

Who operates the program?

The Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities has operated the Special Olympics program since its creation in 1970 for youth and adults served by Wood Lane. In 1990, the program expanded to include youth who receive special education services from their local school district or the Wood County Educational Service Center.

The Board employs one full-time coordinator and two part-time staff members to oversee a year-round, very active, high quality sports program. Wood Lane buses and vans provide transportation to and from games and competition venues.

The program has an advisory board. The board and staff are responsible to raise the funds necessary to cover costs of facility rental, equipment, uniforms, meals, and lodging for area, sectional, and state events. Athletes, families, community groups, and businesses have also been key to our ability to raise the necessary funds to ensure a top quality program for our athletes.



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How can I get involved?

Tell me how!

Call or e-mail to find out how you can begin participating as an athlete or serving as a volunteer. As a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization, contributions made to Wood County Special Olympics are tax deductible in accordance with federal law.

*"I play all of the sports offered.
Cycling is my favorite sport. My favorite memory
is when I cycled 100 miles in one day.*

Gene Stokes, athlete



Wood County Special Olympics

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Wood County Special Olympics is one of the many services operated by Wood Lane (Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities).



Special Olympics
Wood County



"Let me win.
But if I cannot win,
let me be brave
in the attempt."

Special Olympics Oath

What is Special Olympics?

Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Athletes are given opportunities to improve their physical fitness, show their talents, demonstrate courage and see themselves for their abilities through training and competition.



"It's a great social experience for athletes and their families and it helps athletes feel a sense of accomplishment. This is our way to keep our son's recovery moving forward with nurturing individuals who lovingly work with him to regain his former skills.

We would not be as far along without it."

Ellen Scholl, parent

Just like high school sports, athletes regularly train and teams have practices at least two times per week. Games or events are scheduled throughout each sport season with other programs.

Game and event officials are certified in their sport. Athletes have the opportunity to advance to area, sectional, and state competition. Certified officials are utilized.



"I like playing on teams and motivating my teammates."

Kristin Fisher, athlete

What are the benefits of Special Olympics?

Participation in sports goes beyond the experiences of training and competing. It gives individuals the chance to increase fitness and well being, self-esteem and self-confidence, and also expand their circle of friends in the community.

Athletes gain confidence when they learn a new skill or travel and interact with athletes and volunteers. These experiences improve their social relationships, social skills, and help them see the abilities and talents they possess.

Athletes learn that they are a key part of their community as good neighbors, valuable employees and involved citizens.

What sports are offered?

Wood County athletes can participate in one or more of the following sports:

Basketball	Golf	Softball
Bocce	Rock Climbing	Swimming
Bowling	Soccer	Track & Field
Cycling		Volleyball



"My favorite sport is swimming. My favorite memory was competing in Ames, Iowa in the 100 meter backstroke and 200 meter freestyle."

Katie Rupert, athlete

Who participates?

Our athletes

More than 450 individuals are active in the program throughout Wood County. Athletes are eligible at age 8. There is no upper age limit. Competition is based upon age, gender and ability. Athletes see themselves for their abilities. They develop confidence and are empowered by their accomplishments. They are able to experience joy through participation and sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, volunteers, and the community.



We couldn't do it without our volunteers

We are fortunate to have over 100 volunteers each year who serve as coaches or assistants and chaperons at practices and competitions. Simply put, volunteers are key to our success. What many may not realize is that each season means multiple sports and more than one team within that sport. For example, our basketball, volleyball, and softball programs draw enough athletes to form three to four teams in their designated season. Due to its popularity, our bowling program holds practices in Bowling Green and Rossford.

For more information, please visit us online at www.woodso.org