

**Fitness Clubs** are locally organized, fitness-focused groups that provide year-round opportunities for athletes and community members of all abilities to engage in regular physical activity. Clubs bring together individuals with and without intellectual disabilities as partners in a supportive, inclusive environment. Clubs are encouraged to expand into other exercises based on member interests and available resources. Clubs also include optional health lessons and discussions to help members build knowledge about nutrition, hydration, and overall wellness.

## Membership and Leadership

Clubs are organized and led by co-directors, one Special Olympics athlete and one Special Olympics volunteer, who receive training on how to run a club.

- All members must be registered as Special Olympics Indiana athletes or volunteers.
- Between 25% and 75% of members should be individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD).
- Members do not need to be active in Special Olympics sports to join a Fitness Club.
- Volunteers must meet Class A requirements.
- There is no minimum or maximum number of members, but larger groups make it easier to pair members by ability for inclusive activities.

Register here:



## Participation

Clubs are expected to meet at least once per week for a group fitness activity. Fitness options can include walking, hiking, stretching, yoga, biking, or strength training. Activities may also occur alongside sports practice but must focus on general fitness rather than skill development for sports.

Clubs operate year-round, with monthly lessons on health and wellness topics. Lessons cover areas such as hydration, nutrition, personal safety, and healthy habits. Periodic challenges may also be organized to encourage intra- and inter-club engagement. Clubs are encouraged to share photos and success stories for program reporting and publicity purposes.

## Activity Tracking and Health Metrics

Members are encouraged to track physical activity daily using any preferred method, such as a pedometer, fitness tracker, or phone app. Wheelchair users may convert distance traveled into steps for accurate tracking. Activity tracking helps members stay motivated and monitor their progress over time.

Clubs may choose to collect optional health metrics, including height, weight, and blood pressure. Collected data remains confidential and is used for program reporting to help document the benefits of regular group exercise.

## Active Participation

Clubs and members who are inactive for six months will be moved to “inactive” status and must re-register to participate. Maintaining consistent participation is key to building healthy habits, fostering inclusion, and tracking club impact.

## Contact

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