



Club Fit Training Manual

July 2021





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Disclaimer

If You Only Read One Thing in This Manual, Read THIS!

This manual is meant to be an ever-changing, LIVE resource. It is the idea that there will always be new things to add, and new ideas to be shared. I encourage each and every one of you as Club Fit Leaders to share your ideas with the Provincial Office, so they can be added to the manual, and shared with the rest of the Province.

Updates will not be sent out in paper form, they will be posted on the SOBC Website.



Special Olympics Background

History of Special Olympics & the Birth of Special Olympics Canada

The Special Olympics is a global movement of individuals who want to improve the lives of individuals with an intellectual disability. The organization first started in 1968, with the first ever International Special Olympics Summer Games in Chicago. Eunice Kennedy Shriver had noticed the unjust treatment of individuals with an intellectual disability and wanted to make a change. She recruited Dr. Frank Hayden, who was researching the effect of physical activity on individuals with an intellectual disability to help make her dream reality. Dr. Frank Hayden was troubled by the assumption that these individuals were unfit directly because of their disability. His research proved otherwise.

During the Summer Games in Chicago, Dr. Hayden called upon Harry "Red" Foster, a successful businessman and humanitarian to help with a Canadian presence. Harry went back to Canada and immediately started to establish a Canadian Special Olympics program. He ran the first regional Special Olympics Summer Games in Toronto in June 1969.

Using his research, Dr. Hayden fought hard to find ways to develop a national sports program for individuals with an intellectual disability. With the help of Harry "Red" Foster, his research and ideas were noticed by the Kennedy Foundation in Washington DC, leading to the creation of Special Olympics.

Recognized by Sport Canada as the main provider of sport training and competitive opportunities for individuals with an intellectual disability, Special Olympics Canada now reaches over 36,000 children youth and adults throughout Canada, with a global reach of over 4.4 million individuals currently training and/or competing in a Special Olympics program around the world.

Special Olympics British Columbia

Since its inception in 1980, Special Olympics British Columbia (SOBC), a registered charitable organization, has been providing high-quality sports programs, competitions, and other activity programs to meet the needs and interests of individuals with intellectual disabilities. It has been accomplishing this, while enriching lives and celebrating personal achievement through positive sports experiences. The 4,300 Special Olympics athletes, training in 18 sports across 57 communities have opportunities for competition at a local, provincial, national, and international level. Special Olympics athletes are not only benefitting from improved physical fitness and improved athletic ability. These athletes have opportunities to develop social skills and friendships, while achieving goals and improving their self-esteem. — enabling athletes to win in sport, and win at life.

SOBC Mission Statement:

Providing individuals with an intellectual disability the opportunity to enhance their life and celebrate personal achievement through positive sport experiences



Club Fit Introduction

Who is Club Fit For?

Club Fit is a fitness program for individuals ages 14+, designed specifically for Special Olympics athletes of varying skill levels to improve their health and fitness levels outside of their participation in other Special Olympic programs.

Younger athletes may participate, at the discretion of the coaches and Provincial Office. Athletes who register with Special Olympics can take part in Club Fit as their only program. However, it is encouraged that they also participate in a sport program.

CLUB FIT GOALS

1. PROVIDE CURRENT ATHLETES AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THEIR OVERALL HEALTH AND FITNESS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WITH A QUALITY PROGRAM THAT IS ADDITIONAL TO TRADITIONAL SPORT PROGRAMS
2. HELP NEW ATHLETES (OR ATHLETES THAT NO LONGER PARTICIPATE IN SPORT PROGRAMS) IMPROVE THEIR OVERALL HEALTH, WELLNESS AND FITNESS THROUGHOUT THEIR ENTIRE LIFE.

What is Club Fit?

Club Fit is part of Special Olympic BC's long-term athlete development model. It aims to improve athletes' overall wellness by helping athletes optimize potential and provide lifelong activity opportunities.

Club Fit aims to set standards for fitness programs for Special Olympics athletes in British Columbia, and also provide a growing resource of materials. These materials can be used by sport coaches, as part of their team or individual training programs. The Club Fit program provides flexible resources that can be combined by program leaders in numerous ways to achieve a high-quality program that meets all athletes' fitness goals. The resources will grow over time — but with your help! You are encouraged to send your ideas (games, recipes, exercises, stretches) to the Provincial Office, to share with others in the Special Olympics BC community.

