

Families are the bedrock of the Special Olympics mission.

Special Olympics Rhode Island: A place you can call home.

Everyone deserves an opportunity to have a full and enriching life. This is especially true for people with intellectual disabilities. But for many of them and their families, finding a supportive community in which to build that life is an elusive goal. Fortunately, Special Olympics offers the perfect opportunity to join a community of people who know the joys — and the challenges — of raising a child with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics Rhode Island is building a statewide community of families who share the enjoyment of helping our athletes grow and develop, and who help break down the everyday barriers that still exist. There is great power in a community of like-minded families, and even greater power when they speak in a unified voice for a better, richer and more dignified life for those with intellectual disabilities in our state.

We're more than just the Summer Games. A lot more.

Our popular annual Summer Olympic Games at URI is undeniably a signature event. But Special Olympics Rhode Island is actually a year-round organization with teams participating in 21 sports around the state.

We're able to provide these opportunities free of charge to our more than 3,000 athletes, thanks to the generosity of corporate and individual donors. As a self-funded, volunteer-based organization, we are particularly proud of that accomplishment, and of the fact that we remain one of the few state organizations able to offer that benefit. However, we need engaged and supportive families to make our work most effective for our athletes. That's where you come in!



Sports are only the beginning.

While athletic competition remains the foundation of our mission to enrich the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, Special Olympics Rhode Island is about more than just sports.

- Health screenings and education programs improve the lives of our athletes off the field.

Want to become more involved?

You support your athlete in his or her participation in Special Olympics Rhode Island programs and events. But you can have an even deeper connection with the program in a number of ways.

Coach – If you have expertise in a particular sport and would like to help our athletes in any of the 21 sports we offer, we'd love your help. You will find it to be an incredibly rewarding experience. Contact Chris Hopkins at **401-349-4900** or via email at **Chris@specialolympicsri.org**.

Volunteer – Each year, Special Olympics Rhode Island offers more than 1,600 sports training or athletic competitions, and hosts more than 40 local, regional and statewide tournaments and competitions. We always need assistance in running the events smoothly for our athletes. Contact Louise Miller at **401-349-4900** or via email at **Louise@specialolympicsri.org**.

Donate – We are almost entirely self-funded, so every donation helps make an athlete's life better. Contact Dennis DeJesus at **401-349-4900** or via email at **dennis@specialolympicsri.org** to discuss how your contribution can serve athletes with intellectual disabilities.

While we run many events like our annual Summer Olympic Games at URI, the lifeblood of our program is the teams that operate in several Rhode Island communities to provide opportunities for competition and social interaction. For example, our Unified Schools program — in which our athletes compete alongside athletes without intellectual disabilities — provides life-altering socialization for our athletes in ways seldom possible before.

Special Olympics
Rhode Island



I want to join Special Olympics Rhode Island!

I'd like my athlete to join Special Olympics Rhode Island. Please contact me to enroll in the program.

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

Email address _____

Athlete's name _____

Athlete's age _____ Athlete's gender _____

I want to be more involved. Please send me information on how I can help Special Olympics Rhode Island (check all boxes that apply).

- ☐ I want to coach a team.
- ☐ I want to volunteer at events.
- ☐ I want to make a donation to the organization.
- ☐ I want to donate goods and services to the organization.
- ☐ I want to serve on the Board of Directors.
- ☐ I want to serve as a Family Ambassador.

The Special Olympics Mission.

Special Olympics Rhode Island exists to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for individuals with intellectual disabilities by giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

The families of our athletes are our natural constituency; they are powerful advocates for a world in which people with intellectual disability have greater opportunity and are treated with greater respect than ever before.

Special Olympics Rhode Island
370 George Washington Highway
Smithfield, Rhode Island
02917

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Join our Family.

Our athletes — your loved ones — are the heart and soul of Special Olympics Rhode Island. Our programs provide critical opportunities to forge friendships, learn new skills, build confidence and discover independence through the social interaction of sports.

The families of Special Olympics athletes are part of a global network that reaches far beyond athletic competition. Here families find

- a support system of others with similar concerns, questions, and life experiences
- help identifying medical and community resources
- a place of belonging, celebration, and lifelong friendship

We encourage you to be an active member of our Special Olympics family — to participate fully in the enrichment of the lives of our athletes all over the state, and to advocate, when needed, for all Rhode Islanders with intellectual disabilities.

Be a Family Ambassador.

There is no better way for new families to find out what Special Olympics Rhode Island offers than to talk with families who have been in the program. If you want to learn more about what it's like to be a Special Olympics Rhode Island family feel free to contact Gerri Walter at **401-349-4900** or via email at gerri@specialolympicsri.org

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