Special Olympics Alberta
Young Athletes

Kaley McLaren
Who are we?

- **Mission**
  - To enrich the lives of Albertans with an intellectual disability through sport.

- **Vision**
  - Have the ability to provide the opportunity to all athletes with intellectual disabilities to participate in the sports that they wish, at the level that they wish, with the best training possible, in the best facilities available and with the best equipment available.

“*If people would believe in us like Special Olympics and see what we can do, they’d be amazed. If someone says I can’t do something, I want to prove I can.*”

- Suzanne O’Moore, Special Olympics Australia athlete
Science

Vision

Canadian Content
Different
Young Athletes Programs
Young Athletes Programs

• Developmental Stages
• Programs Continue to grow every year
• Based on LTAD Principals
  • Active Start
  • FUNdamentals

Long-Term Athlete Development Model for Athletes with an Intellectual Disability

How long participants stay in the LTAD stages depends on when they get started and their needs and interests.
Active Start Programs

- Ages 2 – 6 yrs
- Objective: Develop play skills through movement and daily physical activity

- Benefits to children:
  - Improvement in physical, social, and cognitive abilities.
  - Improved coordination, confidence, leadership, social skills, and gross motor skills.
  - Higher brain functioning

“James is autistic so getting him involved with his peers was my objective. His sensory & fine & gross motor skills are improving as is his social development.”

-Sandra Weeks [Edmonton Active Start]
FUNdamental Programs

- Ages 7 – 12 yrs
  - Continuation of Active Start program.
  - Foundation of advanced skill are laid down.
  - Focuses on developing physical literacy and basic sport movement skills through fun and structured play.
  - Nutrition education & physical fitness.

Benefits to Children:
- ABC’s [Agility, Balance, Coordinator]

“I’ve seen my students do things and participate in activities that I never thought was possible. What a change!”
-Tara Kinch
Benefits for Parents of Young Athletes

- Parents can play a hands on role on watching their child develop in play
- Parents can learn new activities to do at home with their children
- Parents have the opportunity to have support with other parents who have a child taking part in a Young Athlete Program
Calgary’s Youth Sports Day
June 5th 2013

- 93 Children and 28 teachers and support staff attended
- Held during a time frame where schools had special events already (i.e.. Track and Field day)

- Circuit activities including bowling, floor hockey, golf, athletics, floor curling, basketball and an obstacle course
Resources

- SOA Office
- Active Start Manuals
- FUNdamental Manuals
- Canadian Food Guide

Kits:
- Kits may contain:
  - Large and Small Hoops
  - Pylons
  - Soft Sticky Balls
  - Rods
  - Bean Bags
  - Numbered Place mats
  - Small Paddles
  - Plastic Bricks
  - Foam Balance Beams
  - Scarves
  - Foam Baseballs
  - Parachute
Nutrition

- Built into each FUNdamentals Activity plan
- Start athletes on the right path to a healthy lifestyle
- 40 healthy, easy, kid-focused recipes
- 10 Fun Activities
Resources – Available FMS Training

We now have Fundamental Movement Skills Training available to all participants who are wishing to start their own young athlete program

• 3 Hour training course
  • 1.5 hours for theory
  • 1.5 hours for a practical portion

• All Members who are attending receive plenty of resources to help further their programs

• This training is in the process of becoming an official NCCP course
Impact

• Increase in registration numbers
• Partnerships
• Improvement in athletes’ Fundamental Movement Skills
• Changing the way Special Olympics “does sport”
Challenges

• Getting a strong relationship with the School Boards
• Parents not accepting their child has a disability at a young age
Speechless
Questions?
Thank you.

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