomplishments and new skills that were performed and taking something positive
away from the experience.



Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

The coach can be the key person who makes any competition experience a good one. Taking time to adequately prepare for competition and plan for on-site supervision and that coaching is time well spent.



Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics coach:

Is sports and coaching knowledgeable

- Special Olympics is a sport organization
- Technical knowledge of the sport and how to teach it is essential if coaches are to effectively help athletes improve their sport skills and truly benefit from Special Olympics.
- Successful coaches are constantly looking for opportunities to learn more about the sport.

Is Special Olympics knowledgeable

- Special Olympics has a clearly defined mission, philosophy, and rules that have been developed through years of worldwide experience with athletes with intellectual disabilities.
- A better understanding of these will benefit your athletes.



Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics coach:

Recruits and trains assistant coaches

- Individualized coach-athlete teaching is key to successful training in Special Olympics.
- Assistant coaches can be recruited to help provide individualized attention.
- Assistant coaches are useful only if they are trained and coordinated at practice.

Recruits and trains athletes

A coach is also a promoter and recruiter; always tries to expand participation

Assists with appropriate sport selection

 Age appropriate, is the athlete able to participate safely and successfully and does the athlete have a choice of participating in a different sport or event.



Unit 4 – the successful Special Olympics coach:

Offers activities for all abilities

In order to accommodate a range of abilities

Puts a priority on safety

This is the coach's number one priority

Conducts high-quality training and competition

 Appropriate training, activities such as training days or camps, helps develop pride in being an athlete and organizes competition opportunities if none exist



Unit 4 – the successful Special Olympics coach:

Involves families

 Educates families and group-home providers about the benefits of Special Olympics, appropriate nutrition and food choices and training at home.

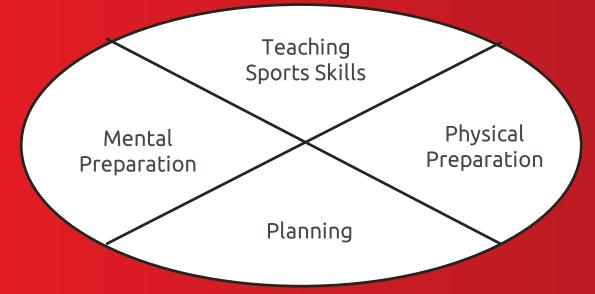
Assists with community inclusion

 Improves social and communication skills, opportunities to talk about Special Olympics at civic functions and assistance in joining non-Special Olympics sports opportunities



Unit 4 – Area of Focus

Athlete Safety



Coaching Philosophy



Unit 4 – Preparation Assessment Review **Goal Setting** Post-Pre-Season Plan Season Season Culminating In-Season Competition

Training and Competition



Improved Performance & Well-Being

- TRAINING ⇒ the key
- COMPETITION ⇒ the means
- OUTCOMES ⇒ skill, confidence, courage, & joy
- GOAL ⇒ better preparation for life



■ RESULTS \Rightarrow lifelong skills, acceptance & increased independence

Let's Get After It and Get It Done!



Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding



Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding

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 certification prior to their participation with a team. Level 1 certification requires a Volunteer Application and Level 1 online training and both items are found here.



Alpine & Snowboarding Event Descriptions

- Glide- non-gated 10-meter course for beginning skiers. For athletes that enter the Glide, this is will be their only event
- Novice- Slalom, giant slalom, & downhill
- Intermediate- Slalom, giant slalom, & downhill
- Advanced-Slalom, giant slalom, & downhill



Warm Up

- The importance of warming up prior to exercise cannot be stressed enough
- Three types of warm- ups:
 - Passive- warm up increases the body temp (wearing warmup pants to increase body temp.)
 - General-performing major muscle group movements not associated with specific sports (jogging or running)
 - Specific- mimics the specific event to be done (squats, bench press and dead lift without weight
- Coaches should be warming up athletes prior to each practice and competition. All practices should include a warm up (dynamic stretching) and cool down (static stretching)



Rules of Competition

All athlete must wear a helmet appropriate to ski racing during official training and competition for all levels.

- Athletes may not receive physical assistance when running the course
 - Verbal encouragement or direction is allowed
 - Coaches can assist during warm up and during pre-race runs but CANNOT be on the course or shadow ski next to the course during the timed race
- Two minute rule- athletes that move out of the general direction of the course (fall, miss a gate, lose a ski, etc.) will have two minute from deviation to re-enter the course.
 - Athletes that fail to adhere to two minute rule or receive physical assistance will be disqualified from that run
 - Athletes who are not able to re-enter the course on their own within two minutes should be removed from the course by their coach.
- State Command- 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, GO!
 - Timer begins when the athlete's foot crosses the start line or when the electronic timing wand is activated
 - Start referee may assist in forward momentum of the athlete



Gate Line

The gate line in downhill and giant slalom, where a gate consists of two pairs of poles holding panels between them, is the imaginary shortest line between the two inner poles at ground (snow) level. The gate line in the slalom is the imaginary shortest line between the turning pole and the outside pole at ground (snow) level.



Correct Gate Passage

A gate has been passed correctly when both the competitors' ski tips and both feet have passed across the gate line. This may be done in one of three ways:

- 1) On the actual descent of the course,
- 2) The athlete may pass below the gates, climb up the hill and come back down through the gates, or
- 3) The athlete may pass below the gates, climb up the hill and break the plane from below the gates without actually passing through them.

