



Fast Facts about Special Olympics Chicago

- More than 7,500 athletes participate in Special Olympics Chicago. More than 70% of those athletes and families are at or below the poverty level.
- Special Olympics Chicago serves athletes in all 50 city wards.
- Currently, we have programs and athletes filtering in from approximately 150 Chicago Public Schools, 25 Chicago Park District locations and 23 Agencies, such as Misericordia. As the needs of our athletes grow, we continue to grow as an organization and in our programming.
- The first international Special Olympics Games were held on July 20, 1968 at Soldier Field in Chicago, with 1,000 athletes from the United States and Canada competing. Today, Special Olympics has grown to serve over 5 million athletes in 172 nations. We are very proud that the Special Olympics movement began here in the city of Chicago.
- In addition to our general programming, we offer additional opportunities outside sportbased competitions. Our athletes attend field trips, outings to the zoo, professional sporting events, holiday socials, etc. all hosted by our team and partners of SOC. Special Olympics also provides an arts program and a CAN-TV program.
- Did you know Special Olympics athletes compete year-round with event-filled calendars? Athletes must participate in an 8-week training program before participating in each sporting competition.
- Special Olympics Chicago offers 71 annual competitions in 22 different sports.