

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Young Athletes™ is an innovative sports play program for children aged 2-7 years old. The program includes active games, songs and other play activities that help children develop skills. The key skill areas are: foundational skills; walking and running; balance and jumping; trapping and catching; throwing; striking; and kicking.

Lesson Plans: Detailed Lesson Plans give adult leaders an 8 week structure for introducing the activities and helping children practice skills while having fun. The Lessons should be led with great enthusiasm, high energy and quick pace. Recommended times for each activity allow leaders to complete the Lesson Plans in 30 minutes. However, we encourage you to adjust the pace and length of time to meet the needs, interests, ages, and skills of your group.

Sequence: For each week there are 3 days of Lesson Plans for a total of 24 days. Lessons are designed to be offered in sequence to help children become acquainted with the activities and build skills through repetition.

Summary Cards: Lesson Summary Cards are provided as prompts for teachers and coaches to use while teaching. They also serve as a resource for families to learn about their child's experience in the program. The Summary Cards also reference the online videos and the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide, an illustrated and simple guide for both leaders and families to use.

Adults Needed: Plan for at least 1 adult for every 4 children. Recruit help from families, volunteers, older students, college students and others in your community to make sure the program runs smoothly and is fun.

Playing at home: Give families the Lesson Plan Summary Cards and encourage them to sing the songs and/or play some of the games with their child at home each week. Help them learn about the activities by including them in your group sessions and/or providing family demonstration sessions, as well as referring them to the Activity Guide and online videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes.

Favazza, P.C., Zeisel, S., Parker, R., & Leboeuf, L. (2011).
Young Athletes Curriculum. Special Olympics International, Washington, DC.

WEEK DAY

one

1

Foundational Skills Lesson Summary Card

Equipment: Scarves (enough for each child to have one); floor markers, balls, bean bags, cones, hoops (distributed around room). All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. Opening Sports Song

Wheels on the Bus melody

The athletes in our class touch their toes...

The runner on the team goes run run run...

The swimmer in the water goes swim swim swim...

5 min. I Spy

Equipment: floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls

5 min. Scarf Game

Equipment: Scarf for each child

5 min. Inchworm Wiggle

5 min. Bridges and Tunnels

5 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it, clap and stomp

(wiggle your body; fly like a bird: arms outstretched)

If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show

it if you're happy and you know it clap and stomp,

(wiggle your body; fly like a bird: arms outstretched).

Tip: Use a variety of body movements.

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Foundational Skills, pages 2-5) and other resources at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY

one

2

Foundational Skills Lesson Summary Card

Equipment: Bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, balance beam, ribbon, floor markers. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. Opening Sports Song with Scarf

Wheels on the Bus melody

The athletes in our class touch their toes...

The player on the court jumps up and down...

The athlete on the team throws the scarf...

5 min. I Spy: Bunny Hop

Equipment: floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam, blocks

4 min. Inchworm Wiggle

6 min. Bridges and Tunnels

7 min. Obstacle Course

Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

3 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Foundational Skills, pages 2-5) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY

one

3

Foundational Skills Lesson Summary Card

Equipment: Whistle, bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, balance beam, ribbon, floor markers. Equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. Opening Sports Song with Bunny Hop

Wheels on the Bus melody

The athletes in our class touch their toes...

The player on the court jumps up and down...

The athlete on the team throws the scarf...

3 min. I Spy: Stomp/Tiptoes

Equipment: floor markers, bean bags, cones, hoops, balls, balance beam, blocks.

4 min. Bridges and Tunnels

5 min. Follow the Leader: Side Steps, Follow a Path

5 min. Running Styles

Introduction to Week 2

7 min. Obstacle Course

Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

3 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Foundational Skills, pages 2-5; Walking and Running, pages 6-8) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**two****1****Walking and Running Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Whistle, floor markers (distributed around room to create a path), tambourine or drum. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. Opening Sports Song

Wheels on the Bus melody

The athletes in our class swing their arms...

The runner on the team runs real fast...

The runner on the team runs real slow...

