

### Young Athletes Equipment

Young Athletes activities use equipment to help children focus on each skill. Equipment can be substituted for materials that can be found around the house.

#### Equipment

#### Suggested Substitutions

##### Balance Beam

Tape  
Rope



##### Small Foam Ball



Tennis ball  
Any small ball

##### Beanbags



Small, soft toys or figures  
Bags filled with rice, sand or beans  
Natural items, like flowers or leaves

##### Sport Cones



Boxes  
Plastic soda bottles filled with sand

##### Large Plastic Blocks



Foam or wood blocks  
Bricks

##### Plastic Dowels



Stick  
Paper towel roll

##### Paddle



Short stick

#### Equipment

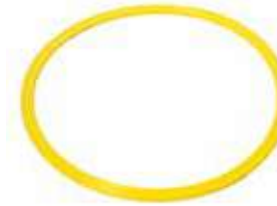
#### Suggested Substitutions

##### Floor Markers



Stickers or tape  
Carpet squares  
Chalk-drawn shapes

##### Hoops



Hula hoops  
Bicycle tubes  
Old tires

##### Scarf



Dish towel  
Small piece of cloth

##### Slow Motion Ball



Beach ball  
Any lightweight ball  
Balloon

#### Additional equipment may be used to run Young Athletes:

- Junior sized sports equipment:
  - Stacking cups
  - Agility ladder
  - Tunnels
  - Parachutes
  - Floor markers, beanbags, and balls with food images
  - Play food items
- basketball, plastic golf club, floorball stick, tennis racket, football (soccer ball), plastic bat and baseball tee.
- Playground ball
- Rope

# Young Athletes in Communities



Youth sport and recreation programs are where children come together with a “coach” for organized play. They can be found in many communities. Special Olympics Young Athletes can provide that same inclusive opportunity for children with and without intellectual disabilities.

Young Athletes in the community allows parents to share in the fun their children have while playing with others. They also observe their children achieving skills that will help them in sports and in life.

### Structure in Communities

When determining how to conduct community Young Athletes sessions, the following details can serve as a guide for set-up and structure.

- **Frequency:** one time per week, plus two times per week at home
- **Timing:** 45 minute – 1 hour session
- **Setting:** Indoors or outdoors
- **Locations:** Community center, sport club, university campus, public recreation space, library, or other venues
- **Coaches:** Community volunteer, specialized professional, family member or university student
- **Inclusion:** Siblings or local community children
- **Volunteers:** Family members, Special Olympics athlete leaders, local sport club members, university students or community volunteers

Volunteering or assistant coaching is a great leadership opportunity for older Special Olympics athlete leaders. Interaction with athlete leaders is also valuable for families as they can get inspired about future possibilities for their child.

### Community Session Structure

Use the structure below to develop individual sessions for Young Athletes in the classroom. It will help provide repetition. It also emphasizes individual growth and supports social interactions.

- **Warm Up:** The warm up gets children moving and prepared for the upcoming activities. A fun warm-up can include songs, games and stretching.
- **Individual Skill Development:** This section allows children to focus on their individual growth and success. Select a skill and activity from the Guide and run it as a singular activity. Or, select several activities and set up different stations.
- **Group Games/Activity:** These games and activities are a fun and effective way to practice skills. They reinforce classroom lessons, encouraging communication, and social interaction.
- **Cool Down and Closing Song:** This section helps children to slow down and prepare to leave. With a closing song, review the activity or skills learned. Complete the lesson with a good stretch.





## Key Points to Consider in a Community Program

### Space and Safety

- **Not too big; not too small.** Take time to read each activity. Make sure the space matches the needs of the activity and the number of children in the group.
- **Indoor versus outdoor.** Young Athletes is good for both indoor and outdoor spaces. Be mindful of spacing. Define borders for safety.
- **One space vs. two spaces.** Depending on the number of children and volunteers, trainers can divide a large group into smaller groups, sometimes by age or ability and run two groups at the same time.

### Structure

- **Establish a routine.** Routines provide clear expectations, consistency and comfort for many children.
- Create different skill stations to accommodate children of different ages and ability.
- Add group games and activities into the session when children are of similar age or ability.
- **Encourage different modes of movement to transition between activities.** This strengthens different muscles and encourages children to learn a new skill.
- Invite siblings, parents or children without ID to support children by modeling activities.
- **Use music to signal transition.** Songs can be used to signal when one activity is finished and another is about to begin.
- **Plan for rest breaks.** Provide a space where children can rest if they become tired or too excited by the activity or environment.
- Offer water and fruit at the end of the session, if available. Good hydration and nutrition is important for physical health and learning.



## Family Engagement

It is important for families to participate with their child in Young Athletes. It is a chance for families to connect with members of their community and other families. This supports growth, development and a feeling of acceptance.

Families can engage in a community program in a variety of ways, including:

- **Weekly newsletters and emails.** Connect weekly to share the activities and progress with families.
- **Session supporters.** Invite family members to participate in the weekly sessions, supporting their children through the various activities, or encourage families to take the next step and become coaches.
- **At-home activities.** Share the Activity Guide with families. Provide suggestions of everyday items that could be used as equipment. This allows families to replicate activities with their child at home.
- **Family support groups.** Provide families with a space to talk and connect while their children are in Young Athletes. Families can be the best support system for one another.

## Family Forums

Family Forums involve families in Special Olympics. They offer a setting for parents and caregivers to gain access to health information, resources and support.

Consider the following ideas when planning a Family Forum:

### Frequency and Timing

Plan a Family Forum monthly or once every three months. Families can gather with guest speakers while coaches and volunteers conduct that week's Young Athletes session.

### Potential Topics

Family Forums need to address the questions and concerns of local family members. They should also be sensitive to the cultural and religious needs of the community. Below are some suggestions for valuable Family Forum topics. Meet with family members first and get their input before deciding on final topics.

- Advocating for your child's rights and access to services
- Your child's medical and dental care
- Accessing follow-up care – how to identify the right professional for your child
- School opportunities – what is available for children with ID in the community
- Nutrition, healthy eating and cooking demonstrations
- General health topics related to the overall community, such as malaria prevention
- Learning through play
- Healthy sibling relationships
- Promoting independence at an early age

### Guest Presenters

When leading Family Forums, use community partners, university professors or industry experts to lead the conversations. For example, bring in a pediatrician to talk about working with your child's doctor. Have a nutritionist come to speak about healthy eating.



**The Young Athletes Activity Guide is just the beginning. Online you can find more information and resources to help support Young Athletes. These resources include:**

- Individual videos displaying proper form for all activities in the Guide
- The Young Athletes Curriculum, with 24 scripted lessons based on the Activity Guide
- Other resources to help program leaders run Young Athletes in the school, community and home
- Information to support and engage family members
- Additional health and fitness activities
- Marketing materials to promote Young Athletes in the community

[resources.specialolympics.org/YoungAthletes](https://resources.specialolympics.org/YoungAthletes)

### Equipment Modifications and Adaptations

Changes to equipment can decrease injury and increase success. Balls, Frisbees, balloons, pucks, bats, rackets, paddles, sticks, bases, nets, goals and fitness equipment can be changed to meet the needs of each child.

- **Change the ball size.** Make the ball or sport object (puck, shuttle) larger or smaller.
- **Length or width.** Change the length of the striking implement (bat, stick) to be longer, shorter or wider.
- **Weight.** Offer striking equipment or balls that are lighter or heavier.
- **Grip.** Make the grip larger, smaller, softer or molded to fit the child's hand.
- **Composition and texture.** Offer a variety of balls and striking equipment that are made of foam, fleece, plastic, rubber, cardboard or other materials.
- **Colors.** Use equipment in many colors for organization or to visually engage children.
- **Height or size.** Lower the height of a net, goal or base. Use larger bases marked with numbers or colors. Increase the size of a goal or change the height to increase accuracy in aiming at a target.
- **Sound, light, pictures, signs or colors.** Use colored scarves, pictures and other visuals to emphasize location.



## Modifications for Children with Motor Challenges

Young Athletes provides a space for children of all abilities to be successful. In some cases, changes may need to be made to ensure all children benefit from the experience.

Regardless of ability level, it is important to adapt activities to meet the individual needs of each child.

### For children who are unable to walk:

- Select activities that focus on sitting on the floor with and without support. These activities include “Rolling and Trapping”, “Scarf Games” and more.
- Modify activities so that children can crawl, rather than walk or run.

### For children who are unsteady on their feet:

- Allow children to use walkers or push a cart to participate in activities.
- Hold children at the waist so they can work on balance, striking and throwing skills.

### For children who use a wheelchair or stroller:

- Allow children to hit off a softball tee.
- Lower nets, targets or barriers.
- Use larger balls that allow children to kick from the wheelchair.
- Position the wheelchair at a side angle to the ball or target for overhead throwing and side striking activities.
- Allow other children to assist by pushing the wheelchair or stroller during group activities.

### For children with limited movement:

- Provide hand-over-hand assistance to complete the activities.
- Provide physical support at the torso or hips.

## Modifications for Children with Autism

Consider the following suggestions when planning Young Athletes sessions that include children with autism:

### Structure and Consistency

- Schedule Young Athletes for the same time every day to maintain consistency.
- Repeat the same structure for every Young Athletes session. Start with a warm up and opening song. Have individual skill practice and group games. Then, close with a song. A consistent routine helps children know what to expect.
- Provide a clear beginning and clear end to activities.
- Use visuals and pictures (like the template seen on page 68) to walk children through the activities for that day’s session.

### Surroundings and Physical Stimulations

- Limit distractions, like bright lights or loud sounds.
- Avoid sudden noises, like a whistle or clapping.
- Designate a quiet room or have a calm area where children can go during times of overstimulation.

### Instruction

- Define clear boundaries for activities.
- Give clear and concise directions for each activity. This helps children understand what is expected of them.
- Develop rules about social interactions, behavior and communication. Use those rules to provide structure to the group.
- Provide individual support for children from volunteers, staff or other children.

### Developing Healthy Habits Early

It is important to introduce healthy habits for children at an early age. Young Athletes includes health and fitness information while focusing on motor skills.

#### Some key healthy habits to focus on include:

- Handwashing
- Healthy foods and beverages
- Reducing screen time (TV, computer, video games, smart phones)
- Daily physical activity
- Healthy daily habits, like brushing teeth

In this Guide, many “Healthy Play” ideas share easy activity modifications that address key health and fitness messages.

To support the “Healthy Play” activities, additional equipment can be purchased. These items include floor markers with images of fruits and vegetables, food-shaped beanbags, or beach balls with various food, beverages or exercises on them.



There are additional health and fitness activities that can be added to Young Athletes. Three sample lessons are in the Guide. Additional lessons and activities to support healthy habits can be found at [resources.specialolympics.org/YoungAthletes](https://resources.specialolympics.org/YoungAthletes)

### Children’s Songs

Locally popular songs can be modified to talk about health topics in a fun and exciting way. The sample songs below show how songs can be updated to teach children about nutrition, physical activity and general health and well-being.

#### Apple, Apple, Way Up High

*Sung to “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”*

Apple, apple, way up high,  
I can reach you if I try.  
Climb a ladder,  
Hold on tight.  
Pick you quickly  
Take a bite.

#### Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands

*Sung to “Row, Row, Row your Boat”*

Wash, wash, wash your hands  
Wash the dirt away  
Before you eat, before you sleep  
And after outdoor play.



### Which Food is Healthy?

*EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Real or plastic foods, or pictures of food, tape*

The goal of this activity is to help children learn about different types of food and making good food choices.

On a wall or table, draw a happy face (smile) and an unhappy face (frown) with tape. Give children different healthy and unhealthy food items. These can be pictures of food, plastic or cloth food, or real food packaging.

Ask children to group the foods into two groups – those that make them healthy and strong (happy face) and those that are unhealthy (unhappy face).

Once children have separated the foods, discuss which foods have been correctly placed on the happy face and which food items were wrongly identified as “healthy”. Using the grid below as a sample, talk to children about why those foods are not healthy. Also, suggest replacing with foods that are healthier choices.

#### Unhealthy vs Healthy Foods

Unhealthy Food	Healthy Food	Comment to Child
Chips/Crisps	Bananas or Carrots	“Chips don’t make strong muscles and soft skin and good eyes, but bananas and carrots make you healthy!”
Juice	Milk	“Milk has lots of calcium and protein that will help you get taller and have strong bones, muscles and teeth.”
Soda	Water	“When you are thirsty, water is a good choice for your body. Soda has lots of sugar and will make you even thirstier.”

### Tame the Tube

*EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Small box, “Screen-Free Activities” Cards*

The goal of this activity is to show the importance of limiting screen time (like TV, computer, video games, tablets, smart phones) to no more than two hours a day for children and families.

Copy the list below and cut out each activity. Place individual activities in a small bowl or box. Ask children to pick an activity and then do each activity as a family or with the whole classroom. Ask children to suggest other screen-free activities that they would like to do.

Talk about the importance of limiting screen time throughout the activity.

#### Screen-Free Activities

Read a book	Sing a Song	Take a Walk
Dance to a Song	Play with Friends	Play a Game
Play Outside	Write a Poem	Cook a Healthy Meal
Draw a Picture	Listen to Music	Play your Favorite Sport

## Additional Resources : Next Steps with Special Olympics

Children will progress at different rates in Young Athletes. Some children will continue to be challenged and others will be ready to move on to more advanced skills. Work with children individually to know the right next step. The next step could be participating in another Young Athletes session, beginning a training program for a sport, or advancing directly to becoming a competitive Special Olympics athlete or unified partner.

Regardless of ability level, Special Olympics provides opportunities for children and adults throughout their lives. Through health promotion, physical activity and sports, Special Olympics has something for everyone.

Through Olympic-style individual and team sports, people with intellectual disabilities over the age of eight can participate in meaningful training and competition opportunities.

### **Become a Unified Teammate**

Special Olympics Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities together on the same team. Unified Sports was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

**Learn more at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)**



# Foundational Skills

## WEEK ONE

---

### **THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES**

games and activities to help children develop fitness, strength, body awareness, spatial concepts, adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements) and visual tracking skills. Children will also become familiar with the Young Athletes equipment and routines.



***Special Olympics***  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Opening Sports Song (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (following directions, singing along, imitating motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "Today is our first day of Young Athletes! An athlete is someone who plays sports and exercises the muscles in their body. We are all going to be Young Athletes while we play new games and exercise the muscles in our bodies. Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch), touch their toes, touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes, - all through the day.
- The runner on the team goes run run run, run run run run, run run. The runner on the team goes run run run - all through the town.
- The swimmer in the water goes swim swim swim, swim swim swim, swim swim swim. The swimmer in the water goes swim swim swim - all through the pool.