It is beneficial that coaches and volunteers have a background in sport, kinesiology and personal training. Club Fit leaders must have a background in one of the above. This helps to ensure the quality of the program, as well as ensure that if there are form abnormalities or injuries, the Club Fit leader can manage them accordingly. If there are concerns or questions about being a Club Fit leader, please contact the Sport Coordinator Health.



Designing Club Fit Sessions

Program Requirements

Each Club Fit session is required to have the following main components:

WARM-UP

STRENGTH

COOL-DOWN

NUTRITION / MENTAL TRAINING

CARDIO

FUNCTIONAL TESTING

The following sections will provide examples and explain the importance of these sections. Other requirements of running a program include:

INSURED LOCATION

- If the location is not insured, please contact your Local Coordinator. The Club Fit program cannot start until the location has been insured under Special Olympics BC's insurance provider. You will receive confirmation through a copy of the insurance document, which can be kept with your Emergency Action Plan.

HAVE FUN!

- Facilitating a fun, high-energy program will ensure that athletes have an enjoyable experience and want to return. Moving forward, this helps to create a positive association with fitness activities.

Important Considerations

There are many things that you should keep in mind when planning your Club Fit sessions:

- Are you optimally challenging each athlete?
 - o This could vary from week to week, and could include different levels of difficulty
 - o Aim for 75%+ success rate (building a challenge, while also fostering feelings of competence and confidence)
- Are you providing water breaks?
- Am I encouraging athletes to work to their highest potential, and supporting them to keep improving their fitness levels at home?

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE SUBMISSIONS OF ANY ACTIVITY PLANS, STRETCHES, GAMES OR RECIPIES TO:

Sport Coordinator Health | health@specialolympics.bc.ca



Starting a Program



Planning for the Program

Volunteers

This program is successful through the amazing committed and knowledgeable volunteers that organize and help at the sessions. As well, volunteers can be a fantastic resource for finding venues. Individuals who work in the fitness community or in the sport/recreation industry may even have access to inexpensive or free venues. Some locations to look for volunteers include:

- Your SOBC Local
- Universities and/or colleges
- Fitness centres
- Parents and caregivers
- The SOBC Sport Coordinator health —depending on the local, they may have people who volunteered previously with health and sport-related events.

Venues

When looking for a venue, look for a large, open space that can accommodate a large number of people. A school gymnasium is a great fit; however other spaces work as well. Consider churches, workout gyms and community centres in your community.

Availability

Work with your volunteers to decide on a day and time that works, based on volunteer availability and athlete participation. Programs run for an hour.

Spread the Word!

Publicize your program to attract volunteers and inform athletes that the program is available. This can be done individually, or in your Local's newsletter. You must let the Sport Coordinator Health know when you start a program.



Launching Your Club Fit

Be Organized and Prepared

Have lesson plans in place before they begin, and make sure that volunteers are aware as well. Ensure you have everything you need including:

- Lesson plan
- First aid kit
- Emergency action plan
- Registration and medical forms for athletes and volunteers
- COVID-19 Safety measures

Registration

Any and all athletes and volunteers that would like to participate in your Club Fit program **MUST** have filled out a registration form. The original should be sent to the Special Olympics Local, and a copy should remain with the program leader. This registration is extremely important for insurance purposes. Any individuals who has not completed registration is not covered by the Special Olympics BC Insurance Policy.

All athletes and coaches are required to complete a medical history form prior to participating in Special Olympics BC's programs. Forms are available through your Local Chapter, or through the Provincial Office. You must always have medical and registration information for athletes and volunteers on hand.

Run Through Your Program

Introduce yourself and your volunteer team. Run through the fitness training sessions, with positive sport experiences and safety.

Reporting

SOBC requires up to date information about your Club Fit program on a bi-annual basis; once when it starts up for the season and once at the end. A link to a short survey will be sent out to the Club Fit Leaders, asking for basic information such as numbers, volunteers, and the location. This is your opportunity to share successes or hardships you have had with your program.

HAVE FUN!

Remember, this program is based around the concept that participants who are having fun are more likely to respond to what is being taught, and will be more excited, and likely, to attend each week. Don't forget to enjoy the program yourself as well!



Tips for a Successful Club Fit

There are many simple ways that you can create a Club Fit environment that will bring the best out of every athlete.

