

Special Olympics Massachusetts Media Guide

Correct:	Incorrect:
Special Olympics	The Special Olympics
Special Olympics athletes	Special Olympians
Athlete with autism*	Autistic athlete
Athlete who uses a wheelchair*	Wheelchair-bound athlete

*Remember to use people-first language. Focus on the athlete first, not their disability.

Definitions:

Athletes - Participants with intellectual disabilities who compete on traditional or Unified Special Olympics teams.

Unified partners - Participants without an intellectual disability who play alongside athletes with intellectual disabilities. The role of a partner is to support the athletes and ensure meaningful game play.

Unified Sports - Athletes with intellectual disabilities and Unified partners without intellectual disabilities train and compete together in an inclusive, supportive environment.

Traditional Teams - Teams comprised entirely of athletes with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics Fast Facts

- In 2018, Special Olympics Massachusetts served over 13,000 athletes in local community programs across the state, in 23 sports at over 470 competitions.
- Special Olympics Massachusetts also collaborates with over 500 schools and over 170 of those have earned the distinction of Unified Champion School for their dedication to offering Unified Sports, Whole School Engagement and Inclusive Youth Leadership.
- Special Olympics Massachusetts is volunteer driven with nearly 13,000 volunteers in 2018 including 1,292 volunteer coaches and 103 certified medical volunteers.
- Special Olympics was founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver when the first Summer Games were held in Chicago. The Special Olympics movement, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2018, is now a global organization with programs in 174 countries.

For more information visit SpecialOlympicsMA.org

Special Olympics Organizational Chart:

Special Olympics International – 5 million+ athletes

Regional Program

Special Olympics North America- 900,000+ athletes

State Program

Special Olympics Massachusetts – 13,000+ athletes

Local Programs

Schools