**I Spy** (5 min.)**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls**PURPOSE** Identify and locate sports equipment using a variety of motor movements, strength, and general fitness.**DEMONSTRATE** "Great warm-up! Now let's play I Spy with all of our new sports equipment! I spy with my little eye a blue ball! Where is the blue ball?" Look around, find the ball.**LEAD** "Hurry, let's walk to the balls! Where is the blue ball? (balls, cones, floor markers, scarves, etc.) Great! OK, listen carefully! I spy with my little eye an orange cone! Where is the orange cone? Look around find it! Hurry, let's run to the cone!"

- Encourage athletes to find an object that is visible and everyone races to the object by walking or running.
- The I Spy game progresses as teacher (or athlete) calls out the name of a piece of equipment and all athletes find that object.
- The teacher can lead by also calling out a color and all athletes find equipment of a particular color.

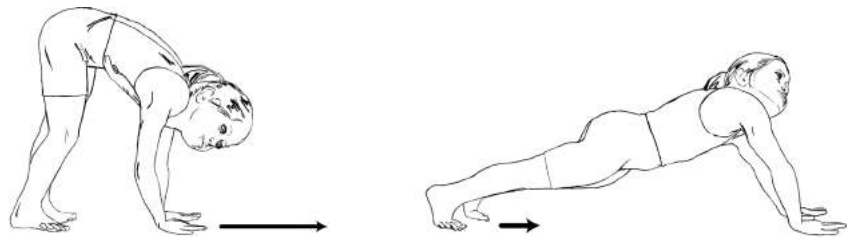
**Scarf Game** (5 min.)**EQUIPMENT** Scarf for each child**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, visual tracking, identification of body parts**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now let's play the Scarf Game! Watch the scarf! Look where the scarf is going! Catch the scarf with your (hands, head, elbow, foot)! You/I caught a (blue, red, yellow) scarf with my/your (hand, head, elbow, foot)!"

## Inchworm Wiggle (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, motor skills

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Bend over and put your hands on the ground. “Let’s play the Inchworm Wiggle!” “Great, watch me move like an inch worm. (Model while talking.) Walk with your hands then, walk with your feet. Awesome!”

- Let’s do it again! Let’s do the Inchworm Wiggle.
- Walk with your hands; then walk with your feet.
- Great! Inch worm to the (name a piece of equipment: bean bags, balance beam, etc.)



## Bridges and Tunnels (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “OK, now we are going to play Bridges and Tunnels! First let’s make our tunnel!” If physically able, have one athlete bend forward so that hands and feet are on the ground to form a bridge and tunnels. Encourage other athletes to form a bridge or tunnel.

## Bridges and Tunnels *(continued)*

### Tunnels

“Who can bend like this to make a tunnel? (Hands and feet on ground, bottom up making tunnel) Awesome, he/she made a tunnel. Now, who can go under his/her tunnel? Great! After you go under the tunnel you make a tunnel right next to him/her! Great, now our tunnel is even bigger!”

- One athlete forms a tunnel by touching the ground with his/her feet and hands or by getting down onto hands and knees.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the tunnel.
- Once they go under the tunnel, have each athlete extend the tunnel (by forming a tunnel next to the person who started the activity).



**Tips:** Make note of approximately how many times the child can perform the activity or how long the child hold up the bridge or tunnel. Encourage more repetitions or more time over several weeks to develop muscular strength and endurance. Encourage bridges and tunnels to be rigid and strong while people and objects pass under and through.

### Bridges

“OK! Now we are going to play bridges. Who can bend like this to make a bridge? (Sit on ground. Place hands/feet flat on ground. Push bottom off ground.) Great! Now let’s make a bridge and go under the bridge!”

- One athlete forms a bridge by sitting with his/her hands and feet flat on the ground and pushing his/her bottom off the ground.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the bridge.
- To make it easier have athletes place their feet or hands on the wall or an object and other athletes go under.





## Closing Sports Song (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This builds body awareness and adaptive skills (following directions, singing along, imitation of motor movements) and helps with transitions.

**EXPLAIN** "Let's end Young Athletes with a song, If You're Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do."

- SING**
- If you're happy and you know it, clap and stomp (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched).
  - If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you're happy and you know it clap and stomp.



## Opening Sports Song *(5 min.)* with Scarf

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch); touch their toes; touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes, - all through the day.
- The player on the court jumps up and down, up and down, up and down. The player on the court jumps up and down - all during the game.
- The athlete on the team throws the scarf, throws the scarf, throws the scarf. The athlete on the team throws the scarf - all through the town.

**Tip:** Have athletes suggest additional motions and lead.

## I Spy: Bunny Hop *(5 min)*

Adapt the Game from Day 1 by asking athletes to hop, then crawl to the sports equipment you name.

## Inchworm Wiggle *(4 min)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1

## Bridges and Tunnels *(5 min)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1



## Obstacle Course (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

**EXPLAIN** Now we get to run the obstacle course! Watch and follow me!

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Show the athletes how to go through the obstacle course. Then assist athletes in moving through course.



### Station 1: Jump on Dots

- Arrange 10 dots in zigzag pattern, close to one another.
- Athlete will bunny hop on two feet from dot to dot.
- Athlete will jump to the right, then jump to the left, zigzagging down length of dots.

### Station 2: Throw Bean Bag Through Target (basket, hoop)

- Use floor marker to show where athlete stands.
- Athlete will throw bean bag or small ball to a hoop held parallel to the floor or to a bucket.
- Progress to throwing through target (hoop on cone or block) from distance of 3 feet.
- Throw underhanded and if child is able proceed to throwing overhand.
- Move distance closer or further away, depending on skill of athlete.



**Tip:** Encourage color recognition, object recognition, verbal and counting development by calling out colors, names, and numbers of objects used in each activity. Ask children to repeat the objects you reference, including their name, color and numbers. Make note of the concepts the child has mastered and those that are still developing (e.g., knows on/off; identified red, not blue). Incorporate concepts during play such as giving directions to move around stationary objects like a couch or crawl under a table to retrieve a toy.

### Station 3: Step/Jump Over Hurdles

- Make hurdle using two cones and one dowel or stick. Place dowel through holes in cone.
- Adjust height as needed for athletes and always start the bar at the lowest height.
- Always start the bar at the lowest height. If he/she is unable to jump, they can step over hurdle.

### Station 4: Walk on Balance Beam

- Athletes will independently walk the length of the beam, alternating steps.
- Add various ways to move down the beam for advanced athletes (walk backwards, side-steps, change directions – forward to backwards).
- Add length to the beam by using multiple beams.

### Station 5: Run to Finish Line (through ribbon)

- When athlete steps off beam, he/she should run to the finish line.
- Teach athletes to run through the line. Introduce this skill several times as some may stop, not wanting to hit or touch the finish line.
- The finish line is a long ribbon. To set the finish line, attach the ribbon to one side of the area while holding the other end of the ribbon in your hand (or have another person hold the other end). As the athlete touches the ribbon, let it go.

## Closing Sports Song *(5 min.)*

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.





## Opening Sports Song with Bunny Hop *(3 min.)*

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class can bend and stretch, bend and stretch, bend and stretch. The athletes in our class can bend and stretch, all through the town.
- The athletes in our class can hop like a bunny, hop like a bunny, hop like a bunny. The athletes in our class can hop like a bunny - all through the day.
- The athletes in our class can go up and down (on your toes), up and down, up and down. The athletes in our class can go up and down - all through the town.

**Tip:** Have athletes suggest additional motions and lead.

**I Spy: Stomp/Tip Toes** *(3 min.)*  
Adapt the Game from Day 1 by instructing athletes to move in different ways to the equipment (e.g. tiptoe, stomp slowly, stomp fast, walk backwards)

**Bridges and Tunnels** *(4 min.)*  
Repeat the Activity from Day 1



## **Follow the Leader** (4 min.) **with Side Steps,** **Follow a Path**

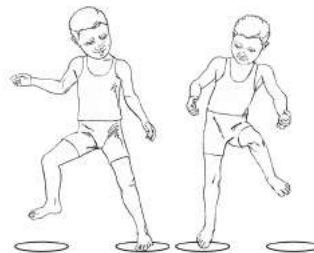
**PURPOSE** Introduction to Walking and Running skills. Motor Skills (walking, running, side steps, grasp, release), adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**EQUIPMENT** Set up space with 3 floor markers placed about two feet apart in a line.

Place bean bags or small ball on the 2nd floor marker so athletes can side step from first marker to second marker, pick up bean bag/ball, side step to last marker, place ball on last marker. Adapt by adding more markers and/or increasing distance between markers.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Encourage athletes to sidestep right and left onto a variety of floor markers (plastic disks, hoops). "Ok! Now let's play follow the leader!"

- March around the room, swing your arms!
- March around the room, hands on head! Side step to the right.
- Great! Side step again. Side step one more time! Now side step to the left. One big side step and again, and again!
- Now this time, side step to the marker, pick up the bean bag, side step to the next marker, drop the bean bag on the marker!



## Running Styles *(introduction to week 2)*

**PURPOSE** Body awareness, general fitness, motor skills (walk, run, balance), adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Using a clap or whistle, signal change in running style, while providing verbal command for each running/walking style:

- Stomp slow/fast
- Run slow/fast
- Run backwards
- High knees run (raise knees high when running)
- Tiptoe walking

## Obstacle Course *(7 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 2.

## Closing Sports Song *(3 min.)*

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 and 2 to end the Lesson.



**You have finished Week One: Foundational Skills Lessons.  
You can now begin Week Two: Walking and Running.**



# Walking & Running

## WEEK TWO

---

### THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES

games and activities to help children develop walking and running skills, fitness, strength, body awareness, spatial concepts, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).



**Special Olympics**  
**youngathletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)





## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

## Opening Sports Song (5 min.)

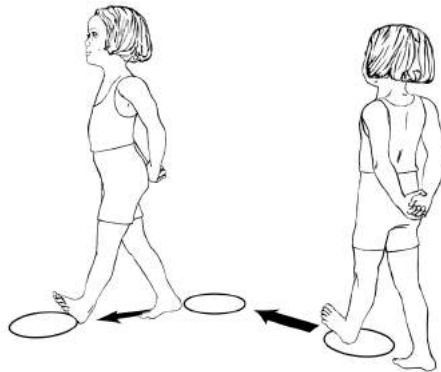
**EQUIPMENT** Whistle, floor markers (distributed around room to create a path), tambourine or drum.

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (following directions, singing along, imitating motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "It is time for Young Athletes! Let's start with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class swing their arms, swing their arms, swing their arms. The athletes in our class swing their arms, - all through the day.
- The runner on the team runs real fast, runs real fast, runs real fast. The runner on the team runs real fast - all through the town.
- The runner on the team runs real slow, runs real slow, runs real slow. The runner on the team runs real slow - all through the game.



## Follow the Leader (5 min.) and Follow a Path

**EQUIPMENT** Tambourine or drum, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, motor skills

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Great warm-up! Now let's play Follow the Leader! March around the room; swing your arms!"

- Use a tambourine or drum or overhead clapping to lead athletes around room, marching.
- Encourage athletes to swing arms and lift knees high.
- March around room, following a path (floor markers).
- Repeat with Follow the Leader: running; walking backwards.

## Side Stepping (4 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers, short balance beam, long balance beam

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Let's do some Side Stepping!"

**Tips:** Encourage child not to crouch or make extra movements when walking or sidestepping and to keep his/her hips and feet facing forward. Try placing a beanbag on the child's head to encourage good posture and balance.

- Encourage athletes to sidestep right and left onto floor markers.
- Side step to the right, across path.
- Side step to left across the path.
- Use the same side step to move across short balance beam and longer balance beam.



## Running Styles *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Whistle

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Choose a variety of running/walking styles to teach children. Then explain at the sound of the whistle (or other command signal like hand clapping) you will tell them to switch their running/walking styles.

- Stomp slow/fast
- Run slow/fast
- Run backwards
- High knees run (Raise knees high when running)
- Tiptoe walk

Or, create a foot race (competition) using different running styles

## Bridges and Tunnels *(5 min.)*

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "OK, now we are going to play Bridges and Tunnels! First let's make our tunnel!" If physically able, have one athlete bend forward so that hands and feet are on the ground to form a bridge and tunnels. Encourage other athletes to crawl (inchworm, walk) under tunnel or bridge.



## Bridges and Tunnels *(continued)*

### Tunnels

“Who can bend like this to make a tunnel? (Hands and feet on ground, bottom up making tunnel) Awesome, he/she made a tunnel. Now, who can go under his/her tunnel? Great! After you go under the tunnel you make a tunnel right next to him/her! Great, now our tunnel is even bigger!”

- One athlete forms a tunnel by touching the ground with his/her feet and hands or by getting down onto hands and knees.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the tunnel.
- Once they go under the tunnel, have each athlete extend the tunnel (by forming a tunnel next to the person who started the activity).



**Tips:** Make note of approximately how many times the child can perform the activity or how long the child hold up the bridge or tunnel. Encourage more repetitions or more time over several weeks to develop muscular strength and endurance. Encourage bridges and tunnels to be rigid and strong while people and objects pass under and through.

### Bridges

“OK! Now we are going to play bridges. Who can bend like this to make a bridge? (Sit on ground. Place hands/feet flat on ground. Push bottom off ground.) Great! Now let’s make a bridge and go under the bridge!”

- One athlete forms a bridge by sitting with his/her hands and feet flat on the ground and pushing his/her bottom off the ground.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the bridge.
- To make it easier have athletes place their feet or hands on the wall or an object and other athletes go under.



## Closing Sports Song *(5 min.)*

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with.

**EXPLAIN** "It is time to end Young Athletes. Let's sing If You're Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do."

- SING**
- If you're happy and you know it, clap and stomp (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you're happy and you know it clap and stomp, (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched).





## Opening Sports Song (5 min.) with Scarf

**EQUIPMENT** Scarf for each athlete.

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** Wheels on the Bus melody:

*"The athletes in our class bend and stretch, bend and stretch, bend and stretch. The athletes in our class bend and stretch - all through the day."*

- Grab opposite corners of scarf, place hands on hips. Start with feet apart, directly below hips. Slowly bend down with scarf in two hands towards your toes, when you sing bend. Come back up, hands on hips when you sing stretch. When you sing all through the day, twirl whole body or scarf around over head.