Establish Good Club Etiquette

- Athletes should understand the value of a team, and working together in a team
- This could include:
 - o Athletes should be on time, and dressed in athletic clothing
 - o Listen to coaches instructions
 - o Listen to, and respect teammates
 - o Always giving 100%

Be Organized and Prepared

FACILITY

- Visit the facility prior to the start of the Club Fit, and become familiar with:
 - o The location of the emergency exits
 - o Available equipment
 - o Bathroom locations

EQUIPMENT

- Familiarize yourself with the equipment provided, if there is any supplementary equipment that you would like, submit an Equipment Request

PREPARATION

- Have a plan for the Club Fit session prepared before the start of the session
- When possible, have stations or equipment prepared before the athletes arrive
- Share the responsibilities with volunteers

Equipment

At Special Olympics, we understand that at your chosen Club Fit facility, you may not have access to the right equipment you need in order to make your program a success. We want to help with this in any way we can.

Club Fit Equipment Bag

When your Club Fit program is starting up for the first time, check with your facility to see if their equipment is available to you. Some facilities may allow others to use their equipment, while some may not. Special Olympics is pleased to provide each new Club Fit program with a bag of equipment. Please contact the Sport Coordinator Health if you would like one.

THE CLUB FIT EQUIPMENT BAG CONTAINS:

- A Club Fit marked roller duffle bag
- Thera bands in yellow (light), red (medium), and green (medium-strong) strengths
- 5 Frisbees
- 20 Agility cones
- 3 Club Fit clipboards
- 10 Pedometers
- 5 yoga mats
- An agility ladder

Supplementary Equipment

Once your Club Fit program is running smoothly, you may realize that there is a piece, or set, of equipment, that would increase the effectiveness of your Club Fit program. The Provincial Office is here to help make your program as successful as possible.

If there is equipment that you would like to purchase, or would like SOBC to purchase, please fill out an Equipment Request form. This will ensure that all Club Fit programs provide the necessary information, and will ensure that your request is processed in a timely manner.



Safety

Safety of all athletes and volunteers is of the utmost importance to Special Olympics BC, and is the responsibility of all Club Fit Leaders & volunteers. What follows are guidelines that will ensure safe, and fun participation in Club Fit programs.

Workout Plans

Developing a plan for the Club Fit session will keep the interest of the athletes focused on the class! Too much time in between activities can lead to athletes getting distracted, or cooling down, increasing risk of injury.

Equipment

There are a few aspects of equipment to keep in mind:

- **APPROPRIATE**

- Does the equipment suit the age, ability, and physical development of the athletes in your Club Fit?
- Modifying equipment to meet the needs of athlete participants should be tested before use in a session.

- **CONDITION**

- Is the equipment in moderate-good to like-new condition?
- Take the time every 1-2 weeks to examine your equipment for any signs of wear and tear that could cause the equipment to break or cause injury to the athlete.

- **KNOWLEDGE**

- Do I know how to use this equipment safely, and effectively?
- Ensure that you are aware of the specific safety standards related to your equipment.

- **STORAGE**

- How am I storing this equipment?
- Ensure that your equipment is always stored in a secure location, when not in use.



Facility

- APPROPRIATE

- Does the facility meet the needs of the participants?
- Ensure that your facility is capable of accommodating the number of athletes registered, with room for growth.
- Avoid facilities that have dangerous equipment (i.e. areas under construction, ladders etc..)

- CONDITION

- Always assess facility and practice area before the start of the Club Fit session to ensure there are no hazards that could injure a participant or volunteer
- Include your restroom facilities in your check
- Any spills, or messes made during your Club Fit should be cleaned up as soon as possible.

Human Risk Factors

- APPROPRIATE

- Does my lesson plan accommodate all the athletes?
- Plans should not include any activity that puts an athlete at risk. Consider an athlete's height, weight, strength.
- Ensure all modifications to exercises are tested before being executed.
- Be aware of your athletes and notice if they start to become fatigued or aggressive. Stop the activity if necessary.

- KNOWLEDGE

- Be aware of any potential behaviour problems within the group that may cause problems
- Consider a volunteer's background and experience when assigning them to a role for the session
- Have a protocol that can be followed in the event of any out of control behaviour or participants. If a discussion with the Club Fit Leader does not change the behaviour, consider filling out an Incident Report, and submitting to the Provincial Office for review.