If a competitor loses a ski without committing a fault (not by straddling a slalom pole), then the tip of the remaining ski and both feet must have passed the gate line. The start and finish lines are the same as a gate line.

In the event that a competitor removes a pole from its vertical position before both the competitors' ski tips and both feet have passed the gate line, the ski tips and feet must pass the original gate line (marking in the snow).



Qualifier & State Competition

Glide/Slalom/Giant Slalom

- Course inspection will be allowed prior to timed runs. During this time, athletes can slowly ski the course by side slipping or snow plowing. Coaching is allowed on the course at this time.
- Glide, Slalom and Giant slalom consist of two timed runs.
 - Combined times for each run will determine the results for awards
 - All athletes with two times will be placed above athletes with only one time, DQ or not finishing a run
 - If a time is not recorded, participation with be awarded

Downhill

- One training run prior to race run on the same course is required of all athletes
- Consists of one timed run
 - If a time is not recorded, participation will be awarded



Divisioning

Alpine & Snowboarding Divisioning (3-8 athletes per division)

- Ability Novice, Intermediate or Advanced Level
- Age (approx. 8-15, 16-21, 22-29, and 30 and older)
- Divisions The scores within a division are 15 percent between highest and lowest scores.

Registration

Registration is done <u>online</u> by Heads of Delegation or Head Coaches. In order to register online the coach must have a username and password. If you need help with registration please contact your <u>Program Manager</u>.

When a coach registers a team they must submit the following:

- 1. Event and level for each athlete
- 2. Coaches on each team
- 3. Athletes must have appropriate paperwork submitted in order to register *If an athlete is attending the State competition they must attend the Qualifier first.*

State Divisioning - divisions are based upon State Qualifier results



Qualifier

Date	Location	City	Registration	E/E	Contact
			Deadline	Deadline	
Feb. 10	Afton Alps	Hastings	Jan. 27	Feb. 3	sarah.richardson@somn.org

State Competition

Date	Location	City	Registration Deadline	E/E Deadline	Contact
March 10	Afton Alps	Hastings	Feb. 27	March 3	sarah.richardson@somn.org

Winter Games Competition Details

- Athletes can compete in three events except for the glide. All events must be the same Level (novice, intermediate, or advanced)
- If an athlete has a visual impairment or otherwise needs assistance, please email SOMN staff
- Lift tickets- all participating athletes and registered coaches at 4:1 ratio will receive complimentary tickets. Family members, spectators and additional coaches will need to purchase lift tickets if they wish to ski
- There will be a designated area outside for each division to store their equipment
- Course inspection will occur prior to competition. There will not be individual training runs on the intermediate or advanced hill
- Please do not allow athletes to free ski or eat lunch between events.



Practice, Skill Development & Resources

Special Olympics Minnesota wants to make sure that you have confidence in your knowledge of alpine & snowboarding rules, skills and practice ideas. Listed below are Special Olympics alpine & snowboarding resources that can help with the training and skill development for athletes.

Special Olympics Minnesota Alpine & Snowboarding Handbook

Special Olympics, Inc Alpine & Snowboarding Resources

Special Olympics Minnesota Alpine & Snowboarding Page

Alpine Coaching Guide

Snowboarding Coaching Guide

For additional resources and video tutorials on Special Olympics Alpine & Snowboarding Page

<u>Alpıne</u>

Snowboarding

For any questions regarding Special Olympics Minnesota alpine & snowboarding please contact Jasmine Jones Competition & Training Manager jasmine.jones@somn.org | 763.270.7185



SOMN Health Programs

SOMN offers health programs to integrate into your sports season to enhance your athletes performance, health, nutritional knowledge and overall wellbeing.

- SOFit- unified approach to improving and protecting health and wellness for people with and without intellectual disabilities.

 Comprehensive, 360 degree look at wellness and human spirit.
 - 8 weeks, unified pairs
 - Coaches lead educational topics including: cooking, healthy grocery shopping, importance of varying workouts, healthy beverage choices.
 - Customizable to groups interest
 - Four pillars of wellness: physical, nutrition, emotional and social.
 - Coaches Manual includes all lessons and activities. Athlete Playbook allows athletes to track lessons and activities.

Questions? Want materials?

Contact Kelsey Sparks | Health Programs Coordinator Kelsey.sparks@somn.org



SOMN Health Programs

SOMN offers health programs to integrate into your sports season to enhance your athletes performance, health, nutritional knowledge and overall wellbeing.

- Fit5
 - Plan for physical activity, nutrition and hydration
 - Recommending 5 days of physical activity, 5 fruits and vegetables and 5 bottles of water
 - Fitness cards offer exercises to challenge abilities. These can be done at practice, the gym and home.
 - Build your practice using fitness cards to focus on endurance, flexibility, and strength
 - Athlete handbook to track progress and follow program at home

Start now! Fit5 Guide and Training Cards

Questions? Want materials?

Contact Kelsey Sparks | Health Programs Coordinator Kelsey.sparks@somn.org



Coach Recognition Item

Each coach that becomes Level 2 certified or recertified in a sport is able to 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 Alpine & Snowboarding Quiz

Level 2 certification is not processed until you have completed the Level 2 quiz.

To take the Level 2 Alpine & Snowboarding quiz please <u>click here</u>.