*"The athletes in our class bend and stretch, bend and stretch, bend and stretch. The athletes in our class bend and stretch - all through the town."*

- Grab two (or opposite) corners of scarf, place hands on hips. As you sing, move the scarf with body. Start with feet apart, directly below hips. Slowly bend right and back to center, bend left and back to center when singing the words bend and stretch. When you sing all through the town, twirl whole body or scarf around over head.

*"The athletes on the team catch a scarf, catch a scarf, catch a scarf. The athletes on the team catch a scarf - all through the game."*

- Have athletes suggest additional motions and lead.



## Follow the Leader (5 min.)

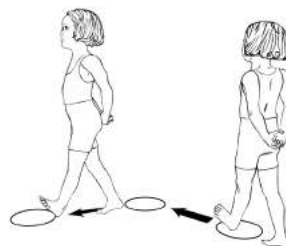
*With Side Steps, Follow the Path, Bunny Hop, Inch Worm*

**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers, bean bags or small ball

**WARM UP** Set up space with 3 floor markers placed about two feet apart in a line. Place bean bags or small ball on the 2nd floor marker so athletes can side step from first marker to second marker, pick up bean bag/ball, side step to last marker, and place ball on last marker. Adapt by adding more markers and/or increasing distance between markers.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Great warm-up! Now let's play Follow the Leader!"

- March around the room, swing your arms!
- March around the room, hands on head! Side step to the right.
- Great! Side step again. Side step one more time! Now side step to the left. One big side step and again, and again!
- Now this time, side step to marker, pick up bean bag, side step to next marker, drop the bean bag on marker!
- Encourage athletes to side step right and left onto a variety of floor markers (plastic disks, hoops).



**Run and Carry** (6 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers, hoop on floor with balls or bean bags in it, hoop on block for target Make a path with 10 floor markers that leads to target (hoop on block), placing markers about one foot apart. Place balls/bean bags in a small hoop on the ground, next to the 5th floor marker) so athletes can pick up bean bag/ball, walk/run/side step to last marker and throw ball/bag through hoop (target). Adapt by adding more markers and/or increasing distance between markers.

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, motor skills (walk, side-step, throw to target, run)

- WARM-UP**
- Have athletes run a short distance, pick up the ball or bean bag and return it back to you.
  - Repeat this a couple of times for each child.
  - Then line up athletes at the first floor marker (the marker furthest away from target).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Great! Now you’re ready to learn a Run and Carry Routine. Watch me do the routine! Now you do it. When I say GO! You do it!”

- walk/run/side step along the path
- stop to pick up ball/bag
- keep going on path to target
- stop on last marker and throw ball/bean bag into target
- follow path back (walking/running/side stepping)
- touch the next person’s hand and say “GO!”

**Tip:** Repeat Run and Carry routine using walk, run, side-step, walk backwards, etc.



# Walking & Running

WEEK DAY  
**two** 1 2 3

---

**Running Styles** (6 min.)  
Repeat the Activity from Day 1.

**Obstacle Course** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

**EXPLAIN** Now we get to run the obstacle course! Watch and follow me!

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Show the athletes how to go through the obstacle course. Then assist athletes in moving through course.

### Station 1: Jump on Dots

- Arrange 10 dots in zigzag pattern, close to one another.
- Athlete will bunny hop on two feet from dot to dot.
- Athlete will jump to the right, then jump to the left, zigzagging down length of dots.

### Station 2: Throw Bean Bag Through Target (basket, hoop)

- Use floor marker to show where athlete stands.
- Athlete will throw bean bag or small ball to a hoop held parallel to the floor or to a bucket.
- Progress to throwing through target (hoop on cone or block) from distance of 3 feet.
- Throw underhanded and if child is able proceed to throwing overhand.
- Move distance closer or further away, depending on skill of athlete.



**Obstacle Course** *(continued)***Station 3: Step/Jump Over Hurdles**

- Make hurdle using two cones and one dowel or stick. Place dowel through holes in cone.
- Adjust height as needed for athletes and always start the bar at the lowest height.
- Always start the bar at the lowest height. If he/she is unable to jump, they can step over hurdle.

**Station 4: Walk on Balance Beam**

- Athletes will independently walk the length of the beam, alternating steps.
- Add various ways to move down the beam for advanced athletes (walk backwards, side-steps, change directions – forward to backwards).
- Add length to the beam by using multiple beams.

**Station 5: Run to Finish Line (through ribbon)**

- When athlete steps off beam, he/she should run to the finish line.
- Teach athletes to run through the line.
- Introduce this skill several times as some may stop, not wanting to hit or touch the finish line.
- The finish line is a long ribbon. To set the finish line, attach the ribbon to one side of the area while holding the other end of the ribbon in your hand (or have another person hold the other end).
- As the athlete touches the ribbon, let it go.

**Closing Sports Song** *(3 min.)*

Repeat song used in Day 1 to end the lesson.



## Opening Sports Song (3 min.) with Bunny Hop

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING** Wheels on the Bus melody:

- The athletes in our class can bend and stretch, bend and stretch, bend and stretch. The athletes in our class can bend and stretch - all through the day.
- The athletes in our class can hop like a bunny, hop like a bunny, hop like a bunny. The athletes in our class can hop like a bunny - all through the town.
- The athletes in our class can go up and down (on your toes) up and down. The athletes in our class can go up and down - all through the game.

## Step and Jump (6 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Balance beams, ropes, floor markers. Use the balance beam/rope and floor markers to set goals for athletes to jump to.

**PURPOSE** Introduction to Balance and Jumping skills. Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (balance and direction), body awareness.

**EXPLAIN** "OK athletes, now we are going to jump off of our balance beams/ropes and try to land on the floor markers."

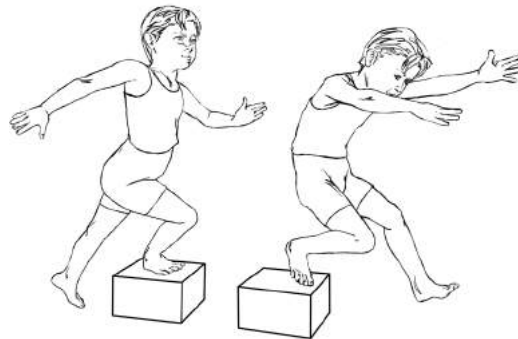




## Step and Jump *(continued)*

### DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD

- Step onto the balance beam/rope, then bend your knees, and jump to the floor markers.
- If athletes are physically able, allow them to jump onto the balance beam/rope as well.
- As athletes master jumping to a floor marker, move the markers further away, raise the level of the jump, and alter the floor marker position to allow for twisted jumps.
- For example, an athlete could face forward but jump to a marker to their side. Assure that balance skills have been acquired first.



## Run and Carry *(6 min.)*

Repeat Activity from Day 2.

# WALKING & RUNNING

## WEEK DAY

### two

### 1

### 2

### 3

## Coach Says *(5 min.)*

**PURPOSE** Introduction to Balance and Jumping skills. Identification of body parts, general fitness, balance, motor coordination, body awareness. Shifting of body weight to engage balance muscles is an important functional and sports related skill.

### DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD

“Now let’s play Coach Says using our bodies. I want you to look at what I do with MY body and try to do it with your own. I want you to COPY what I do. Look at me, see how I am...”

**Tips:** Encourage the child to mimic your movements; try placing a bean bag on the child’s head to encourage good posture and balance; encourage landing with two feet at the same time.

- Standing on one foot, standing with one foot in front of the other, standing on tip toes, standing on my heels...You try!
- Now try it with your arms out/in/up/down, or eyes closed/open.
- Encourage athletes to try these new balancing techniques while manipulating their bodies so that their muscles will need to counteract shifts in weight.

## Obstacle Course *(7 min.)*

Repeat Activity from Day 2.

## Closing Sports Song *(3 min.)*

Repeat the song used in Day 1 and Day 2 to end the lesson.



**You have finished Week Two: Walking & Running Lessons. You can now begin Week Three: Jumping & Balancing.**



# Jumping & Balancing

## WEEK THREE

---

**THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES** games and activities to help children develop fitness, strength, body awareness, spatial concepts, balance, jumping, and hand eye coordination, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).



***Special Olympics***  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

# Jumping & Balancing

WEEK DAY

three

1

2

3

## Opening Sports Song (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (follow directions, sing along, imitation of motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "We're going to start a NEW week of Young Athletes! Remember, an athlete is someone who plays sports and exercises the muscles in their body. We are all going to be Young Athletes while we play new games and exercise the muscles in our body. Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

### SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The runner on the team goes run run run, run run run, run, run, run. The runner on the team goes run run run - all through the day.
- The athletes in our class walk real slow, walk real slow, walk real slow. The athletes in our class walk real slow - all through the town.
- The player on the court goes jump jump jump, jump jump jump, jump jump jump. The player on the court goes jump jump jump - all through the game.



**Coach Says** (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** Shifting of body weight to engage balance muscles is an important functional and sports related skill. Other skills to be developed include identifying body parts, general fitness, motor skills (balance), motor coordination, body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Encourage athletes to try these new balancing techniques while manipulating their bodies so that their muscles will need to counteract shifts in weight. "Great warm-up! Now let's play "Coach Says" using our bodies. I want you to look at what I do with MY body and try to do it with your own. I want you to COPY what I do. Look at me, see how I am:

- Standing on one foot, standing with one foot in front of the other, standing on tip toes, standing on my heels...You try!
- Now try it with your arms out/in/up/down, or eyes closed/open.

**Balance Beam/Ropes** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Balance beams/ropes

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills, body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Let's play with our balance beams/ropes!" Walk along the balance beam/ropes nice and straight.

- Now try walking with one foot on each side of the balance beam/ropes like I am (straddling rope).
- Great! Now let's walk on TOP of the balance beam/ropes with one foot in front of the other. Go very slowly to keep your balance.





# Jumping & Balancing

WEEK DAY

three

1

2

3

## Foot Trap (4 min.)

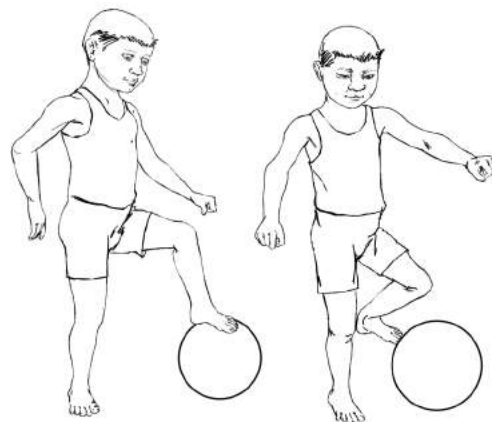
**EQUIPMENT** Slow motion ball; Use various sized balls for athletes to experience various amounts of challenge to their balance (smaller ball = smaller challenge).

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (kicking & trapping), body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we are going to use our feet to trap a ball. Take your foot like I am, and place your foot on top of the ball. Stand like this and balance. Then, take your foot off and kick the ball to another athlete/coach."

**Tips:** Encourage athletes trying this skill with smaller balls if larger ones are too difficult.

- Give children opportunities to practice kicking the ball from a stand still trap. If athletes master this begin having them trap a rolling ball.
- Now, when another athlete kicks the ball to you, try to stop the ball while it's moving by putting your foot on top of it the same way.
- Once it stops, get your balance, and then kick the ball back.
- Great job passing the ball back and forth using foot traps!



## Step and Jump *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Balance beams/ropes, floor markers. Use the balance beam/rope and floor markers to set goals for athletes to jump to.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (balance and direction), body awareness, adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “OK athletes, now we are going to jump off of our balance beams/ropes and try to land on the floor markers.

- Step onto the balance beam/rope, then bend your knees, and jump to the floor markers.
- As athletes master jumping to a floor marker, move the markers further away, raise the level of the jump, and alter the floor marker position to allow for twisted jumps if athletes have balance skills.

## Closing Sports Song *(5 min.)*

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with.

**EXPLAIN** “It is time to end Young Athletes. Let’s sing If You’re Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do.”

- SING**
- If you’re happy and you know it, clap and stomp (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you’re happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you’re happy and you know it clap and stomp, (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched).



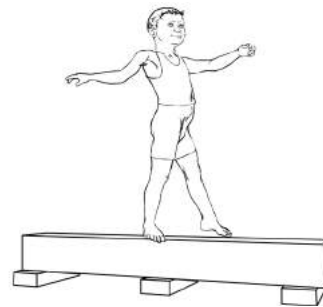
## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Balance beam/rope

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

### SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- (On balance beam/rope) The player on the court goes jump jump jump, jump jump jump, jump jump jump. The player on the court goes jump jump jump - all through the day.
- (On balance beam/rope) The athletes in our class jump on and off, on and off, on and off. The athletes in our class jump on and of - all through the town.
- The athletes in our class jump forward and back, forward and back, forward and back. The athletes in our class jump forward and back - all through the game.



## Coach Says (4 min.)

Adapt the Activity from Day 1, having athletes stand on a balance beam or rope as they stand on one foot, tip toe, heels, etc.



## Rolling and Trapping *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, identification of body parts (toes touching), strength, general fitness/flexibility, motor skills (rolling, trapping), body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Arrange athletes in pairs facing one another on the ground with their legs outstretched in a straddle position so that their legs are touching in the shape of diamond.

- Give them a slow motion ball/ball to roll back and forth between them.
- Now we're going to practice rolling these balls to our partners like we started last week.
- Face sitting your partner with your legs out and spread like this (demonstrate).
- Make sure your toes are touching your partner's toes.
- Next, one of you rolls the ball to the other on the ground like this (demonstrate). Stop the ball with your hands, and roll it back.
- If athletes are physically able to, encourage them to advance to a kneeling or standing position.
- Try passing the ball to your partners on your knees like this (demonstrate).
- Try passing the ball to your partners standing up and rolling it to them like this (demonstrate crouching position).
- Great job!!



**Foot Trap** (4 min.)  
Repeat Activity from Day 1.

**Jumping High** (5 min.)

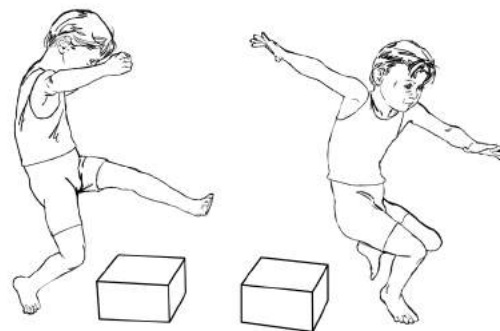
**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers, dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam/rope, and blocks. Equipment should be already placed around room. Spread the equipment around the room so that athletes can have a chance to jump over the various pieces.