- EXPLANATION

- Ensure that all parents and participants of the risks that are associated with the activities in Club Fit
- When explaining an activity, always inform of athletes of ways to avoid injury (i.e. if they will be crossing paths, inform them to keep their heads up)
- Always check that athletes and participants understand instructions



- SUPERVISION

- o Always make sure that the number of athletes is not too high, that it compromises supervision
- o Club Fit requires a ratio of **at least 6 athletes to 1 coach**.
- o Be aware of any athletes that need more direct supervision. Consider assigning a volunteer to just that athlete
- o If volunteer numbers do not allow for one-on-one supervision, work with the family to find the best solution (i.e., a family member attends the Club Fit with the participant).

Emergency Action Plan

Anything could happen during a Club Fit session. It is always extremely important to have both an Emergency Action Plan, as well as a first aid kit. Both the kit and the EAP should be at every session in an easily accessible place.

An EAP should be activated if an individual:

- Is not breathing
- Is having difficulty staying conscious
- Does not have a pulse
- Has an injury to the back, neck or head
- Is bleeding excessively or has visible trauma.

When building your EAP consider:

1. Personnel

- a. Who is in charge? Who supervises the other athletes? Who makes the call? Who knows First Aid?

2. Location

- a. What is the address? Are there any major landmarks nearby? What door to the building is closest to your location?

3. Communication

- a. Always have a fully charged cell phone, know where the closest public phone is
- b. If using a public phone, include the necessary change
- c. Include important numbers such as the local fire and police department, the building manager, poison control, as well as who is in charge

4. Participant information

- a. Refer to the SOBC medical form of the athlete or coach or athlete for any allergies or conditions
- b. Note the number of athletes and volunteers currently present

5. First Aid Kit

- a. Always have a fully-stocked First Aid Kit that contains a copy of the EAP.



First Aid

If you don't have a First Aid Kit available, talk to your Local, or to the Provincial Office before purchasing one. You can also consider putting one together yourself. This may suit the needs of your program more readily than a store-bought kit.

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR A FIRST AID KIT:

- Sterile gauze pads in small and large squares
- Adhesive tape
- Triangle bandages, that can be used for a sling or for extremely large wounds
- Band-Aids® in assorted sizes
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Safety pins
- Instant ice packs
- Disposable non-latex gloves
- Alcohol wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- A barrier device in the rare case of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation
- Feminine hygiene products
- A copy of your Emergency Action Plan

Most first aid kits in stores will have most of the listed items. Anything missing you can add after. If there are any items that you would like to add yourself, please don't hesitate to. These kits are meant to be of use to you, as the leader, and your athletes in the case of an emergency.



Club Fit Program Components



Warm Up

Muscle stiffness is directly correlated with injury in sport. The main goal of completing a warm up prior to engaging in physical activity is to reduce muscle stiffness, and increase blood flow to working muscles. It also increases flexibility and range of motion of muscle fibres and connective tissues. There should NEVER be pain with stretching, should the individual begin to feel burning or tingling sensations in the area being stretched, stop immediately.

There are two main components to a warm-up. Light cardio and dynamic stretching. Warm ups can even involve exercises that are going to be performed later, in a lighter intensity.

Light Cardio

Cardiovascular activities aid in warming the muscles by increasing blood flow, and bringing up the heart rate. Some examples of light cardio include:

WALKING/JOGGING

One of the easiest and best warm ups, and can be done anywhere! You can start athletes at a walk, and gradually transition to a run.

Try adding some dynamic stretches to the walk, such as arm swings or shoulder rotations.

SHUFFLING

Athletes complete a side shuffle. Ensure that athletes complete this exercise on both sides.

CYCLING

If you're located in a gym, cycling on a stationary bike at a low intensity is a great warm up.

ROWING

A great option if you are in a facility that has access to rowing machines.

TAG GAMES

A great game that gets athletes excited about the session! Try to avoid 'Freeze Tag' and other versions that involve minimal movement.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

One of the most popular warm ups! Have a volunteer or the Club Fit Leader choose a number of exercises for the athletes to copy. Exercises could include lunges, half squats, high knees, butt kicks, jumping jacks etc..



Dynamic

Dynamic stretching is active movements of muscle that bring forth a stretch, but are not held in the end position. When getting ready to start physical activity, it gets blood flowing to the area of the working muscles, while also increasing range of motion and flexibility. If there is any pain with exercise, stop IMMEDIATELY.

