



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes was developed in 1996 to begin to address health disparities of Special Olympics athletes. Athletes receive a variety of health screenings and services in clinics conducted in a welcoming, fun environment. Healthcare professionals and students are trained to provide the screenings in an effort to educate the professional community about the health needs and abilities of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Healthy Athletes offers health professionals and students a unique opportunity to become part of the Special Olympics movement and to contribute their skills in ways that will literally change the world, and themselves.

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

Local Clinical Directors are the best persons to identify Dentists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Assistants, and students because they know their community and its local healthcare professionals.

These potential volunteers may come from:

- Private Practitioners
- Universities/Colleges/Vocational Schools
- Health and Professional Associations
- Medical Facilities
- Government Medical Facilities (i.e., Military, Veterans Administration, National, State, Local)

To become a Clinical Director or Screening Volunteer, please visit [www.sofl.org/healthyathletes.aspx](http://www.sofl.org/healthyathletes.aspx) and complete the "Contact Me" form.



**Special Olympics**  
*Florida*

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Special Olympics was created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation for the Benefit of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities.



**Special Olympics**  
*Florida*

Healthy Athletes  
**Special Smiles**<sup>TM</sup>





## Special Olympics Florida

### MISSION:

The mission of Special Smiles is to increase access to dental care for Special Olympics Florida athletes, as well as all people with intellectual disabilities.

### OBJECTIVE:

The primary objective of Special Smiles is to increase the number of dental professionals who will serve people with intellectual disabilities in their practices and clinics.



### CLINICAL DIRECTORS:

Licensed Dentists are needed to:

- Assist with garnering sponsorships
- Network with other medical professionals
- Recruit and train local volunteers
- Work with Special Olympics Florida to coordinate several events yearly
- Ensure proper data collection and quality assurance
- Develop follow-up referrals for athletes

### WHY PARTICIPATE:

For many Special Olympics athletes, dental care is not often a priority and can take a back seat to more pressing medical issues.

At screenings during Special Olympics World Games\*, 35 percent of athletes had obvious signs of decay of their molar teeth, and 12 percent of athletes reported tooth or mouth pain at the time of the exam.

\* Statistics taken from *Healthy Athletes Screening Data* published by Special Olympics, Inc.

At a Special Smiles non-intrusive screening, a dental care professional:

- Assesses decay, unstable fillings and sealants, injury, fluorosis, and gingival signs
- Refers athletes to local practitioners
- Provides athletes with a written report card, oral health education (brushing and flossing techniques), and personal preventative products



Only 1 in 50 professional healthcare givers have had formal training or any practical experience in examining or caring for people with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics Florida has been given a golden opportunity to assist our athletes as well as educate health professionals on how to best serve our athletes. A grant from the Florida Legislature has provided start-up funds to offer health screenings to athletes at selected Area and State games. Volunteer clinical directors are needed to attend train-the-trainer sessions and coordinate screenings at games.

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***“You are not a healthy person unless you have good oral health. Oral health is part of general health, and it can affect your overall health and your quality of life.”***

-- Former United States Surgeon General C. Everett Koop