**PURPOSE** Identify and locate sports equipment, motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (jumping, balance, grasp), body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Introduce the skill of jumping over equipment to the athletes.

**Tips:** Children can jump onto or off of equipment if their feet cannot clear the floor (for instance they can jump over the bean bag, or on top of it); If they are jumping off of the equipment as opposed to over it, challenge them to reach for an object (ex: scarf) while doing so.

- Yesterday we jumped on an off of our balance beams onto our floor markers.
- Today, we're going to try to jump OVER our equipment.
- Jump onto the equipment first- THEN see if you can jump OVER it!



## Frog Hoppin' / Leapin' Lizards *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers placed around the room

**PURPOSE** Identify and locate sports equipment (floor markers), motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (hopping & running), body awareness and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "OK athletes, now we're going to play Leapin' Lizards! Everyone is going to LEAP/HOP from one floor marker to another just like a leapin' lizard!"

**Tips:** If the child takes off or lands flat-footed, encourage leaning forward and bending the knees; If leaping is difficult for the child, run along the child's side, holding his/her hand and practice leaping onto a marker over an object.

- You can jump from one to the next (demonstrate) or over them (demonstrate).
- If athletes master jumping from one to the next, and/or over the markers, encourage them to run and land either onto or over the marker:
- Now that you can hop onto the marker, and over the marker, try running first and then landing on the marker.

## Closing Sports Song *(5 min.)*

Repeat the song used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.



## Opening Sports Song with Leapin' Lizard (2 min.)

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

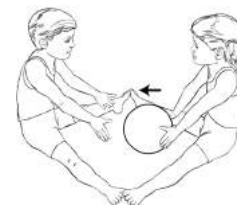
### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes on the team leap over the mark, over the mark, over the mark. The athletes on the team leap over the mark - all through the day.
- The player on the court runs forward and back, forward and back, forward and back. The player on the court runs forward and back - all through the town.
- The athletes in our class leap on the mark, on the mark, on the mark. The athletes in our class leap on the mark - all through the game.

**Coach Says:** (3 min.)  
**with a bean bag** Adapt the Activity from Day 1 by having them first jump on, then over a bean bag, then play catch with it.

**Jumping High** (4 min.)  
Repeat Activity from Day 2.

**Rolling & Trapping** (5 min.)  
Repeat Activity from Day 2.



**Foot Trap** (4 min.)  
Repeat Activity from Day 2.

**Special Olympics**  
**youngathletes™**

**Frog Hoppin'/  
Leapin' Lizards***(5 min.)*

Repeat Activity from Day 2.

**Goalie Drill***(5 min.)***EQUIPMENT** Two cones to form each goal and slow motion ball placed around room.**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, (shift weight to react to ball movements), strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, running), body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movement).**EXPLAIN** Arrange athletes so that they are standing in-between two cones forming a goal. "OK Leapin' Lizards, let's practice being goalies! Stand in-between the two cones. The space in-between the cones is called a GOAL."**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD**

- When the coach or your partner rolls or kicks the ball into the goal, use your hands to stop the ball like this.
- The goalie's job is to stop the ball before it goes in-between the cones, the goal. Let's practice being goalies!

**Closing Sports Song***(2 min.)*

Repeat the song used in Day 1 and 2 to end the Lesson.



**You have finished Week Three: Jumping & Balancing Lessons. You can now begin Week Four: Trapping & Catching.**



# Trapping & Catching

## WEEK FOUR

---

**THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES** games and activities to help children develop trapping and catching (fitness, strength, body awareness, spatial concepts, balance, hand eye coordination, motor control, proprioception).



**Special Olympics**  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

## Opening Sports Song (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (following directions, singing along, imitating motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** “We’re going to start a NEW week of Young Athletes! Remember, an athlete is someone who plays sports and exercises the muscles in their body. We are all going to be Athletes while we play new games and exercise the muscles in our bodies. Let’s start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do.”

### SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The goalie on the team goes stop that ball (jump in front of ball), stop that ball, stop that ball. The goalie on the team goes stop that ball - all through the day,
- The player on the court goes jump jump jump, jump jump jump, jump jump jump. The player on the court goes jump jump jump - all through the town.
- The athletes in our class roll the ball, roll the ball, roll the ball.
- The athletes in our class roll the ball— all through the game.



## Rolling & Trapping *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, identification of body parts (toes touching), strength, general fitness/flexibility, motor skills (rolling, trapping), body awareness, adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Arrange athletes in pairs facing one another on the ground with their legs outstretched in a straddle position so that their legs are touching in the shape of diamond. Give them a slow motion ball/ball to roll back and forth between them. "Great job with our song! Now we're going to practice rolling these balls to our partners like we started last week."

- Face sitting your partner; with your legs out and spread. Make sure your toes are touching your partner's toes.
- Next, one of you rolls the ball to the other on the ground. Stop the ball with your hands, and roll it back.
- If athletes are physically able to, encourage them to advance to a kneeling or standing position.
- Great job!



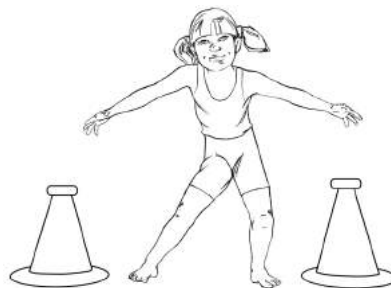
## Goalie Drill *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Two cones to form each goal and slow motion ball should be already placed around room.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination (shift weight to react to ball movements), strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, running), body awareness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Arrange athletes so that they are standing in-between two cones forming a goal. "OK Athletes, let's practice being goalies!"

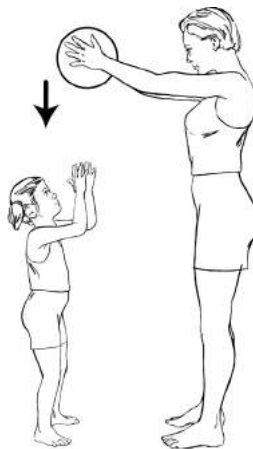
- Stand in-between the two cones. Remember, the space in-between the cones is called a GOAL.
- When the coach or your partner rolls or kicks the ball into the goal, use your hands to stop the ball.
- The goalie's job is to stop the ball before it goes in-between the cones, the goal. Let's practice being goalies!





**Big Ball** (5 min.)**EQUIPMENT** Big ball**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (balance), body awareness, proprioception, hand eye coordination, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now, let's play catch with our big ball (or slow motion ball) Watch me first, then everyone will get a chance to play with an adult."

- Stand facing the athlete and slowly bring the ball toward them. "See the ball coming towards you! Keep your eye on the ball!" Repeat several times. Moving more quickly each time. "It's moving faster now!"
- Next, have the athlete grab the ball from your hands. "OK, now when I get close, TAKE the ball from my hands."
- Then, explain, "I'm going to let go of the ball so you can catch it now! Just use your hands to catch it!" Practice this several times before actually tossing the ball.
- Give each athlete as much practice as possible catching the ball while being sure to incorporate all children. Waiting children can cheer, toss an imaginary ball, or toss another ball to themselves.



## Bean Bag Catch *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Bean bag

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Adapt the Big Ball Activity using a bean bag instead of ball to practice catching skills.

## Closing Sports Song *(5 min.)*

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with.

**EXPLAIN** "It is time to end Young Athletes. Let's sing If You're Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do."

- SING**
- If you're happy and you know it, clap and stomp (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you're happy and you know it clap and stomp, (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched).



## Opening Sports Song *(4 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Balance beam/rope

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class catch the bean bag, catch the bean bag, catch the bean bag. The athletes in our class catch the bean bag - all through the day.
- The player on the team catches the ball, catches the ball, catches the ball. The player on the team catches the ball - all through the town.
- The athletes on the team jump up and down, up and down, up and down. The athletes on the team jump up and down - all through the game.

## Goalie Drill *(5 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1.

## Big Ball or Bean Bag Catch *(5 min.)*

Repeat the Big Ball or Bean Bag Catch Activity from Day 1.



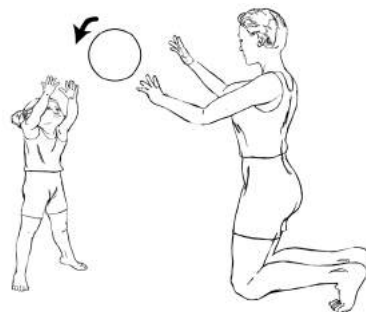
## High Ball Catch (6 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Large beach ball, slow motion balls

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, catching, & holding), body awareness, proprioception, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements). Use a large beach ball or slow motion balls to introduce catching from a short distance.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Kneel facing the child who is about 3 feet away. "OK athletes, we're going to practice catching this BIG ball!"

- Gently toss a beach ball or fairly large ball to the child and encourage catching the ball with fingers pointing up (because it's from above the waist). Be sure the toss is done from the chest level and with the fingers pointing up. "See how I am tossing the ball to (athlete) with my fingers pointing UP? Catch the ball with your fingers pointing UP!"
- Vary distances and heights depending on child's physical abilities. Progress by moving further away and mixing up high and low tosses. "Great job!! Now I'm going to back up a little bit and see if we can do this!"
- Give the athletes as much practice as possible while being sure to incorporate all children. Waiting children can be cheering, or tossing an imaginary ball, or tossing it to themselves if there are enough.



**Bounce Catch** (6 min.)**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, catching, & holding), body awareness, proprioception, and adaptive skills (follow directions, imitating motor movements). Use a large beach ball to introduce catching from a floor bounce.**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Face the child and bounce a beach ball or fairly large ball so the child can catch the ball without moving. "Now that we practiced catching the ball from up here (motion to chest area), NOW we're going to catch it from down here (motion to lower half of body)."

**Tip:** Eyes should be focused on the target. Fingers should be pointing down when catching a ball that approaches below the waist and pointing up when the ball approaches above the waist.

- See if I bounce the ball to (athlete), he can point his fingers DOWN because it's coming from DOWN here (motion to lower half of body)."
- Point your fingers down to catch the bounce pass. Now try with your partners!
- Vary distances and use smaller balls depending on child's physical abilities.
- Give the athletes as much practice as possible while being sure to incorporate all children. Waiting children can be cheering, or tossing an imaginary ball, or tossing it to themselves if there are enough.

**Closing Sports Song** (3 min.)

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.

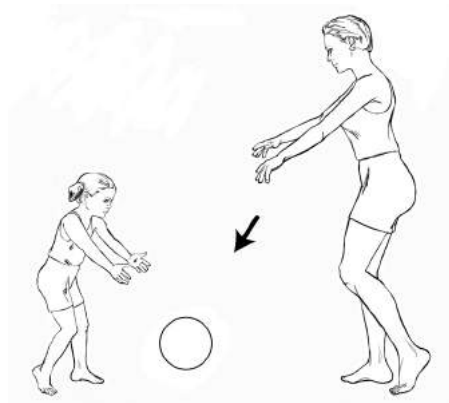


## Opening Sports Song (5 min.) with Leapin' Lizard

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

### SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes on the team leap over the mark, over the mark, over the mark. The athletes on the team leap over the mark - all through the day.
- The player on the court jumps up and down, up and down, up and down. The player on the court jumps up and down - all through the town.
- The athletes in our class catch the ball, catch the ball, catch the ball. The athletes in our class catch the ball - all through the game.



## Bean Bag (5 min.) Catch/Throw

**EQUIPMENT** You will need a bean bag for each child so that they can toss the bean bag with adults, and by themselves when waiting.

**PURPOSE** Identification of body parts, general fitness, motor skills (catching, throwing), motor coordination, body awareness, Adaptive skills (Following directions, imitating motor movements). Introducing Week 5 skills.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Great job with that, Athletes!! Now we're going to try the catching AND throwing our bean bags! Watch me first then everyone will get a chance to play with an adult."

- Stand facing the athlete and slowly bring the bean bag toward them. "See the bean bag coming towards you! Keep your eye on the ball!" Repeat several times. Moving more quickly each time. "It's moving faster now!"
- Next, have the athlete grab the bean bag from your hands. "OK, now when I get close, TAKE the ball from my hands."
- Then, explain, "I'm going to let go of the bean bag so you can catch it now! Just use your hands to catch it!" Practice this several times.
- Then begin tossing the bean bag. "I'm throwing the bean bag, and you're catching it!"
- Now introduce throwing the bean bag. "Take the bean bag and put it in your hands. Look at my hands and toss the bean bag to me, just like I did to you!" This is an UNDERHAND throw.
- We can throw the bean bag back and forth. Give the athletes as much practice as possible while being sure to incorporate all children. Waiting children can be cheering, tossing an imaginary bean bag, or tossing the bean bag to themselves, getting used to how the manipulate the bean bags.

**Tip:** Note that students should be pointing their fingers down when taking and throwing objects passed below their waists.





**High Ball Catch** (5 min.)  
Repeat Activity from Day 2.

**Rolling** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Two cones to form each goal and slow motion ball should be already placed around room.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness/flexibility, motor skills (rolling, trapping), hand and eye coordination (aiming at goal), body awareness, and adaptive skills (follow directions, imitating motor movements). Introduce Week 5 skills.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Demonstrate and Lead: Arrange athletes so that they are standing one bodies length away from two cones forming a goal. Place a floor marker where you want them to sit/kneel/stand. "OK Athletes, let's practice making goals!"

**Tip:** Remind athletes to keep their eyes on the ball and to use the floor markers as an indicator of where to sit, kneel or stand.

- Sit on the ground and roll the ball THROUGH the cones to make a GOAL!! This can be done against a wall alone, or with a partner athlete on the other side of the cones, mirroring one another, with the same task to make a goal
- Now kneel on your knees and try rolling the ball THROUGH the cones to make a GOAL kneeling!
- Now stand on your feet and try rolling the ball THROUGH the cones to make a goal standing!

**Bounce Catch** (4 min.)  
Repeat Activity from Day 2.

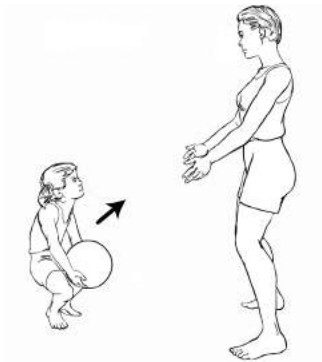


**Two-Hand Underhand** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Inflatable balls or slow motion balls for each athlete or each pair of athletes.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination (shift weight to react to ball movements), strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, throwing, catching), identification of body parts (fingers), body awareness and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements). Introduce Week 5 skills.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Arrange athletes so that they are standing face to face with another athlete and use floor markers to give athletes a reference point of where to stand, if needed. Arrange the athletes about 3 feet, or one athlete's body length apart.