Warm Up Example

By Sarah Wall

1. Jog one length of the gym
2. High knees for one length of the gym
3. Butt kicks for one length of the gym
4. Side shuffles (left side) for one length of the gym
5. Side shuffles (right side) for one length of the gym
6. Skip for one length of the gym

Gather athletes in a circle and complete the following:

- 10 neck rotations, from left to right (not backwards)
- 10 upright trunk rotation
- 10 wide leg bent over trunk rotation
- 10 leg extensions, swing leg forward and backward
- 10 forward arm circles
- 10 backward arm circles

A Club Fit Warm Up should run from approximately 5-15 minutes.



Cardio

Cardiovascular exercise is one of the key components of Club Fit, and should be completed in absolutely every Club Fit session. Cardio for short is any movement done repeatedly that gets your heart rate up, and increases blood circulation throughout the body. Similar to a higher-impact version of warm up, it can work well to transition right from warm up into a cardiovascular exercise. Benefits of cardiovascular activity include:

- Improved heart health
- Increased metabolism, which can lead to weight loss
- Improved ability to recover after exercise
- Mood improvements

In an hour session, a MINIMUM of 15 minutes should be dedicated to cardiovascular activity.

Cardiovascular exercises that can be utilized in your Club Fit:

WALKING/JOGGING/RUNNING

CYCLING

SWIMMING

ROWING

Cardio Games

Another option to completing your cardio requirement is to play a game. The key is to ensure that athletes are constantly moving for the time span.

CONNECTION TAG

- One player is 'it', and when they tag someone, that individual links arms with the individual who is 'it' and they both become 'it'
- The link can break anytime, but links need to be made up of a least three individuals, and they can split or re-join at anytime.



SIMON SAYS

- Athletes will follow instructions, only when Simon Says is said first
- Keep the activities fun, and let others lead.
- Keep the athletes moving to prevent them from cooling down.

MAD HATTER

- A number of different exercises are written down onto a piece of paper, and put into a hat or any fillable surface you have. There needs to be more pieces of paper than athletes present.
- Each athlete picks one exercise that needs to be performed for a minimum of 30 seconds.
- Exercises should be completed back-to-back leaving minimal rest time in between.

TUMBLE N' TEACH DICE

- Please contact the Provincial Office to find out more about the Tumble N' Teach Dice.
- Exercises should be complete back-to-back, just as in 'Mad Hatter'

CAPTURE THE FLAG

- Split into two teams
- Place objects on either end of the gym in a pile. Objects could be whatever equipment you have access to.
- The goal is to collect more 'flags' than the other team by going to their end, picking up the object and bringing it back to your own pile.
- Leader chooses a movement that must be used to travel to the flags (i.e., skipping, shuffling, running)
- Take a few water breaks, and play a best of 3 or 5 series.

RABBITS AND ROOSTERS

- Split the group into two teams, lined up 2-3 meters apart, in the middle of a gym. One side is roosters, the other side is rabbits
- When you call either 'Rabbits' or 'Roosters' that team has to try and catch the opposing team as they run to touch the wall closest to them.
- Players who are tagged join the other team.

RELAY RACES

- Can be done as a group of 4 or 3.
- Athletes run around, or across the gym as fast as possible, holding an item
- Teammates are lined up at starting line, and once athlete that is running returns, they hand off the object and the next person runs
- This continues until all teammates have run.



Strength

Strength training, often called resistance training, has profound effects on the musculoskeletal system. Strength training uses resistance, usually in the form of weights, to produce a muscle contraction, which builds strength, endurance, and increases the size of skeletal muscles. Strength exercises should be done in 3 sets of 8-12 repetitions.

Benefits of strength training include:

- Lower risk of diseases such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Decreases colds and illnesses
- Reduces symptoms of PMS
- Decreases likelihood of injury
- Increases in strength and flexibility
- Improvements in posture and state of mind

Strength Exercise Examples

Upper Body:

- Push-ups
- Triceps Dips
- Side Plank
- Bicep Curls (weights required)

Lower Body (optional to add weights or resistance bands):

- Sumo Squats
- Lunges
- Side Squats
- Hip Bridges
- Deadlifts
- Calf Raises

In an hour long session, a MINIMUM of 20 minutes should be dedicated to strength training



Cool

A cool down following the exercise portion of Club Fit is just as essential as warm up.

