

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Special Olympics BC Games returning to Kamloops

2017 SOBC Summer Games set to be held in Canada's Tournament Capital

Special Olympics BC (SOBC) is delighted to announce that the 2017 SOBC Summer Games will be coming to Kamloops July 6 to 8 next year. Hot on the heels of the successful 2015 SOBC Winter Games, Kamloops will be the first community to host back-to-back SOBC Winter and Summer Games.

The 2017 Provincial Games will be the largest SOBC Games to date, with almost 1,300 athletes with intellectual disabilities from all parts of the province and the Yukon expected to compete, supported by more than 350 volunteer coaches and mission staff. The Games will feature exciting competition and inspiring displays of sportsmanship in the 11 SOBC summer sports: 5- and 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball, bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming.

Competing in Provincial Games is a huge thrill in itself for the athletes, many of whom will have their first opportunities ever to travel with a team, and will experience the joy of challenging themselves to attain and exceed their athletic goals. The competitors will also be chasing the opportunity to advance to national and international levels of competition. Top performers in Kamloops will qualify for spots on Team BC for the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, during the 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics movement. Out east, the participants will compete to advance to the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games.

Kamloops has long been a key location for Special Olympics in B.C., as one of the first communities to offer Special Olympics programming in the province, beginning in 1983. This will be the fourth time Kamloops has hosted SOBC Provincial Games, and Canada's Tournament Capital was also the host of the first official SOBC Summer Games in 1986.

"We are so excited to go back to Kamloops where we know the people, the facilities, and what this city can do. We really feel these will be an exceptional set of Games," said Lois McNary, SOBC Vice President, Sport. "Provincial Games are such empowering and exciting experiences for our athletes, and we're confident that the incredible volunteers, sponsors, and venues in Kamloops will once again create amazing conditions in which the athletes will shine."

In 2017, the SOBC Games Opening Ceremony will be held on July 6, followed by competition throughout Friday July 7 and Saturday July 8. A teams-only Closing Ceremony will be held on July 8 and volunteer recognition breakfast on July 9.

More than 1,200 volunteers will be needed to help stage this inspiring event. Volunteer registration details and Games venues will be announced in the weeks to come. Learn more at www.sobcgameskamloops.ca and find SOBC on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety; the Games hashtags will be #SOBCGames #Kamloops2017.

About Special Olympics BC

Special Olympics BC is dedicated to providing individuals with intellectual disabilities opportunities to enrich their lives and celebrate personal achievement through positive sport experiences. In 57 communities around the province, we provide year-round training and competitive opportunities in 18 different sports to more than 4,600 athletes of all ages and abilities, thanks to the dedicated efforts of over 3,900 volunteers. For more information, please visit www.specialolympics.bc.ca, and find us on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety. To learn more about SOBC – Kamloops, visit www.sobckamloops.org and www.facebook.com/sobckamloops.

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