- OK athletes, just like we threw our bean bags, we're going to practice throwing these balls to our partners.
- Take the ball and put it in your hands. Look at my/your partner's hands and throw the ball into my/their hands. Be sure to point your fingers down!
- This is an UNDERHAND throw. We can throw the ball back and forth to our partners!

**Closing Sports Song** (3 min.)

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 and 2 to end the Lesson.



**You have finished Week Four: Trapping & Catching Lessons. You can now begin Week Five: Throwing.**

# Throwing WEEK FIVE

**THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES**

games and activities  
to help children develop  
throwing skills, fitness,  
strength, body awareness,  
and spatial concepts.



***Special Olympics***  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (follow directions, sing along, imitation of motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

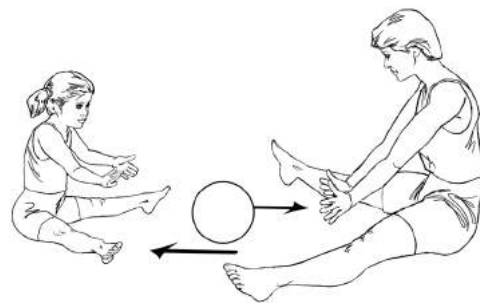
- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch), touch their toes, touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes - all through the day.
- The runner on the team goes run run, run, run run, run, run run run. The runner on the team goes run run run - all through the town.
- The player on the court jumps up and down, up and down, up and down. The player on the court jumps up and down - all through the game.



**Rolling** (5 min.)**EQUIPMENT** Slow motion ball, cones, floor markers placed next to cones**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Sit with legs extended out to the side facing the child. "Let's sit down like we did last week –with our legs out. Now let's roll the ball." Roll the ball back and forth.

**Tip:** Remind athletes to keep their eyes on the ball and to use the floor markers as an indicator of where to sit, kneel or stand.

- Great – now legs try rolling the ball while we kneel. Roll the ball from half-kneeling position.
- Okay. Now let's stand up and roll the ball between the cones to make a goal.
- Encourage the child to roll the ball from a standing position so it passes between two cones. This can be done against a wall alone, or with a partner athlete on the other side of the cones, mirroring one another, with the same task to make a goal.



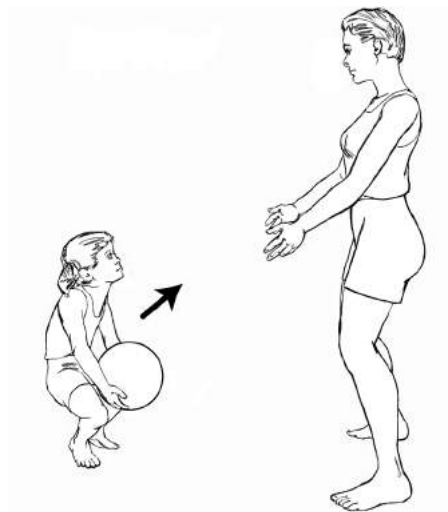
## Two-Hand Underhand (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Slow motion ball for each pair of athletes, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Arrange athletes so that they are standing face to face with another athlete and use floor markers to give athletes a reference point of where to stand, if needed. Arrange the athletes about 3 feet, or one athlete's body length apart.

- OK athletes, just like we're going to practice throwing these balls to our partners.
- Take the ball and put it in your hands. Look at my/your partner's hands and throw the ball into my/their hands. Be sure to point your fingers down!
- This is an UNDERHAND throw. We can throw the ball back and forth to our partners!
- Progress to having athletes stand further away.



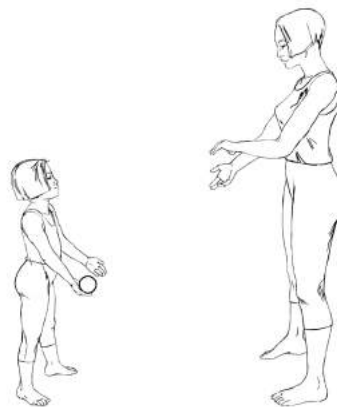
## Underhand Toss *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Small foam ball, bean bag

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Athletes—let’s make a circle and we can toss the ball/beanbag to each other. Hold the ball/beanbag like this”. Fingers should be facing down when tossing a ball underhand. Foot opposite the hand tossing the ball should always be forward in an open stance.

- Throw the ball or beanbag to the athlete standing next to you. Encourage the child to stand with bent knees holding the small ball or beanbag in his/her hand.
- Ask the child to toss the ball or the beanbag to the child standing next to him/her and have the ball/beanbag go around the circle.
- Keep going—everyone gets a turn throwing the ball/beanbag. Remember to keep your fingers down when tossing underhand.





## Two Hand Throwing (overhead) *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Slow motion ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we are going to throw the ball. Watch how I do it."

"Stand sideways with one foot a little bit in front of the other one. This is called a sideways stance. Raise your hands over your head. Bend your arms. Now throw the ball."

- Encourage the child to stand in a sideways stance and to rock back and forth. As the child rocks to the back foot ask them to raise their hands over their head.
- When rocking forward encourage the child to bring their arms forward as well as overhead to throw the ball towards you. Practice throwing several times.
- That was great! Good job.

## Closing Sports Song *(5 min.)*

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with.

**EXPLAIN** "It is time to end Young Athletes. Let's sing If You're Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do."

- SING**
- If you're happy and you know it, clap and stomp (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you're happy and you know it clap and stomp, (wiggle your body; fly like a bird: walk around with arms outstretched).



## Opening Sports Song *(3 min.)*

**EXPLAIN** “Let’s start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do.”

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class hop up and down, up and down, up and down. The athletes in our class hop up and down - all through the day.
- The swimmer in the pool goes slash splash splash, (splash motion with hands), splash splash splash, splash splash splash – all through the pool.
- The swimmer in the pool goes splash splash splash - all through the pool.

## Underhand Toss *(6 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1.

## Two Hand Throwing *(5 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1.



## Overhand Throwing (6 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Small foam ball

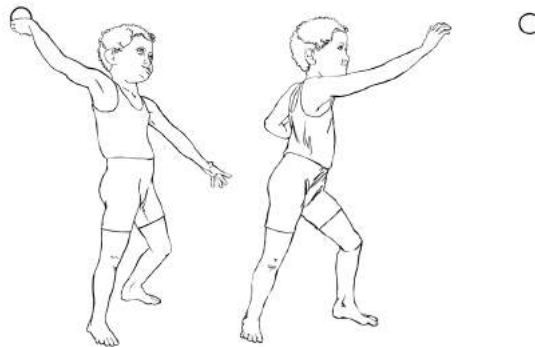
**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills

### DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD

This uses the same techniques as two hand throwing but encourage the child to use one hand, bringing his/her arm back and forward the throw the small ball towards you. "Now let's throw this smaller ball like I am doing with just one hand."

**Tips:** The hips and shoulders should rotate forward; The arm should bend at the elbow and then straighten at the release of the ball; Wrist should snap downward when the ball is released.

- Stand in your sideways stance.
- Bring the hand holding the ball up over your head.
- Bend your arm at the elbow.
- Now throw the ball.
- That was great! Good job. Let's do it again.



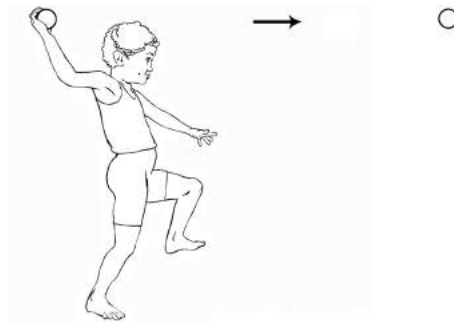
## Throwing for Distance *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Small foam ball or bean bag, floor markers, hoops set up on cones. Set up markers about 3 feet apart.

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, motor skills

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Encourage athletes to throw the ball at the markers, then through the hoops.

- Now we are going to throw the ball at the first star/floor marker. Great—now go and get it and throw to the second star/floor marker. Wow—can you throw it to the third star/floor marker?
- Move over to the hoop. One athlete stands on a marker to throw the ball and the other athlete stands by the hoop to retrieve it. Now let's throw the ball or beanbag through the hoop. Look you made a basket!
- Have another athlete pick up the ball and take their turn throwing it. Vary distances according to ability.



## Closing Sports Song *(4 min.)*

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.

## Opening Sports Song (3 min.)

**EXPLAIN** “Let’s start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do.”

### SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch), touch their toes, touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes - all through the day.
- The pitcher on the team throws the ball, throws the ball, throws the ball. The pitcher on the team throws the ball - all through the game.

## Review of Underhand Toss (4 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Small foam ball, bean bag, hoop (NOTE: Hoop can either be held by an adult or set up on the top of the cone).

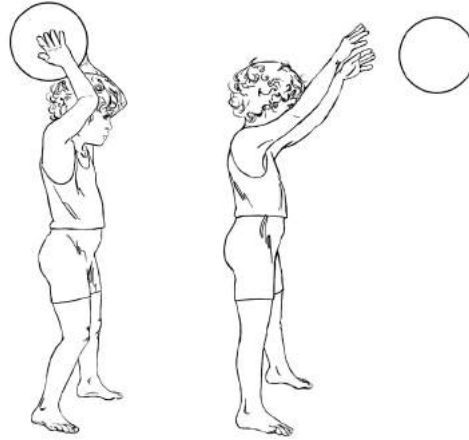
**SING AND DEMONSTRATE** “Today we are going to make baskets with the ball/beanbag in front of the hoop.”

- Hold the ball/beanbag like this (show fingers facing down). Stand like we did before, sideways with one foot in front of the other.
- Now throw the beanbag/ball through the hoop. Great—you made a basket.
- Have another athlete at the hoop pick up the ball and take their turn throwing it. Vary distances according to ability.



**Two Hand Throwing** (4 min.)

Repeat the Activity from Day 1 and 2.



**Overhand Throwing** (4 min.)

Adapt the Activity from Day 2, by encouraging athletes to use one hand, bringing his/her arm back and forward to throw a small ball towards you.

**Throwing for  
Distance and  
Accuracy** (4 min)

Repeat the Activity from Day 2.

## Ball Tapping (4 min.)

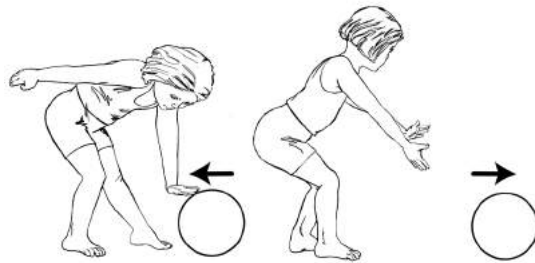
**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball or slow motion ball, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Tap a beach ball toward the child. "Tap the ball across the floor back to me— keep your hand open."

**Tips:** Eyes should be focused on the ball; Encourage the child to follow through by twisting his or her belly forward and clapping the hands out in front.

- Progress to having the child stand sideways with 1 foot on each of two markers (front/back).
- Toss a beach ball to the child and have him/her hit the ball with an open hand.
- Great job!



**Handball** (4 min.)**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, cone**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements. Introducing Week 6 skills).**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we are going to see if we can hit this ball off the cone. Watch – keep your hand open and hit it like this."

- Place the ball on the cone and hit it with an open hand or fist.
- Line athletes up opposite the cone to take turns hitting the ball and bringing it back.
- OK, now you do it. Good job!

**Closing Sports Song** (3 min.)

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 and 2 to end the Lesson.



**You have finished Week Five: Throwing Lessons.  
You can now begin Week Six: Striking.**



# Striking WEEK SIX

**THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES** games and activities to help children develop kicking skills, fitness, strength, body awareness, eye hand coordination, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).



***Special Olympics***  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (follow directions, sing along, imitation of motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class can jump, jump, jump, jump, jump, jump, jump. The athletes in our class jump, jump, jump - all through the day.
- The basketball player on the team can make a basket (arms up and forward throw as if making a basket as in overhand toss) make a basket, make a basket. The basketball player on the team can make a basket – all through the game.



## Ball Tapping *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball or slow motion ball, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Tap a beach ball toward the child. "Tap the ball across the floor back to me – keep your hand open."

**Tips:** Eyes should be focused on the ball; encourage the child to follow through by twisting his or her belly forward and clapping the hands out in front.

- Progress to having the child stand sideways with 1 foot on each of two markers (front/back).
- Toss a beach ball to the child and have him/her hit the ball with an open hand.
- Great job!

## Handball *(4 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, cone

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we are going to see if we can hit this ball off the cone. Watch – keep your hand open and hit it like this."

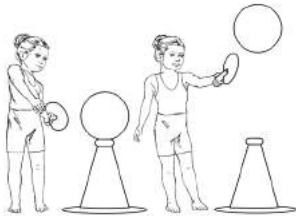
- Place the ball on the cone and hit it with an open hand or fist.
- Line athletes up opposite the cone to take turns hitting the ball and bringing it back.
- OK, now you do it. Good job!



## Side Striking *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, cones; paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Athletes, now we are going to use a racket to hit the ball". Using a side-ways stance, encourage the child to strike a tossed ball with a junior size racket or bat.



- Look at the ball. See it coming to you.
- Now swing the racket. Great, you got a hit!
- Keep practicing being sure all children get several turns.

## Obstacle Course *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

**PURPOSE** Body awareness, general fitness, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance), and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we get to run the obstacle course! Watch and follow me!" Show the athletes how to go through the obstacle course. Then assist athletes in moving through course.



## Obstacle Course *(continued)*

### Station 1: Jump on Dots

- Arrange 10 dots in zigzag pattern, close to one another.
- Athlete will bunny hop on two feet from dot to dot.
- Athlete will jump to the right, then jump to the left, zigzagging down length of dots.

### Station 2: Throw Bean Bag Through Target (basket, hoop)

Athlete will throw bean bag or small ball to a hoop held parallel to the floor or to a bucket.

- Progress to throwing a bean bag or small ball through target (hoop on cone or block) from distance of 3 feet.
- Use floor marker to show where athlete stands.
- Move distance closer or further away, depending on skill of athlete.