Static Stretching

Static stretches are stretches that are done at rest. Holding the position allows the muscle to gradually lengthen, and should be done after exercise when muscles are warm. Static stretches should never be performed on cold, or inactive muscles, as it has been shown to reduce athletic ability and may even promote joint instability, increasing risk.

When performing a static stretch, reach far enough until you feel a slight pull in the muscle, but no pain. Hold each stretch for a minimum of 30 seconds, and make sure to stretch each side of the body equally.

An effective method for completing a full cool down stretch is to start from either the top or the bottom, and work down/up. This will ensure that you get all the major muscle groups. You can let athletes lead the stretch, and then follow with any missed muscle groups.



Circuit Training

By Steph Stresing – Sport Coordinator Health

Introduction

Circuit training is not considered a Club Fit program requirement. However, this method of exercise is a great way to meet both the cardio requirement, as well as the strength requirement.

Circuit training is a compilation of body weight and resistance exercises and is a great way to increase muscular endurance and muscular strength. The exercises are short in duration and are performed at high-intensity, moving from one exercise directly to the next.

When athletes become proficient at an exercise, weight can be added in the form of a medicine ball or a thicker band (if appropriate) to increase the difficulty of the exercise, giving the athlete a better workout!





Different exercises can be included or substituted in circuit training, as long as the muscles for each major muscle group are being utilized. What follows are some general guidelines for a circuit training workout, including a warm up.



Circuit Example

Athletes will complete a circuit of 9 stations, moving consecutively from station to station, working on a 60 second clock. Athletes will work for 50 seconds at each station and the remaining 10 seconds will be used for transition time to the next movement.

Once the athletes have gone through all of the stations, they will take a 3–5-minute break and complete a second round of the circuit.

Name Instructions	Image	Modification to Exercise
<p>Burpees</p> <p>Begin standing upright with arms to the side, then bend over and squat down. Hold body in place and kick legs back into a plank position. Then pull legs back into a squat position. From here, rise up to the original position. To modify, to do half burpees and minus the vertical jump.</p>		
<p>Jump Lunges</p> <p>Start with your feet shoulder-width apart, core engaged and shoulders back. Take a step back with one leg and jump up to switch your legs in midair. Land with both knees at 90°. To modify this, alternate lunges without jumping.</p>		



<p>Plank</p> <p>Begin lying face down and place forearms on the mat with elbows underneath the shoulders. Place legs together with forefeet on the floor. Pushing up, hold body straight and keep the core and legs tight to hold the position. To modify this, drop knees to the ground.</p>		
<p>Chest Press with Band</p> <p>Loop the band around each hand so that there is tension on the band on the back just below the shoulder blades. Hands should be at the chest, palms facing down, and elbows up. Press band forward with both hands at the same time until arms are fully extended. Return to start and repeat. To modify, utilize a band with less resistance.</p>		
<p>Flutter Kicks</p> <p>Lying face up on a mat, keeping legs straight, ensuring lower back stays on the ground, lift both legs off the ground. Lift one leg higher, leaving the other one just above the ground, then return to original position. Keeping the core tight, alternate legs at a medium to high pace. To modify, do leg raises.</p>		
<p>Squats</p> <p>Stand with arms extended forward. With arms forward, squat down by bending at the hips. Descend until thighs are below parallel of the knees. Try to keep the chest upright throughout the movement. Return to standing and repeat. To modify, hold onto something for support.</p>		



<p>Jumping Jacks</p> <p>Stand with arms to the side. In a simultaneous movement, jump legs outward and move arms above the head. Then, simultaneously jump legs back together and bring arms back to the side.</p> <p>Repeat. To modify, step one leg out at a time.</p>		
<p>Reverse Flies with Band</p> <p>Hold either end of the band with straight arms in the front of the body and at chest height. Move arms to outward, remaining at chest height and keeping arms straight. Slowly return to the original position, and repeat. To modify, utilize a band with less resistance.</p>		
<p>Russian Twist</p> <p>Sit on the mat with legs up. With hands together and keeping the core tight, rotate the body to either side. Repeat. Athletes may keep feet on the ground. A medicine ball can be added to increase the difficulty of the exercise. To modify, keep feet on the ground.</p>		



Agility Ladder Training

Agility is the ability to change the direction of the body in an efficient and effective manner with maintaining body balance. In sports, athletes are usually not staying in one place for long, especially in high-impact sports.

