Location: Groff Park

Due to the size of the space, we will be able to accommodate the first 15 registrants and will then start a wait list after that. We will monitor the weather situation each week but be prepared to wear warmer clothes since we will be outside.

Address: 83 Mill Lane, Amherst, MA 01002

Dates & Times: Sunday Mornings from 11am - 12pm
• October 4th
• October 11th
• October 18th
• October 25th

Young Athletes is an introductory sport & play program for children ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities focusing on fun activities important to mental and physical growth. This program is an early introduction to sports & the world of Special Olympics.

Since Young Athletes activities will need to be done from a safe, social distance due to COVID guidances, please review the safety measures we will be taking on the next two pages below.

To Register, Please Go To:
- https://www.specialolympicsma.org/UMassAmherstYA

Or Contact Eric Archambault At:
- Eric.Archambault@SpecialOlympicsMA.org
PRE-SCREENING & REGISTRATION

Individuals must not participate in any activities if they are sick, for their own health and to reduce transmission of any infections to others. Please self evaluate at home before planning to arrive.

Upon arrival, there will be a pre-screening area which all participating children and parents/family members must go through. A maximum of 50 people are currently allowed at any outdoor facility or playing field. We will be capping our initial in-person Young Athletes gatherings to 15 participants, 1 family member per participant, and a maximum of 10 volunteers to help lead the activities.

- For each session, parents will be asked the following questions on behalf of themselves and their child:
  1. In the last 14 days, have you had contact with someone who has been sick with COVID-19?
  2. Have you had a fever in the last week (temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher)?
  3. Do you have a cough and/or difficulty breathing?
  4. Do you have any other signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (Fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea)?

- Children and parents/caregivers will have their temperature taken using a non-touch thermal scanning thermometer. If temperature exceeds 100.4°F, you may re-test after 5 minutes to ensure temperature is accurate.

If yes to any questions, participants MUST be isolated from the group (at minimum, kept 2m/6ft apart from others and with mask on), be sent home, and instructed to contact their healthcare provider for evaluation.

- Participants who are found to have COVID-19 symptoms must wait 7 days after symptoms resolve to return to activity OR must provide written proof of physician clearance to Special Olympics to return earlier.

- Participants who test positive for/ have COVID-19 must provide written medical clearance before returning to sport and fitness activities.

- If at any time, a practice has been exposed to a COVID-19, the practice must halt for 14 days.

Once through the initial pre-screening area, families will be able to check in to receive a Young Athletes t-shirt, name tag and directions on which area to go to in the designated space.

OTHER NOTES:

- There will be markings on the ground leading up to the pre-screening and registration table areas so that all families maintain social distance.
- Plenty of signage will be posted around the venue which reinforces healthy habits of handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Handwashing facilities and hand sanitizer stations will be available at the venue.

YOUNG ATHLETES ACTIVITY SETUP

Since we won’t be able to pair up volunteers directly with athletes as 1:1 buddies, we will require one parent/caregiver to remain with their child at all times during the activities. Having parent or caregiver volunteers can support children with safely following the coach’s instruction from a distance, while reducing exposure to additional individuals. They can also help to keep their child physically distant from others.

All Young Athletes and their parent/caregiver will be assigned to a designated space in the playing field. This will be the area they remain in while our volunteer coaches instruct the activities with everyone. All spaces will allow children to remain 6 feet apart, but have enough space to practice the activities comfortably.

Children are encouraged to wave, smile or use sign language to say hello instead of using hugs or high-fives to greet each other during the Young Athletes activities.

FACE MASKS:

Children over 2 years old should wear a cloth face mask when participating in in-person Young Athletes activities or events. There are some situations, outlined below, where children may be unable to wear a mask. In these situations, families should delay participation in in-person Young Athletes activities until Phase 3, when face masks are no longer required.

- Wearing a face mask will cause the child to touch their face more than without a mask.
- The child has trouble breathing.
- The child is unable to remove their mask without assistance.

If necessary, face masks may be removed once physical activities (that meet physical distance requirements) begin and replaced when they end. This will be most relevant if children are participating in high intensity activities, like running, where a face mask may cause difficulty breathing.

All adults present at Young Athletes activities (coaches, parents, caregivers, etc.) must wear a face mask from arrival through departure.

EQUIPMENT:

Families will be encouraged to bring their own equipment for use during the Young Athletes activities. There will be a mix of activities that either require minimal equipment or no equipment. Some examples of equipment which may be used include bean bags, balance beams, scarves, hoops, beach pales, and soccer balls. A list of the activities planned and equipment needed for each week will be sent to families beforehand so they can prepare accordingly.

If needed, extra equipment will be available onsite for individual use which will be cleaned and sanitized.

ACTIVITIES:

Stretching, songs and warm-up activities will all be done as a group while maintaining physical distance. The focus will be on activities that allow for social interaction without direct contact.

- For example, children can take turns being the leader in Follow the Leader. We will focus on stationary activities and stretches that keep children in their own space but allow them to interact with others.

Instead of group games, we will focus on individual skills.

- For example, one Young Athletes session can focus on kicking skills and spend 5 minutes each on four activities: stationary ball kick, penalty kick, cone dribble and one-on-one. Activities can progress in difficulty to continue development.
- Coaches will station themselves in a location where all children can see as they demonstrate activities, for example, in the center of the circle.

Volunteers to help lead the activities.

Instead of group games, we will focus on individual skills.

Stretching, songs and warm-up activities will all be done as a group while maintaining physical distance. The focus will be on activities that allow for social interaction without direct contact.

- For example, children can take turns being the leader in Follow the Leader. We will focus on stationary activities and stretches that keep children in their own space but allow them to interact with others.

Instead of group games, we will focus on individual skills.

- For example, one Young Athletes session can focus on kicking skills and spend 5 minutes each on four activities: stationary ball kick, penalty kick, cone dribble and one-on-one. Activities can progress in difficulty to continue development.
- Coaches will station themselves in a location where all children can see as they demonstrate activities, for example, in the center of the circle.