### Station 3: Jump Over Hurdles

- Make hurdle using two cones and one dowel or stick. Place dowel through holes in cone.
- Adjust height as needed for athletes. Always start the bar at the lowest height.
- Encourage athlete to jump using two feet, over the bar, landing on two feet.



**Station 4: Walk on Balance Beam**

- Athletes will independently walk the length of the beam, alternating steps.
- Add various ways to move down the beam for advance athletes (backwards, sideways, change directions – forward to backwards).
- Add length to the beam by using multiple beams.

**Station 5: Run to Finish Line (through ribbon)**

- When athlete steps off beam, he/she should run to the finish line. Teach athletes to run through the line.
- Introduce this skill several times as some may stop, not wanting to hit or touch the finish line.
- The finish line is a long ribbon. To set the finish line, attach the ribbon to one side of the area while holding the other end of the ribbon in your hand (or have another person hold the other end).
- As the athlete touches the ribbon, let it go.

**Closing Sports Song** (5 min.)

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with.

**EXPLAIN** “It is time to end Young Athletes. Let’s sing If You’re Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do.”

- SING**
- If you’re happy and you know it, wiggle your arms (flap like a bird’s wings, walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you’re happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you’re happy and you know it wiggle your arms.



## Opening Sports Song *(4 min.)*

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class roll the ball, roll the ball, roll the ball. The athletes in our class roll the ball - all through the day.
- The athletes in our class jump up and down, up and down, up and down. The athletes in our class jump up and down - all through the town.

## Side Striking *(6 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1.

## Beginning Hockey *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, small foam ball, dowel, junior sized hockey stick or junior size plastic golf club

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills, and eye hand coordination

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Today we are going to learn to play some sports. First we are going to play hockey." Place a large ball on the ground.

- Stand in your sideways stance.
- Hold the stick (hockey stick, golf club) with both hands.
- Now hit the ball
- Great!





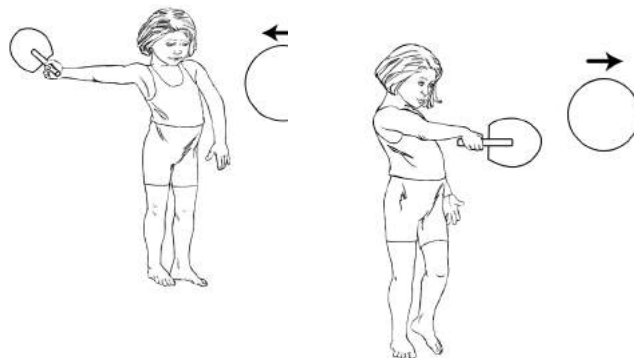
## Beginning *(6 min.)* Tennis/Softball

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, cones; paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills and eye hand coordination

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now we are going to play tennis/softball.” Place a large ball on a cone and use floor markers to help athletes learn how to stand sideways.

- Now stand sideways and hold the paddle/racket with one hand.
- Hit the ball with your paddle/racket.



## Bridges/Tunnels *(4 min.)*

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “OK, Now we are going to play tunnels and bridges. First let’s make our tunnel!” If physically able, have one athlete bend forward so that hands and feet are on the ground to form bridges and tunnels. Encourage other athletes to crawl (inchworm, walk) under tunnel or bridge.



## Bridges/Tunnels *(continued)*

### Tunnels

"Who can bend like this to make a tunnel? (Hands and feet on ground, bottom up making tunnel). Awesome, he/she made a tunnel. Now, who can go under his/her tunnel? Great! After you go under the tunnel, you make a tunnel right next to him/her! Great, now our tunnel is even bigger!"

- One athlete forms a tunnel by touching the ground with his/her feet and hands or by getting down onto hands and knees.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the tunnel.
- Once they go under the tunnel, have each athlete extend the tunnel (by forming a tunnel next to the person who has already made a tunnel).

### Bridges

"Ok! Now we are going to play bridges. Who can bend like this to make a tunnel? (Sit on ground. Place hands/feet flat on ground.) Push bottom off ground. Great! Now let's make a bridge and go under the bridge!"

- One athlete forms a bridge by sitting with his/her hands and feet flat on the ground and pushing his/her bottom off the ground.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the bridge.
- To make it easier have athletes place their feet or hands on wall or an object and other athletes go under.

## Closing Sports Song *(4 min.)*

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.



## Opening Sports Song (2 min.)

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** Wheels on the Bus Melody

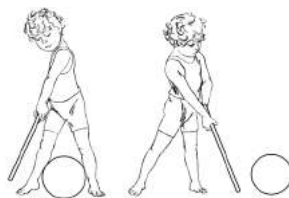
- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch), touch their toes, touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes - all through the day.
- The pitcher on the team throws the ball, throws the ball, throws the ball. The pitcher on the team throws the ball - all through the game.

## Side Striking (5 min.)

Repeat Activity from Day 1 and 2.

## Beginning Hockey (5 min.)

Repeat Activity from Day 2.



## Beginning Tennis/Softball (5 min.)

Repeat Activity from Day 2.



**Kicking** (4 min.)

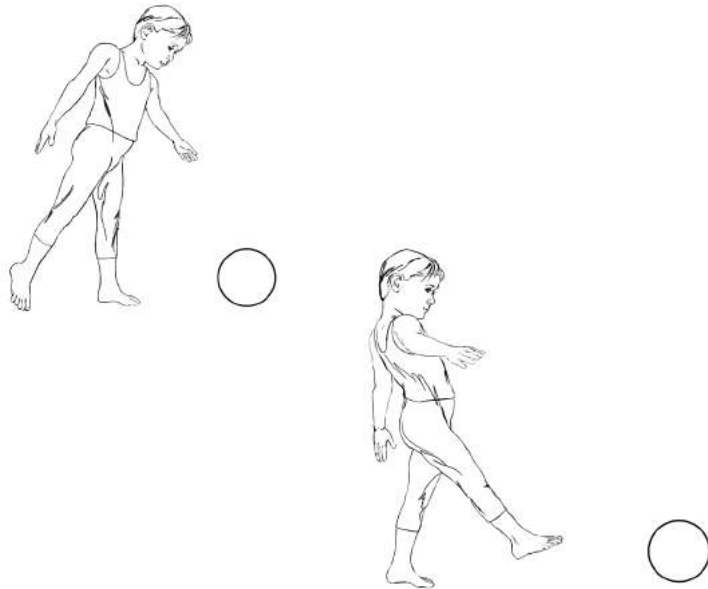
**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills. Introduction of Week 7 skills.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Athletes, now we are going to kick the ball. Watch me!"

**Tips:** The child's eyes should be focused on the ball; Non-kicking foot should be positioned just behind and to the side of the ball; The kicking leg should bend at the knee for a back swing and should follow through; The opposite arm swings forward as the ball is kicked.

- Stand behind the ball. Now kick it.
- Have the child kick the ball towards you with his/her preferred foot.
- Wonderful. Now get the ball and give it to (child) to kick.



## Obstacle Course (7 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now we get to run the obstacle course and practice some things we have learned! Watch and follow me!” Show the athletes how to go through the course. Then assist athletes in moving through course.

### Station 1: Throwing for distance and accuracy

- Set up markers about 3 feet apart.
- Have the child throw the ball at the marker.
- Encourage the child to throw the ball at the markers.

### Station 2: Frog Hoppin’

- Place round floor markers so that they are a distance that the athlete can jump.
- Have athletes hop from one marker to the next.

### Station 3: Walk on Balance Beam

- Athletes will independently walk the length of the beam, alternating steps.
- Add various ways to move down the beam for advance athletes (backwards, sideways, change directions – forward to backwards).
- Add length to the beam by using multiple beams.



**Station 4: Jump Over Hurdles**

- Make hurdle using two cones and one dowel or stick. Place dowel through holes in cone.
- Adjust height as needed for athletes. Always start the bar at the lowest height.
- Encourage athlete to jump using two feet, over the bar, landing on two feet.

**Station 5: Run to Finish Line (through ribbon)**

- When athlete steps off beam, he/she should run to the finish line. Teach athletes to run through the line.
- Introduce this skill several times as some may stop, not wanting to hit or touch the finish line.
- The finish line is a long ribbon. To set the finish line, attach the ribbon to one side of the area while holding the other end of the ribbon in your hand (or have another person hold the other end).

**Closing Sports Song** (2 min.)

Repeat the song used in Day 1 and 2 to end the Lesson.



**You have finished Week Six: Striking Lessons.  
You can now begin Week Seven: Kicking.**



# Kicking WEEK SEVEN

**THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES** games and activities to help children develop kicking skills, flexibility, general fitness, strength, body awareness, coordination, spatial concepts, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).



***Special Olympics***  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (follow directions, sing along, imitation of motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class can jump, jump, jump, jump, jump, jump, jump. The athletes in our class jump, jump, jump - all through the day.
- The tennis player on the team can swing their racket, swing their racket, swing their racket. The tennis player on the team can swing their racket - all through the game.



**Kicking** (5 min.)

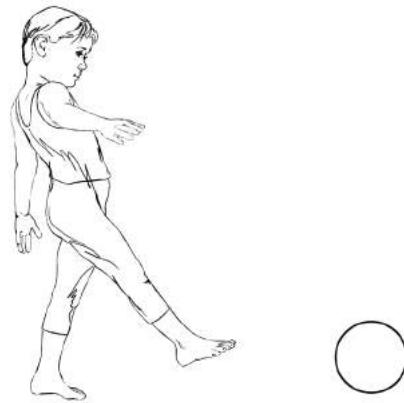
**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills. Introduction of Week 7 skills.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Athletes, now we are going to kick the ball. Watch me!"

**Tips:** The child's eyes should be focused on the ball; Non-kicking foot should be positioned just behind and to the side of the ball; The kicking leg should bend at the knee for a back swing and should follow through; The opposite arm swings forward as the ball is kicked.

- Stand behind the ball. Now kick it.
- Have the child kick the ball towards you with his/her preferred foot.
- Wonderful. Now get the ball and give it to (child) to kick.



## Penalty Kick Prep *(6 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating, motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now let’s get ready to play soccer! We are going to run and then kick the ball. Watch!” Place a ball on the ground.

- Walk to the ball and kick it.
- Have children repeat activity, progressing to running and kicking.
- Great! Let’s do it again.

## Kicking for Distance *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball, playground ball, cones, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Let’s see how far we can kick the ball. Which marker can you kick the ball past? “

- Encourage athletes to walk or run up to the ball and kick it for distance by having them kick a ball past various markers.
- Great job! Can you kick the ball past the cone (blue maker, etc.)



**Kicking for Accuracy** (6 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball; cones, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements, counting)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "In soccer you score goals by kicking the ball through the cones. Now let's try to make a goal in a soccer game." Place a ball on the ground.

- Encourage child to walk or run up to the ball to kick to toward a goal or between 2 cones.
- Great – let's see how many goals the team has scored (count as each child scores a goal).

**Closing Sports Song** (4 min.)

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with.

**EXPLAIN** "It is time to end Young Athletes. Let's sing If You're Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do."

- SING**
- If you're happy and you know it, wiggle your arms ( flap like a bird's wings, walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you're happy and you know it wiggle your arms.

## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** Wheels on the Bus Melody

- The runners in our class run, run run (run in place). The runners in our class run, run, run - all through the day.
- The hockey players in our class strike the puck, strike the puck, strike the puck (make hockey motion from week 6). The hockey players in our class strike the puck - all through the game.

## Penalty Kick Prep (4 min.)

Repeat Activity from Day 1.

## Kicking for Distance (5 min.)

Repeat Activity from Day 1.

## Kicking for Accuracy (5 min.)

Repeat Activity from Day 1.



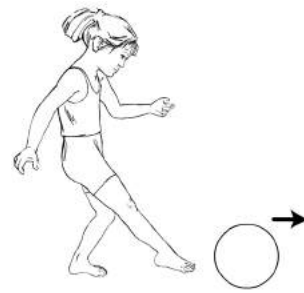
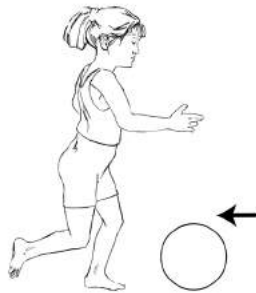
**Kickball** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

**PURPOSE** Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitation of motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now let’s kick the ball as I roll it to you. Remember to keep your eyes on the ball!”

- Roll or kick a ball toward an athlete and encourage him/her to kick the moving ball toward you or a moving target.
- Have the athlete bring the ball back to you.
- That was a great job. Now let’s do it again with (child).
- Give athletes more opportunity to practice by assigning adults to small groups.



**Give and Go** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball, playground ball; cones

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills, eye hand coordination, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements, counting)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Let's play soccer. I am going to kick the ball to you and you kick it between the cones."

- Kick a ball toward the athlete and encourage him/her to kick the moving ball toward a goal or between 2 cones.
- You scored a goal! Let's keep count and see how many goals our team can score.
- an object and other athletes go under.



**Closing Sports Song** (3 min.)

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.

## Opening Sports Song *(4 min.)*

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

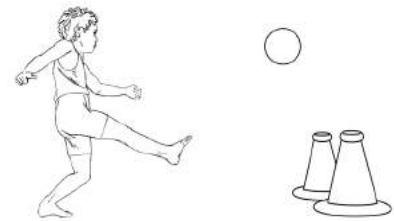
- The soccer player in our class kick the ball, kick the ball, kick the ball. The soccer players in our class kick the ball - all through the day.
- The pitcher on the team throws the ball, throws the ball, throws the ball. The pitcher on the team throws the ball - all through the game.

## Kicking for Distance *(5 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 1 and 2.

## Kicking for Accuracy *(5 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 2.



## Kickball *(5 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 2.

## Give and Go *(4 min.)*

Repeat the Activity from Day 2.





## Bridges and Tunnels *(4 min.)*

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “OK, Now we are going to play tunnels and bridges. First let’s make our tunnel!” If physically able, have one athlete bend forward so that hands and feet are on the ground to form bridges and tunnels. Encourage other athletes to crawl (inchworm, walk) under tunnel or bridge.

### Tunnels

“Who can bend like this to make a tunnel? (Hands and feet on ground, bottom up making tunnel). Awesome, he/she made a tunnel. Now, who can go under his/her tunnel? Great! After you go under the tunnel, you make a tunnel right next to him/her! Great, now our tunnel is even bigger!”