Also referred to as a Speed Ladder, Agility Ladders are the most effective way to train balance, quickness, and reactive strength. They help athletes learn a wide range of movement patterns, that can help to develop rarely used muscle groups. An Agility Ladder is a multi-use, multi-directional tool that is great for using during the cardio section of your Club Fit.

Benefits of using an Agility Ladder:

- Increase in running skills
- Improvements in ability to maintain balance, speed, strength and coordination
- Increase in response time by the body in various situations
- Reduces risk of injury related to quick changes in body position
- Increase in performance efficiency
- Increases in core strength

General Guidelines

What follows are some general guidelines that apply for all ladder drills.

- Stay in the ready position as much as possible (legs bent, arms bent at 90 degrees, ready for movement)
- Push off from the balls of your feet — not your toes
- Try to keep your shoulders, arms and hands relaxed
- Keep elbows at a 90 degree angle
- Try to keep your head still as much as possible (movement should be coming from hips and lower body)
- Start at a pace that is quick, but slow enough that you can get the footing correct. Then slowly build up the speed.
- If you miss a step, try to keep going through the rest of the ladder instead of stopping and restarting

All new Club Fit kits being sent out will contain an Agility Ladder. If you don't have one in your Club Fit and would like one, please contact Health: health@specialolympics.bc.ca.



Nutrition

By Madelaine Parent BSc —Food, Nutrition, and Health (Hons)

Introduction

Nutrition is an essential part of athletic performance. Eating a regular healthy diet allows us to be alert and full of energy, keeps us within a healthy weight range, helps us build muscle, contributes to proper growth and functioning and prevents illness.

Feel free to discuss nutrition while completing cool down!

Aim to speak about nutrition in half of your Club Fit sessions. 10-15 minutes is required.

Recipe Cards

SOBC is pleased to provide recipe cards to each athlete who attends Club Fit on a regular basis. At the start of the season, any athlete who has not received any cards will receive a small case with their first card inside. This card will have a simple stress-free recipe on one side, and a link to SOBC's monthly training tip on the other.

These cards are meant as a tool to empower athletes to think about their food choices, as well as demonstrate the ease of eating healthy foods.



Mental Training

By Sarah Kiengersky —Mental Performance Coach

Introduction

Welcome to the Club Fit manuals' Mental Training portion. By helping your athletes through this mental training program you will not only help their fitness in this program, but their performance in a sport context. Mental skills are very valuable skills that the world's best athletes use in their daily training environments, competition, and life. The following will describe what mental skills training is, your role in mental skills training, and how to support your athletes with their mental training endeavours.

What is Mental Skills Training?

Think of this concept—you and your athletes spend countless hours training their physical and tactical skills, but how many hours do you spend training their minds for competition?

Mental skills training (MST) targets social, emotional, and mental areas of an athlete's mental performance by working through various tools or skill sets the athlete can apply to their training and competition.

MST targets a few main goals important to sport performance:

1. To assist athletes in consistently performing at their peak performance levels
2. To help athletes cope with the pressure, unexpected events, and demands of performance.
3. To develop mental strategies that will assist athletes in overcoming obstacles in sport.
4. To improve their overall sport performance and experience.

The Coach Role in Mental Skills Training

One of the biggest keys to athlete success with mental training is you, the coach. You need to believe in the mental training portion and its value, but understand it to a level that you are able to teach and support it. Your role is to educate your group of athletes on how they can develop mental skills for performance. You need to be willing to make MST a formal part of your regular training schedule. Keep your focus on MST consistent, not just convenient.

Did you know?

Coach buy-in leads to athlete buy-in, contributing to athlete success and overall team success



Building Mental Skills into Your Daily Training Environment (DTE)

Just as physical and technical skills need constant practice to become better, so do mental skills. One of the biggest myths in mental skills training is that these skills can be incorporated into training and competition regimes and they will work like magic. This is not true; mental skills take constant practice in order to become effective. Devoting time to physical, technical, and mental training creates a total performance package. Think of this like a formula, presented below.

TOTAL PERFORMANCE FORMULA:

Physical Fitness +

Technical Skills +

Group Function +

Mental Fitness

=

OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE PACKAGE

Devoting time to mental skills training outlines its importance to your athletes, and by supporting this the athletes are more likely to adopt mental training and make it a usual part of their sport training.

