



Lions Clubs International

CHAMPIONS LIONS CLUB GUIDE IN SUPPORT OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS



Growing our Partnership to Expand Services to Persons with Intellectual Disabilities



CHAMPIONS LIONS CLUBS

Champions Lions clubs in support of Special Olympics focus on serving and empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities. Together, Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International are prepared to not only improve the vision of persons with intellectual disabilities across the world, but also integrate LCI's organizational structures to provide increased service opportunities to persons of all abilities. Champions Lions clubs, a type of special interest club, model how Lions Clubs International is not only the leading service organization in numbers, but also in scope.

OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Special Olympics is a global nonprofit organization targeting the nearly 200 million people globally with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides sports training and competition in over 30 Olympic-type sports to promote dignity, acceptance and a chance to reach one's potential.

Through 200 accredited programs, Special Olympics reaches 3.4 million athletes with intellectual disabilities in over 180 countries.

Special Olympics' Mission: To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, 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.

Learn more at www.specialolympics.org.

ROOTED PARTNERSHIP

The global partnership between Lions Clubs International and Special Olympics began in 2001 with the global expansion of the Opening Eyes program. Funded by Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), more than US\$11 million has gone toward protecting sight and preventing blindness in Special Olympics from all over the world. The partnership has helped over 200,000 Special Olympic athletes receive the quality vision care they deserve, and much work remains! Opening Eyes vision screenings take place at select Special Olympics sporting events worldwide.

To date, more than 89,000 athletes have received prescription eyewear and over 8,000 Lions worldwide have volunteered their time and talents to Special Olympics, demonstrating the motto, "We Serve."

REAL CHAMPIONS

In 2010, Lions Clubs International and Special Olympics collaboratively selected the word "Champions" to designate Special Olympics-focused Lions clubs. This designation identifies Special Olympics athletes precisely as they are: champions. Champions for stepping out on the track, field or court and competing. Champions for putting smiles on others faces, changing attitudes and teaching tolerance. Champions for building a more accepting world for everyone.



Champions Lions clubs show the world the skills and talents of persons with intellectual disabilities that are too often overlooked in today's society.



Consider sponsoring the membership of a Special Olympics athlete or inviting Lions in your district to a benefit event/meal to help cover dues for individuals with disabilities.

WIDESPREAD SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Champions Lions clubs not only have the opportunity to focus on Opening Eyes, they can further support Special Olympics athletes through the Healthy Athletes® initiative, scholarship awards, monetary donations and the promotion of Special Olympics and Special Olympics Games. Champions Lions clubs also play a key role during Special Olympics athletic events through hands-on support. Responsibilities include:

- Sponsoring local and regional games
- Helping register athletes
- Coaching
- Proving color vision and visual acuity tests
- Distributing glasses and supports goggles to athletes
- Being a resource for athletes and their families

Persons with intellectual disabilities should also be encouraged to be members of the Champions Lions club you are forming. The Larkspur Champions Lions Club, for example, has members made up primarily of persons with developmental disabilities. Like all Lions club, its mission is to help those in need and serves as a way for members to live a fuller life.





STEPS TO DEVELOPING CHAMPIONS LIONS CLUBS

Champions Lions clubs are unique; they require teamwork and communication between two separate organizations. Therefore, added steps are necessary to ensure proper collaboration and communication between Lions Clubs International and Special Olympics.

Step One: Contact Lions Clubs International

Prior to developing an extension team and beginning to recruit new members, contact Lions Clubs International to express your interest and request a New Club Extension Kit. While Lions Clubs International and Special Olympics have a global partnership, each accredited program of Special Olympics may not be familiar with the Lions club structure. Therefore, it is necessary for Lions Clubs International to approach your local Special Olympics Program to tell them about our organization, partnership and your interest in establishing a Champions Lions club. It is also equally important for Lions Clubs International and Special Olympics to assess the viability of developing a Champions Lions club in that particular location.