- One athlete forms a tunnel by touching the ground with his/her feet and hands or by getting down onto hands and knees.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the tunnel.
- Once they go under the tunnel, have each athlete extend the tunnel (by forming a tunnel next to the person who has already made a tunnel).

### Bridges

“Ok! Now we are going to play bridges. Who can bend like this to make a tunnel? (Sit on ground. Place hands/feet flat on ground.) Push bottom off ground. Great! Now let’s make a bridge and go under the bridge!”

- One athlete forms a bridge by sitting with his/her hands and feet flat on the ground and pushing his/her bottom off the ground.
- The other athletes crawl, scoot, under the bridge.
- To make it easier have athletes place their feet or hands on wall or an object and other athletes go under.



**Closing Sports Song** (2 min.)

Repeat the song you used in Day 1 and 2 to end the Lesson.



**You have finished Week Seven: Kicking Lessons.  
You can now begin Week Eight: Review of Skills as Sports.**

# Review of Skills as Sports WEEK EIGHT

---

## **THIS SET OF LESSONS PROVIDES**

athletes the chance to apply  
the skills developed over the  
course of the Young Athletes™  
program to sports games.



***Special Olympics***  
**young athletes™**

[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## Overview

**Lesson Plans (Day One, Day Two, Day Three) provide details to help you plan and carry out the Young Athletes program with a group of children between the ages of 2 and 7 years old.**

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Time:** Young Athletes is implemented with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Time estimates are provided to guide completion of each lesson in 30 minutes. However, the pace and length of the lesson should be matched to the needs, interests, ages, and skills of the young athletes in your group.

**Sequence:** There are three lessons for each skill area labeled Day One, Day Two and Day Three. Lessons within the skill area are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Resources:** The Lesson Plan Summary Cards include an outline of the activities, list of equipment needed, and page numbers to find the activity descriptions. The cards, Young Athletes Activity Guide, Suggestions from Teachers, and training videos are included in the online Toolkit (see website below).

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and play one or two games with their child at home before the next session. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing a family training session. Be sure they have access to the Activity Guide and Videos for more information.

**>> See the Young Athletes Toolkit online at:**  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

# Review of Skills as Sports

WEEK DAY

eight

1

2

3

## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**PURPOSE** Start each Young Athletes class with a gathering/warm-up song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This will help them warm-up, serve as a gathering activity, create body awareness and support adaptive skills (follow directions, sing along, imitation of motor movements).

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

**SING** **Wheels on the Bus melody:**

- The athletes in our class can run run, run, run, run, run. The athletes in our class run run run - all through the day.
- The swimmer on the team can swim, swim, swim, swim, swim, swim. The swimmer on the team can swim, swim, swim - all through the pool



## Running Styles *(4 min.)*

**PURPOSE** Strength, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movement)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “This week we are going to practice different sports. Today we are going to do sports that you would see in track and field. First let’s try running different ways.”

Use a whistle to signal when athletes should listen to you and change their running style.

- Stomp slow/fast
- Run slow/fast
- Run backwards
- High knees runs (raise knees high when running)
- Tiptoe walking

Or, create a foot race (competition) using different running styles movements)



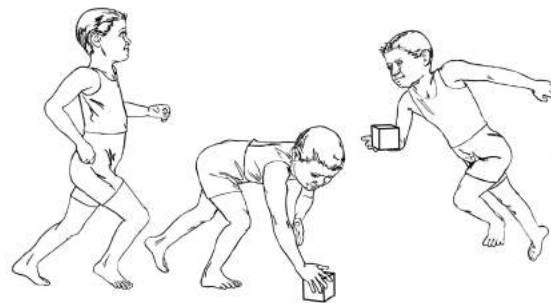
## Run and Carry Relay *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Bean bag, floor markers placed at equal intervals around the floor.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Set up floor markers around the room, then show each child a marker to stand on. Give a bean bag to the child at the first marker. "Now let's play a running game."

- (Child at first marker/home base) is going to run from home to the second marker.
- He/she is then going to hand the bean bag to (child at second marker) and he/she will run to the next marker and give the bean bag to (child at third marker.).
- We will keep going around the room until (child on last marker) gets the beanbag and runs "home" to me.
- Ready, set, go.



## Jumping High (5 min.)

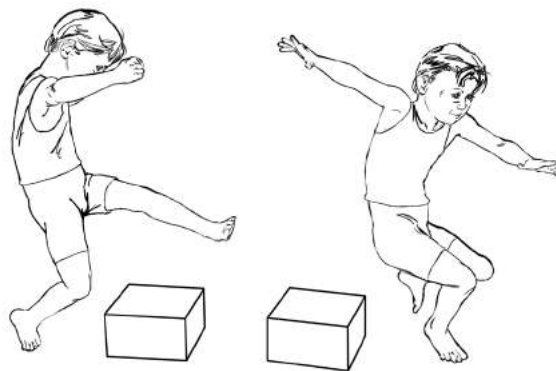
**EQUIPMENT** Floor markers, dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam/rope, and Blocks should be spread around the room. so that athletes can have a chance to jump over the various pieces.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now we are going to do the high jump. We’re going to try to jump OVER our equipment.”

**Tips:** Children can jump onto or off of equipment if their feet cannot clear the floor; If they are jumping off of the equipment as opposed to over it, challenge them to reach for an object (ex: scarf) while doing so.

- Jump onto the equipment first– THEN see if you can jump OVER it!
- Now move to the next piece of equipment and try it again.





**Hurdles** (5 min.)

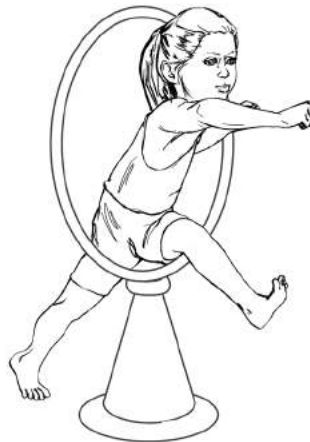
**EQUIPMENT** One dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle). Make hurdle using two cones and one dowel or stick. Place dowel through holes in cone.

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, adaptive skills (following directions, imitating of motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Set up several hurdles for athletes. Always start the bar at the lowest height. Adjust height as needed for athletes. "Now we are going to jump over hurdles."

- Encourage athlete to jump using two feet, over the bar, landing on two feet.
- After everyone has jumped over the lowest height, raise the dowel. Repeat.

For more of a challenge (optional) set up 2 hurdles several feet apart. "Now that everyone had jumped over the stick, let's see if you can jump over 2 in a row like this. Jump over first one, walk to the next one and then jump over that one."



## Throwing for Distance and Accuracy *(5 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Small foam ball, floor markers

**PURPOSE** Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Set up markers (e.g. stars) about 3 feet apart. Have the child throw the ball at the marker. Encourage the child to throw the ball at the markers.

- Now we are going to throw the ball at the first star/marker.
- Great – now go and get to and throw to the second star/marker.
- Wow – can you throw it to the third star/marker?

## Closing Sports Song *(4 min.)*

**PURPOSE** End each Young Athletes class with a closing/cool-down song with motions. Use a common melody and motions that children have done before or are familiar with. This builds body awareness and adaptive skills (following directions, singing along, imitation of motor movements) and helps transition to the next activity.

**EXPLAIN** “Let’s end Young Athletes with a song, If You are Happy and You Know It. Sing along with me and do what I do.”

- SING AND DEMONSTRATE**
- If you’re happy and you know it, wiggle your arms (flap like a bird’s wings, walk around with arms outstretched)
  - If you’re happy and you know it then your face will really show it if you’re happy and you know it wiggle your arms.



# Review of Skills as Sports

WEEK DAY

eight

1

2

3

## Opening Sports Song (3 min.)

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song. Sing along with me and do what I do."

### SING AND DEMONSTRATE **Wheels on the Bus Melody**

- The athletes in our class roll the ball, roll the ball, roll the ball. The athletes in our class roll the ball - all through the day.
- The athletes in our class jump up and down, up and down, up and down. The athletes in our class jump up and down - all through the game.

## Balance Beam (4 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Balance beam/rope.

**PURPOSE** Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Athletes – today we are going to play more sports games. First we are going to do the balance beam – this is part of gymnastics. OK athletes, I want you to look at what I do with MY body and try to do it with your own. I want you to COPY what I do. Look at me, see how I am:"

- Standing on one foot on the balance beam/rope, standing with one foot in front of the other on the balance beam/rope, standing on tip toes on the balance beam/rope, and standing on my heels on the balance beam/rope...You try!
- Now try it with your arms out/in/up/down, or eyes closed/open.
- Encourage athletes to try these new balancing techniques while manipulating their bodies so that their muscles will need to counteract shifts in weight. Shifting of body weight to engage balance muscles is an important functional and sports related skill.



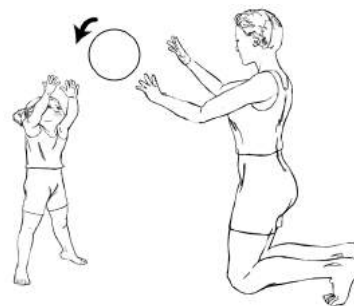
## High Ball Catch *(4 min.)*

**EQUIPMENT** Large beach ball, slow motion balls

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, strength, general fitness, motor skills (grasping, catching, & holding), body awareness, proprioception, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements). Use a large beach ball or slow motion balls to introduce catching from a short distance.

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** Kneel facing the child who is about 3 feet away. "OK athletes, we're going to practice catching this BIG ball!"

- Gently toss a beach ball or fairly large ball to the child and encourage catching the ball with fingers pointing up (because it's from above the waist). Be sure the toss is done from the chest level and with the fingers pointing up. "See how I am tossing the ball to (athlete) with my fingers pointing UP? Catch the ball with your fingers pointing UP!"
- Vary distances and heights depending on child's physical abilities. Progress by moving further away and mixing up high and low tosses. "Great job!! Now I'm going to back up a little bit and see if we can do this!"
- Give the athletes as much practice as possible while being sure to incorporate all children. Waiting children can be cheering, or tossing an imaginary ball, or tossing it to themselves if there are enough.



# Review of Skills as Sports

WEEK DAY

eight

1

2

3

## Overhand Throwing (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Small foam ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, motor skills

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** This uses the same techniques as two hand throwing but encourage the child to use one hand, bringing his/her arm back and forward the throw the small ball towards you. "Now let's throw this smaller ball like I am doing with just one hand."

- Stand in your sideways stance.
- Bring the hand holding the ball up over your head.
- Bend your arm at the elbow.
- Now throw the ball.
- That was great! Good job. Let's do it again.

## Handball (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, cone

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements).

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we are going to see if we can hit this ball off the cone. Watch – keep your hand open and hit it like this."

- Place the ball on the cone and hit it with an open hand or fist.
- Line athletes up opposite the cone to take turns hitting the ball and bringing it back.
- OK, now you do it. Good job!



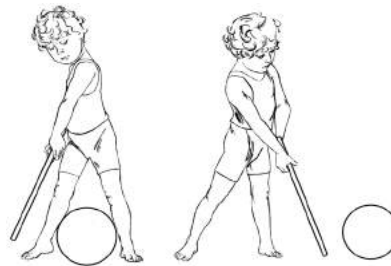
**Beginning Hockey** (6 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, small foam ball, dowel, junior sized hockey stick or junior size plastic golf club

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills, and eye hand coordination

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Today we are going to learn to play some sports. First we are going to play hockey." Place a large ball on the ground.

- Stand in your sideways stance.
- Hold the stick (hockey stick, golf club) with both hands.
- Now hit the ball
- Great!

**Closing Sports Song** (3 min.)

Repeat the song used in Day 1 to end the Lesson.

# Review of Skills as Sports

WEEK DAY

eight

1

2

3

## Opening Sports Song (4 min.)

**EXPLAIN** "Let's start Young Athletes with our Sports Song (Wheels on the Bus melody). Sing along with me and do what I do."

### **SING AND DEMONSTRATE** Wheels on the Bus Melody

- The athletes in our class touch their toes (bend and stretch); touch their toes; touch their toes. The athletes in our class touch their toes, - all through the day.
- The pitcher on the team throws the ball, throws the ball, throws the ball. The pitcher on the team throws the ball - all through the town.

## Beginning (6 min.) Tennis/Softball

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, cones; paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills and eye hand coordination

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Now we are going to play tennis/softball." Place a large ball on a cone and use floor markers to help athletes learn how to stand sideways.

- Now stand sideways and hold the paddle/racket with one hand.
- Hit the ball with your paddle/racket.



**Kickball** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

**PURPOSE** Body Awareness, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills (run, jump, throw, balance) and adaptive skills (following directions, imitation of motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now we are going to practice our soccer skills! First we are going to kick the ball.”

- Roll or kick a ball toward an athlete and encourage him/her to kick the moving ball toward you or a moving target.
- Have the athlete bring the ball back to you.
- That was a great job. Now let’s do it again with (child).
- Give athletes more opportunity to practice by assigning adults to small groups.

**Penalty Kick Prep** (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, flexibility, general fitness, motor skills, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating, motor movements)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** “Now we are going to practice our penalty kick! We are going to run and then kick the ball. Watch!” Place a ball on the ground.

- Walk to the ball and kick it.
- Have children repeat activity, progressing to running and kicking.
- Great! Let’s do it again.





# Review of Skills as Sports

WEEK DAY

eight

1

2

3

## Give and Go (5 min.)

**EQUIPMENT** Beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball, playground ball; cones

**PURPOSE** Motor coordination, general fitness, flexibility, motor skills, eye hand coordination, and adaptive skills (following directions, imitating motor movements, counting)

**DEMONSTRATE AND LEAD** "Let's play soccer. I am going to kick the ball to you and you kick it between the cones."

- Kick a ball toward the athlete and encourage him/her to kick the moving ball toward a goal or between 2 cones.
- You scored a goal! Let's keep count and see how many goals our team can score.

## Closing Sports Song (4 min.)

Repeat the song used in Day 1 and Day 2 to end the Lesson.



### CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finished Week Eight: Review of Skills as Sports and the Young Athletes program. Plan for a culminating event with your local Special Olympics Program. You can repeat or adapt the Lessons to help children practice their skills and gain more confidence, too. See the online toolkit for Suggestions from Teachers and other resources at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Young Athletes™ is an innovative sports play program for children aged 2-7 years old. The program includes active games, songs and other play activities that help children develop skills. The key skill areas are: foundational skills; walking and running; balance and jumping; trapping and catching; throwing; striking; and kicking.