Speak about Mental Training in at least half of your sessions for 10-15 minutes.



Functional Testing

Introduction

Special Olympics BC's Functional testing protocol has been adopted from Tracie Albisser's Sport Readiness manual from Pacific Sport BC. Please refer to the Functional Testing Manual for more specific information on the exercises, recording sheet and a comprehensive overview of the program. Functional Testing identifies areas of weakness and provides exercises to correct any improper form or areas of weakness. These tests might also prevent injury and motivate athletes as they track their ongoing progress. Functional tests have corresponding corrective exercises while fitness tests do not.

Functional Testing runs on a bi-annual basis; once at the beginning of the season (September/October), and once near the end (May/June). The new Functional Testing Program is based on 7 exercises and should take roughly 1 hour to complete. With the new Functional Testing Program, it has been designed to be easily completed and recorded in your normally scheduled Club Fit session. Additional volunteers may be utilized for Functional Testing based on number of athletes in the program.

Importance

These sessions are used to test an athlete's fitness level, to motivate and guide his/her training. Functional testing is important as it provides feedback to coaches regarding the effectiveness of the Club Fit and shows the personal progress of each athlete. Functional Testing should have an emphasis on the proper form of exercises.

Functional testing days are a good opportunity to identify and correct any improper technique and ensure that athletes are moving forward and reducing possible injury from improper form. Coaches should share progress with the athletes to help them set goals and track their progress, increasing their motivation and confidence. It is extremely important that the same methods of testing and recording are being used province-wide, to ensure reliability and maintain the integrity of the results.

Prior to running Functional Testing, please contact Sport Coordinator of Health for updated information and the new virtual recording document.



Conclusion

Special Olympics BC encourages all of its athlete members to continue their training throughout the year, regardless of whether their program is running or not. From training at home, to joining a Special Olympics sport program, to joining local programs in your community, staying active is a great way to keep up strength and cardio training and put all that hard work to good use.



Training at Home

Staying physically and mentally fit is important to being athletic and healthy. SOBC challenges athletes to exercise not just their bodies but their minds as well, every day. If you have athletes that are looking for a way to record their progress at home, there is an Athlete Training Diary that can be provided.

Encourage athletes to keep training and check out the SOBC website for materials on training at home.

We suggest checking in with athletes from time to time after Club Fit to see how the athletes are doing with their at home program. This could be done by phone or email to encourage the athletes to keep up their training, answer any questions that athletes may have, check their progress and give positive feedback.

Joining a Program

Long Term Athlete Development

Active Start, FUNdamentals, and Sport Start are part of Special Olympics BC's youth development program. It builds from teaching an athlete basic motor skills to teaching sport specific motor and movement skills. These programs are designed for ages 2-18 years. These programs help to develop basic motor abilities, and then translate those into sport specific skill development. The process of introducing youth to basic skills early, then to specific sport skills and game play, helps the athletes along the path to transitioning into other organized sport programs and living healthy and active lives for their entire lives!

Traditional Special Olympic Programs

Special Olympics BC offers athletes the opportunity to train and compete in 18 different sport programs. Both winter and summer sport programs are designed for athletes who want to participate in an environment that emphasizes development, fair play and fun. Special Olympics athletes can compete against and with other athletes of similar ability in a range of events from local competitions to representing Canada and the Special Olympics World Games. All Special Olympics programs are coached by certified volunteers that are trained to accommodate athletes of all ability levels.



SOBC SUMMER SPORTS

5-Pin & 10-Pin Bowling
Aquatics (Swimming)
Athletics (Track &
Field) Basketball
Bocce
Golf
Powerlifting
Rhythmic Gymnastics
Soccer
Softball

SOBC WINTER SPORTS

Alpine Skiing
Cross-Country Skiing
Curling
Figure Skating
Floor Hockey
Snowshoeing
Speed Skating

Eligibility

To participate in a SOBC program, individuals must meet the following criteria: Have an intellectual disability, agree to observe, and abide by the Special Olympics Canada sport rules.

Registering

Special Olympics BC is committed to providing sports experiences to individuals regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or financial situation. To register please contact your local Special Olympics BC branch and we will walk you through the registration process or for more information any Special Olympics programs please contact the Provincial Office.



**For Any Questions, Concerns or Information,
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