Step Two: Meet with Representatives from Your Local Special Olympics Accredited Program

Once Lions Clubs International and Special Olympics have determined a particular location viable for developing a Champions Lions club, the organizing Lions will receive contact information for your local Special Olympics Program. Set up a time to meet with local Special Olympics representatives to discuss your interest and ask questions. Below is an outline to help you cover important points during your meeting:

Questions to Ask

1. When and how did your Special Olympics Accredited Program get started?
2. Could you provide an overview of your particular program?
3. What types of services and programs does your program offer?
4. How many Special Olympics athletes does your program serve?
5. What areas have the greatest need?
6. How can a new Champions Lions club best serve your Special Olympics Program?
7. What is the best way to collaborate?
8. What is important for volunteers to know about Special Olympics?

Information to Provide

1. Overview of Lions Clubs International and local service projects
2. Reasons for starting a Champions Lions club
3. Vision for the club
4. Plan for new member recruitment
5. Next steps

Steps Three – Seven: Steps to New Club Formation

The next steps for developing a Champions Lions club can be found in steps two – seven (skipping step three) of the Guide to New Club Formation (TK-1). In these steps, please abide by the following:

- **Lions recruit Lions:** As your extension team is being developed and new members are being recruited, it is important to remember that Lions recruit Lions. This is not the responsibility of Special Olympics. Special Olympics personnel, volunteers and families may of course be asked to join, and it is up to them if they wish to aid in the recruitment of club members.
- **Special Olympics' General Rules:** Just as Lions Clubs International has a trademark policy as a matter of legal protection to our clubs, districts and international association, Special Olympics has their own set of general rules. Below is information for Lions clubs in accordance to the Official General Rules of Special Olympics:

1. Lions clubs shall not use Special Olympics name or logo in their official charter documents (i.e. Lions clubs may not use "Special Olympics," or an abbreviation, in its club name).
2. Lions clubs may, however, acknowledge through marketing events, fundraisers and Lions clubs' activities that they support Special Olympics Programs and the Special Olympics Movement's mission, goals and objectives.
3. Lions clubs that do acknowledge and identify their support of Special Olympics need not do so on an exclusive basis but may support other charities.
4. In circumstances where a Lions club wishes to support Special Olympics Programs exclusively, it may use the following terms for marketing and communications purposes, under license from Special Olympics International:
 - X Lions Club for the support of Special Olympics [Program name and logo]
 - X Lions Club in collaboration with Special Olympics [Program name and logo]

Licenses may be requested from Special Olympics by contacting David Evangelista, Senior Director of Multilateral Partnerships and Development, at DEvangelista@specialolympics.org.

5. Use of Special Olympics' logo under these circumstances should be in accordance with Special Olympics' Graphics Standard Guide.
6. Special Olympics will not exercise oversight of funds raised by Lions clubs, either partially or totally, in support of Special Olympics activities.
7. Whenever a Lions club raises money wholly in support of Special Olympics, it should work with the Special Olympics Program it supports to ensure coordination of efforts and cooperation between them.

Lions Clubs International is a proud partner of Special Olympics. All Lions clubs are asked to adhere to the rules stated above.

Step Eight: Charter Night

Charter Night is an opportunity to celebrate the formation of the Champions Lions clubs and the Special Olympics athletes and families the club will be serving. Invite athletes, family members and Special Olympics staff representatives. Consider asking each group to speak at the event. You may even wish to incorporate the athletes into the program. The Special Olympics-focused Lions club located in the New South Wales Inner West Region of Australia, for example, celebrated Charter Night with Special Olympics dancers. The night was colorful and each dancer was presented with a trophy for their participation in this historic event.

Refer to the Charter Night Planning Guide (TK-26) to help plan the event.

CLOSING TIPS

- Designate a liaison to maintain communication between the Champions Lions club and Special Olympics.
- Educate club members about Special Olympics and the athletes they serve.
- Set up a 501(c)3 Lions Foundation to qualify contributor's donations as tax deductible, such as in the case of establishing a scholarship fund for athletes to participate in Special Olympics Games.

For more information, contact the Membership Programs and New Clubs Marketing Department at memberprog@lionsclubs.org.



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Lions Clubs International

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