

DRILL BOOK

Track & Field Training

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

**SCHOOLS
PARTNERSHIP
PROGRAM**

**SPECIAL OLYMPICS
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
NEVADA**



This book belongs to:



Special Olympics
Unified Sports®

What is Unified Sports?



Unified Sports® joins students with and without intellectual disabilities on the same sports team. Whether you are already participating in the Special Olympics Schools Partnership Program or just getting started, why not try Unified Sports... the results are **AMAZING!**

How can you start Unified Sports in your school?

- Students are grouped into teams with similar or equal numbers of special education and general education students.
- Games are played with slightly modified rules, to ensure meaningful inclusion for ALL students.
- Special Olympics can help you create appropriate rule modifications.
- Practices are held at a convenient time for all students:
 - During inclusive PE
 - Lunchtime
 - Scheduled time during the school day
 - After school





Special Olympics
Unified Sports®

What does Unified Sports do for your school?

- Allows all students, regardless of ability level, the opportunity to share their talents with the school and community.
- Teaches teamwork and the value of inclusion in all aspects of life.
- Builds lasting relationships between students with and without intellectual disabilities.
- Creates a school climate of acceptance and respect.
- Expands the opportunities for all students to compete in their school's athletics program.

To find out more about how to get started:

www.sonc.org/unified-sports



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SPRING SPORT

Training begins - March/April

Competition – May

- 6-8 weeks of training.
- Strive for two or three, 20-30 minute practices per week.
- Practice sessions should include time spent on warm-up, general fitness, sport-skill development and competition-specific situations.
- Attend a multi-school track and field competition held at the end of the training season.



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SAMPLE PRACTICE SESSION

Warm-up:

5 minutes of an easy stretch, walk or jog, and explanation of the day's practice.

Sport Specific Skills:

5 minutes of coordination drills- skip, gallop, leap, backward jog, side step. 10 minutes of skill drills—choose drills from the following pages or create new drills.

Competition Situations:

10-15 minutes of simulated competition situations, including field and running events in small heats of athletes. Focus on starting on time, staying in one's own lane, etc.



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Track & Field Training

TRACK

Coaching Tips

- *Focus on staying in one's own lane and running through the finish line. Run next to the athlete for guidance on this.*
- *Change students' lane assignments frequently so they become used to running anywhere.*
- *Have students select a "power foot" to place 6-12" in front of the other foot at the starting line. This is the foot that gives the push of power for the race.*
- *Remind students to pump their arms when running to generate more speed.*

Foundational Movement Skills

Mark off a few lanes, 10 yards long with start and finish lines. Students march from start to finish, returning outside the lanes. Repeat several times. Next, students will jog, jump, tiptoe, walk/jog backward, side step, gallop, etc. Variations for students in wheelchairs include weaving, rolling backward, zig-zagging, stopping & starting, etc.

Starting Line Drill

Students line up behind starting line, power foot in front. When the coach says "set" athletes remain behind the starting line and bend their arms, preparing to race. On the "go" command athletes push off of their power foot and pump their arms to propel themselves forward.





Track & Field Training

TRACK

Wheelchair Racing/Slalom

Coaching Tips

- *Wheelchair slalom races feature athletes weaving in and out of four cones, placed in a straight line 15 feet apart.*
- *Grasp the wheels or handrails at the eleven o'clock position and set the back wheels of the chair behind the start line to get into the "ready-to-race" position.*
- *Athletes focus their gaze several meters out ahead on the track.*
- *Focus on staying in one's own lane and remaining there through/past the finish line before slowing down.*
- *Keep head and body still.*

Set-Up/Rules

- Wheelchair slalom races take place in and out four cones, placed in a straight line 15 feet apart from each other.
- Start and finish lines are 15 feet from the first and fourth cones, respectively.
- Competitors may touch but not run over cones.
- All of the same rules apply to motorized and assisted (competing athlete's chair is propelled by someone other than him/herself) wheelchair races.





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LONG JUMP

Coaching Tips

- *Competitors start with both feet on the ground and toes behind the starting line. Athletes may rock back and forth before take-off, but must initiate the jump with both feet.*
- *Distance is measured from the starting line to the closest impression on the landing area made by any part of the body (including clothing).*
- *Set footprints or some type of marker on the ground behind the starting/takeoff line to guide athletes.*
- *Focus on jumping forward, not up. **Although it is not allowed during competition**, coaches may put something on the ground for athletes to jump over, as a reminder.*
- *Key coaching tip, make sure to have athletes bend their knees, and swing their arms in a back and forth motion to create momentum for their jump.*
- *Modify familiar running games to include jumping. For example, have students jump/hop instead of running while playing tag.*

Gradually Increased Jumping

With tape or chalk, mark off a starting/takeoff line and multiple parallel goal lines approximately 25 cm (~10") apart. Athletes line up shoulder to shoulder behind the takeoff line. Then, athletes will jump forward with the intention of clearing the first goal line. Once athletes clear the 25 cm goal line, have them attempt to clear the 50 cm goal line. Continue as such, seeing how much athletes can increase their jumping distance over time.





Track & Field Training

LONG JUMP

Jumping Across a Line or Curb

Draw a line several feet long using tape or chalk. Have athletes line up single file, parallel to the line. Athletes will jump side to side, over the line and back, as fast as they can. Next, athletes will turn so that they are facing the line and jump forward and back over the line as fast as they can. Once athletes have mastered jumping across a line, the same skill can be practiced using a curb or step. Have athletes slowly jump onto the curb or step, then off. They can jump sideways or forward and back.



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THROWING

Softball Throw Coaching Tips

- *Athletes may use an overhand or underhand throw and must remain behind the designated throwing line at the completion of the throw.*
- *Distance is measured from the throwing line to the spot where the ball first hits the ground.*
- *Make sure athletes are stepping with their opposite foot and pointing their opposite hand forward to increase throwing distance and accuracy.*
- *In competition, athletes get three attempts and are scored on their furthest throw.*
- *To release the ball at a high point, have athletes practice throwing the ball over a high object (e.g., a volleyball net).*

Turbo Jav Throw Coaching Tips

- *Athletes must throw the Turbo Jav with an overhand motion and must remain behind the designated throwing line at the completion of the throw.*
- *Distance is measured from the throwing line to the spot where the point of the Turbo Jav first hits the ground.*
- *In competition, athletes get three attempts and are scored on their furthest throw.*
- *Ensure athletes get enough practice to become comfortable with the correct grip.*
- *Focus on keeping eyes forward, looking in the direction of the throw.*
- *Follow through is extremely important. Keep the arm moving forward in the direction of the throw.*





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THROWING

Throwing Drills – Softball and Turbo Jav

Practice the starting position and throwing motion (step, point, ear, throw) first without the throwing instrument.

Have three athletes start side by side behind a line. Explain to them this is the designated throwing line they are not allowed to cross. Give each athlete a throwing instrument and instruct them to wait for the field to clear and the coach tells them to throw. Ensure all athletes wait for the coach to give the OK before retrieving their object from the field.

Although it is not allowed during competition, in practice coaches may place, on the field, a target toward which athletes can aim. To encourage improvement, coaches can move the target further out as athletes reach each new distance.

To imitate competition atmosphere, have students take turns, with each student getting three attempts before the next student's opportunity. Staff or other students can mark and measure the throws.



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For more training & educational resources:

SchoolsPartnershipProgram.org



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