**Lesson Plans:** Detailed Lesson Plans give adult leaders an 8 week structure for introducing the activities and helping children practice skills while having fun. The Lessons should be led with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Recommended times for each activity allow leaders to complete the Lesson Plans in 30 minutes. However, we encourage you to adjust the pace and length of time to meet the needs, interests, ages, and skills of your group.

**Sequence:** For each week there are 3 days of Lesson Plans for a total of 24 days. Lessons are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

**Summary Cards:** Lesson Summary Cards are provided as prompts for teachers and coaches to use while teaching. They also serve as a resource for families to learn about their child's experience in the program. The Summary Cards also reference the online videos and the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide, an illustrated and simple guide for both leaders and families to use.

**Adults Needed:** Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

**Playing at home:** Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and/or play some of the games with their child at home each week. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing family demonstration sessions, as well as referring them to the Activity Guide and online videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes).

Favazza, P.C., Zeisel, S., Parker, R., & Leboeuf, L. (2011).  
Young Athletes Curriculum. Special Olympics International, Washington, DC.

## WEEK DAY one 1 Foundational Skills Lesson Summary Card

**Equipment:** Scarves (enough for each child to have one); floor markers, balls, bean bags, cones, hoops (distributed around room). All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

### 5 min. Opening Sports Song

Wheels on the Bus melody

*The athletes in our class touch their toes...*

*The runner on the team goes run run run...*

*The swimmer in the water goes swim swim swim...*

### 5 min. I Spy

**Equipment:** floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls

### 5 min. Scarf Game

**Equipment:** Scarf for each child

### 5 min. Inchworm Wiggle

### 5 min. Bridges and Tunnels

### 5 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

*If you're happy and you know it, clap and stomp*

*(wiggle your body; fly like a bird: arms outstretched)*

*If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show*

*it if you're happy and you know it clap and stomp,*

*(wiggle your body; fly like a bird: arms outstretched).*

**Tip:** Use a variety of body movements.

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Foundational Skills, pages 2-5) and other resources at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

## WEEK DAY

one

2

### Foundational Skills Lesson Summary Card

**Equipment:** Bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, balance beam, ribbon, floor markers. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

#### 5 min. **Opening Sports Song with Scarf**

Wheels on the Bus melody

*The athletes in our class touch their toes...*

*The player on the court jumps up and down...*

*The athlete on the team throws the scarf...*

#### 5 min. **I Spy: Bunny Hop**

**Equipment:** floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam, blocks

#### 4 min. **Inchworm Wiggle**

#### 6 min. **Bridges and Tunnels**

#### 7 min. **Obstacle Course**

Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

#### 3 min. **Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Foundational Skills, pages 2-5) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

## WEEK DAY

one

3

### Foundational Skills Lesson Summary Card

**Equipment:** Whistle, bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, balance beam, ribbon, floor markers. Equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

#### 5 min. **Opening Sports Song with Bunny Hop**

Wheels on the Bus melody

*The athletes in our class touch their toes...*

*The player on the court jumps up and down...*

*The athlete on the team throws the scarf...*

#### 3 min. **I Spy: Stomp/Tiptoes**

**Equipment:** floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam, blocks.

#### 4 min. **Bridges and Tunnels**

#### 5 min. **Follow the Leader: Side Steps, Follow a Path**

#### 5 min. **Running Styles**

Introduction to Week 2

#### 7 min. **Obstacle Course**

Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

#### 3 min. **Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Foundational Skills, pages 2-5; Walking and Running, pages 6-8) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****two****1****Walking and Running Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Whistle, floor markers (distributed around room to create a path), tambourine or drum. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**5 min. Opening Sports Song**

Wheels on the Bus melody

*The athletes in our class swing their arms...**The runner on the team runs real fast...**The runner on the team runs real slow...***5 min. Follow the Leader and Follow a Path****Equipment:** tambourine or drum, floor markers**4 min. Side Stepping****5 min. Running Styles**

- Stomp slow/fast
- Run slow/fast
- Run backwards
- High knees run (raise knees high when running)
- Tiptoe walk

**6 min. Bridges and Tunnels****5 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Walking and Running, pages 6-8) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****two****2****Walking and Running Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Whistle, bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), balance beam, one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, ribbon, floor markers. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**5 min. Opening Sports Song with Scarf**

Wheels on the Bus melody

**5 min. Follow the Leader**

With Side Steps, Follow the Path, Bunny Hop, Inch Worm

**6 min. Run and Carry****Equipment:** Floor markers, hoop on floor with balls or bean bags in it, hoop on block for target**4 min. Running Styles****7 min. Obstacle Course**

Set Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

- Jump on Dots
- Throw Bean Bag Through Target (hoop)
- Step/Jump Over Hurdles
- Walk on Balance Beam.
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

**3 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Walking and Running, pages 6-8) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****two****3****Walking and Running Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Whistle, bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), balance beam, one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, ribbon, floor markers. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**3 min. Opening Sports Song with Bunny Hop**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

**6 min. Step and Jump (Introduction to Week 3)**  
**Equipment:** balance beams, ropes, floor markers

**6 min. Run and Carry**

**5 min. "Coach Says"**  
Introduction to Week 3

**7 min. Obstacle Course**  
Set Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

- Jump on Dots
- Throw Bean Bag Through Target (hoop)
- Step/Jump Over Hurdles
- Walk on Balance Beam.
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

**3 min. Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

**>>** See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Walking and Running, pages 6-8; Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11) and videos at:  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****three****1****Balance and Jumping Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Floor Markers (distributed around room); slow motion balls/balls, balance beams/ropes. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**5 min. Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody  
*The runner on the team goes run run, run...*  
*The athletes in our class walk real slow...*  
*The player on the court goes jump jump jump...*

**5 min. "Coach Says"**

**4 min. Balance Beam/Ropes**

**5 min. Foot Trap**  
**Equipment:** slow motion ball

**6 min. Step and Jump**

**5 min. Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

**>>** See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****three****2****Balance and Jumping Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Floor markers (distributed around room), dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, slow motion balls/balls, balance beams/rope. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **“Coach Says” (with a Balance Beam/Rope)**

5 min. **Rolling & Trapping**

4 min. **Foot Trap**  
*Tip:* Use smaller balls if larger ones are too difficult.

5 min. **Jumping High**  
*Tip:* Children can jump onto or off of equipment if their feet cannot clear the floor. For instance they can jump over the bean bag, or on top of it.

5 min. **Frog Hoppin’/Leapin’ Lizards**

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You’re Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****three****3****Balance and Jumping Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Floor markers, dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, slow motion balls/balls, balance beam/rope, blocks, scarves. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

2 min. **Opening Sports Song with Leapin’ Lizards**  
Wheels on the Bus melody  
*The athletes on the team leap over the mark...  
The player on the court runs forward and back...  
The athletes in our class leap on the mark...*

3 min. **“Coach Says” (with a Bean Bag)**  
Introduction to Week 4

4 min. **Jumping High**

5 min. **Rolling & Trapping**  
Introduction to Week 4

4 min. **Foot Trap**

5 min. **Frog Hoppin’/Leapin’ Lizards**

5 min. **Goalie Drill**  
**Equipment:** two cones to form each goal and slow motion ball

2 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You’re Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11; Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****four****1****Trapping and Catching Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Slow Motion balls/balls, pairs of cones to form goals (space between cones is goal), bean bags (one per child/pair). All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. **Rolling & Trapping**

5 min. **Goalie Drill**

5 min. **Big Ball**

5 min. **Bean Bag Catch**

5 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****four****2****Trapping and Catching Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Bean bags (one per child/pair if possible), pairs of cones to form goals, beach ball, slow motion balls. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. **Opening Sports Song with Leapin' Lizards**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. **Goalie Drill**

5 min. **Big Ball/Bean Bag Catch**  
(choose one)

6 min. **High Ball Catch**

6 min. **Bounce Catch**  
**Equipment:** large beach ball

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****four****3****Trapping and Catching Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Floor markers (distributed around room), Bean Bags (one for each child/pair), pairs of cones to form goals (the space in-between is the goal), slow motion balls/balls or beach balls (one for each child/pair). Equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**3 min. Opening Sports Song with Leapin' Lizards**

Wheels on the Bus melody

*The athletes on the team leap over the mark...*

*The player on the court runs forward and back...*

*The athletes in our class leap on the mark...*

**5 min. Bean Bag Catch/Throw**

Introducing Week 5 concept

**5 min. High Ball Catch**

**Equipment:** beach ball, slow motion balls

**5 min. Rolling**

Introducing Week 5 concept

**4 min. Bounce Catch****5 min. Two-Hand Underhand**

Introducing Week 5 concept

**3 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15; Throwing pages 16-19; Advanced Skills, pages 28-31) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****five****1****Throwing Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball, beanbag, floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**4 min. Opening Sports Song**

Wheels on the Bus melody

**5 min. Rolling**

**Equipment:** Slow motion ball, cones, floor markers next to cones

**5 min. Two-Hand Underhand****6 min. Underhand Toss (1 hand)**

**Equipment:** Small foam ball, beanbag

**6 min. Two-Hand Throwing (overhead)**

**Equipment:** slow motion ball

**4 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Throwing pages, 16-19) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)



**WEEK DAY****five****2****Throwing Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball, beanbag, floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

6 min. **Underhand Toss**  
**Equipment:** Small foam ball, beanbag

5 min. **Two-Hand Throwing (overhead)**  
**Equipment:** Slow motion ball

6 min. **Overhand Throwing**

6 min. **Throwing for Distance**

4 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Throwing, pages 16-19) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****five****3****Throwing Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – beach ball, small foam ball, and slow motion ball; bean bag, hoop, floor markers, cone. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **Review of Underhand Toss**  
**Equipment:** Small foam ball, beanbag, hoop (NOTE: Hoop can either be held by an adult or set up on the top of the cone).

4 min. **Two-Hand Throwing**

4 min. **Overhand Throwing**

4 min. **Throwing for Distance and Accuracy**  
**Equipment:** slow motion ball

4 min. **Ball tapping**  
**Equipment:** Beach ball or slow motion ball, mallets

4 min. **Handball**  
Introducing Week 6

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Throwing pages, 16-19; Striking, pages 20-23) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****six****1****Striking Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball, floor markers (distributed around room to create a path); bean bags, hoops, cones, balance beams (one long, one short); paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. **Ball Tapping**

5 min. **Handball**

6 min. **Side Striking**

6 min. **Obstacle Course**

Set Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

- Jump on Dots
- Throw Bean Bag Through Target (hoop)
- Step/Jump Over Hurdles
- Walk on Balance Beam.
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

4 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Striking, pages 20-23) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****six****2****Striking Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – beach ball, small foam ball and slow motion ball; paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat; cones; dowel, junior sized hockey stick or junior size plastic golf club. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

6 min. **Side Striking**

6 min. **Beginning Hockey**

6 min. **Beginning Tennis/Softball**

4 min. **Bridges/Tunnels**

4 min. **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Striking, pages 20-23; Foundation Skills, pages 2-5) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****six****3****Striking Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Beach ball, small foam ball, slow motion ball and junior size soccer ball; paddle, cones; dowel, junior sized hockey stick or plastic golf club; floor markers, hoop set-up on cone, balance beam. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**2 min. Opening Sports Song w/ Leapin' Lizards**

Wheels on the Bus melody

*The athletes on the team leap over the mark...*

*The player on the court runs forward and back...*

**5 min. Side Striking****5 min. Beginning Hockey****5 min. Beginning Tennis/Softball****4 min. Kicking**

Introduction to Week 7

**7 min. Obstacle Course**

Set up a 5 station course with floor markers , bean bags with hoop, hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, finish line.

- Throwing for distance and accuracy
- Frog Hoppin'
- Walk on Balance Beam
- Jump Over Hurdles
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

**2 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Striking, pages 20-23) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****seven****1****Kicking Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball; floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

**4 min. Opening Sports Song**

Wheels on the Bus melody

**5 min. Kicking****6 min. Penalty Kick Prep****5 min. Kicking for Distance****6 min. Kicking for Accuracy****4 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Kicking, pages 24-27) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****seven****2****Kicking Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or play-ground ball; floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

*3 min.* **Opening Sports Song w/ Leapin' Lizards**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

*4 min.* **Penalty Kick Prep**

*5 min.* **Kicking for Distance**

*5 min.* **Kicking for Accuracy**

*5 min.* **Kickball**

*5 min.* **Give and Go**

*3 min.* **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

**>>** See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Kicking, pages 24-27) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****seven****3****Kicking Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or play-ground ball; floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

*4 min.* **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

*5 min.* **Kicking for Distance**

*5 min.* **Kicking for Accuracy**

*5 min.* **Kickball**

*4 min.* **Give and Go**

*4 min.* **Bridges/Tunnels**

*3 min.* **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

**>>** See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Kicking, pages 24-27; Foundation Skills, pages 2-5) and videos at: [www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****eight****1****Review of Skills as Sports Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball; floor markers, cones, dowel, bean bags, hoops, balance beam/rope, and blocks. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

*3 min.* **Opening Sports Song w/ Leapin' Lizards**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

*4 min.* **Running Styles**

*5 min.* **Run and Carry Relay**  
Adapted from Week 2

*5 min.* **Jumping High**

*5 min.* **Hurdles**

*5 min.* **Throwing for Distance and Accuracy**  
From Week 5

*3 min.* **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide and videos at:  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY****eight****2****Review of Skills as Sports Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls – beach ball and small foam ball; cones, balance beam/rope; dowel, junior sized hockey stick, junior size plastic golf club. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

*3 min.* **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

*4 min.* **Balance Beam**  
From Week 3

*4 min.* **High Ball Catch**  
From Week 4

*5 min.* **Overhand Throwing**  
From Week 5

*5 min.* **Handball**  
From Week 6

*6 min.* **Beginning Hockey**  
From Week 6

*3 min.* **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide and videos at:  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)

**WEEK DAY**

**eight**

**3**

**Review of Skills as Sports Lesson  
Summary Card**

**Equipment:** Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball, playground ball; cone, floor markers; paddle or junior size racket. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

*4 min.* **Opening Sports Song**  
Wheels on the Bus melody

*6 min.* **Beginning Tennis/Softball**  
From Week 6

*5 min.* **Kickball**  
From Week 7

*5 min.* **Penalty Kick Prep**  
From Week 7

*6 min.* **Give and Go**

*4 min.* **Closing Sports Song**  
If You're Happy and You Know It

**>>** See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide and videos at:  
[www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes](http://www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes)