



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.

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



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

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