5 min. Follow the Leader and Follow a Path

Equipment: tambourine or drum, floor markers

4 min. Side Stepping**5 min. Running Styles**

- Stomp slow/fast
- Run slow/fast
- Run backwards
- High knees run (raise knees high when running)
- Tiptoe walk

6 min. Bridges and Tunnels**5 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Walking and Running, pages 6-8) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**two****2****Walking and Running Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Whistle, bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), balance beam, one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, ribbon, floor markers. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. Opening Sports Song with Scarf

Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. Follow the Leader

With Side Steps, Follow the Path, Bunny Hop, Inch Worm

6 min. Run and Carry

Equipment: Floor markers, hoop on floor with balls or bean bags in it, hoop on block for target

4 min. Running Styles**7 min. Obstacle Course**

Set Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

- Jump on Dots
- Throw Bean Bag Through Target (hoop)
- Step/Jump Over Hurdles
- Walk on Balance Beam.
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

3 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Walking and Running, pages 6-8) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**two****3****Walking and Running Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Whistle, bean bags and/or balls near target (hoop on cone), balance beam, one dowel with two cones or blocks (for hurdle), scarves, ribbon, floor markers. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. Opening Sports Song with Bunny Hop
Wheels on the Bus melody

6 min. Step and Jump (Introduction to Week 3)
Equipment: balance beams, ropes, floor markers

6 min. Run and Carry

5 min. "Coach Says"
Introduction to Week 3

7 min. Obstacle Course
Set Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

- Jump on Dots
- Throw Bean Bag Through Target (hoop)
- Step/Jump Over Hurdles
- Walk on Balance Beam.
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

3 min. Closing Sports Song
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Walking and Running, pages 6-8; Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11) and videos at:
www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**three****1****Balance and Jumping Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Floor Markers (distributed around room); slow motion balls/balls, balance beams/ropes. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. Opening Sports Song
Wheels on the Bus melody
The runner on the team goes run run, run...
The athletes in our class walk real slow...
The player on the court goes jump jump jump...

5 min. "Coach Says"

4 min. Balance Beam/Ropes

5 min. Foot Trap
Equipment: slow motion ball

6 min. Step and Jump

5 min. Closing Sports Song
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**three****2****Balance and Jumping Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Floor markers (distributed around room), dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, slow motion balls/balls, balance beams/rope. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **“Coach Says” (with a Balance Beam/Rope)**

5 min. **Rolling & Trapping**

4 min. **Foot Trap**
Tip: Use smaller balls if larger ones are too difficult.

5 min. **Jumping High**
Tip: Children can jump onto or off of equipment if their feet cannot clear the floor. For instance they can jump over the bean bag, or on top of it.

5 min. **Frog Hoppin’/Leapin’ Lizards**

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You’re Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**three****3****Balance and Jumping Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Floor markers, dowel, bean bags, cones, hoops, slow motion balls/balls, balance beam/rope, blocks, scarves. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

2 min. **Opening Sports Song with Leapin’ Lizards**
Wheels on the Bus melody
The athletes on the team leap over the mark...
The player on the court runs forward and back...
The athletes in our class leap on the mark...

3 min. **“Coach Says” (with a Bean Bag)**
Introduction to Week 4

4 min. **Jumping High**

5 min. **Rolling & Trapping**
Introduction to Week 4

4 min. **Foot Trap**

5 min. **Frog Hoppin’/Leapin’ Lizards**

5 min. **Goalie Drill**
Equipment: two cones to form each goal and slow motion ball

2 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You’re Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Balance and Jumping, pages 9-11; Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**four****1****Trapping and Catching Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Slow Motion balls/balls, pairs of cones to form goals (space between cones is goal), bean bags (one per child/pair). All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. **Rolling & Trapping**

5 min. **Goalie Drill**

5 min. **Big Ball**

5 min. **Bean Bag Catch**

5 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**four****2****Trapping and Catching Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Bean bags (one per child/pair if possible), pairs of cones to form goals, beach ball, slow motion balls. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

5 min. **Opening Sports Song with Leapin' Lizards**
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. **Goalie Drill**

5 min. **Big Ball/Bean Bag Catch**
(choose one)

6 min. **High Ball Catch**

6 min. **Bounce Catch**
Equipment: large beach ball

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**four****3****Trapping and Catching Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Floor markers (distributed around room), Bean Bags (one for each child/pair), pairs of cones to form goals (the space in-between is the goal), slow motion balls/balls or beach balls (one for each child/pair). Equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. Opening Sports Song with Leapin' Lizards

Wheels on the Bus melody

The athletes on the team leap over the mark...

The player on the court runs forward and back...

The athletes in our class leap on the mark...

5 min. Bean Bag Catch/Throw

Introducing Week 5 concept

5 min. High Ball Catch

Equipment: beach ball, slow motion balls

5 min. Rolling

Introducing Week 5 concept

4 min. Bounce Catch**5 min. Two-Hand Underhand**

Introducing Week 5 concept

3 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Trapping and Catching, pages 12-15; Throwing pages 16-19; Advanced Skills, pages 28-31) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**five****1****Throwing Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball, beanbag, floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. Opening Sports Song

Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. Rolling

Equipment: Slow motion ball, cones, floor markers next to cones

5 min. Two-Hand Underhand**6 min. Underhand Toss (1 hand)**

Equipment: Small foam ball, beanbag

6 min. Two-Hand Throwing (overhead)

Equipment: slow motion ball

4 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Throwing pages, 16-19) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**five****2****Throwing Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball, beanbag, floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

6 min. **Underhand Toss**
Equipment: Small foam ball, beanbag

5 min. **Two-Hand Throwing (overhead)**
Equipment: Slow motion ball

6 min. **Overhand Throwing**

6 min. **Throwing for Distance**

4 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Throwing, pages 16-19) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**five****3****Throwing Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – beach ball, small foam ball, and slow motion ball; bean bag, hoop, floor markers, cone. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **Review of Underhand Toss**
Equipment: Small foam ball, beanbag, hoop (NOTE: Hoop can either be held by an adult or set up on the top of the cone).

4 min. **Two-Hand Throwing**

4 min. **Overhand Throwing**

4 min. **Throwing for Distance and Accuracy**
Equipment: slow motion ball

4 min. **Ball tapping**
Equipment: Beach ball or slow motion ball, mallets

4 min. **Handball**
Introducing Week 6

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Throwing pages, 16-19; Striking, pages 20-23) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**six****1****Striking Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball, floor markers (distributed around room to create a path); bean bags, hoops, cones, balance beams (one long, one short); paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. Opening Sports Song
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. Ball Tapping

5 min. Handball

6 min. Side Striking

6 min. Obstacle Course

Set Set up a 5 station course with floor markers (dots for jumping on), bean bags with hoop (throwing bean bag through hoop), a series of hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, area to run to finish (through a ribbon).

- Jump on Dots
- Throw Bean Bag Through Target (hoop)
- Step/Jump Over Hurdles
- Walk on Balance Beam.
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

4 min. Closing Sports Song
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Striking, pages 20-23) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**six****2****Striking Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – beach ball, small foam ball and slow motion ball; paddle, junior size racket or plastic bat; cones; dowel, junior sized hockey stick or junior size plastic golf club. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. Opening Sports Song
Wheels on the Bus melody

6 min. Side Striking

6 min. Beginning Hockey

6 min. Beginning Tennis/Softball

4 min. Bridges/Tunnels

4 min. Closing Sports Song
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Striking, pages 20-23; Foundation Skills, pages 2-5) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**six****3****Striking Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Beach ball, small foam ball, slow motion ball and junior size soccer ball; paddle, cones; dowel, junior sized hockey stick or plastic golf club; floor markers, hoop set-up on cone, balance beam. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

2 min. Opening Sports Song w/ Leapin' Lizards

Wheels on the Bus melody

The athletes on the team leap over the mark...

The player on the court runs forward and back...

5 min. Side Striking**5 min. Beginning Hockey****5 min. Beginning Tennis/Softball****4 min. Kicking**

Introduction to Week 7

7 min. Obstacle Course

Set up a 5 station course with floor markers , bean bags with hoop, hurdles (cones with dowel/stick), balance beam, finish line.

- Throwing for distance and accuracy
- Frog Hoppin'
- Walk on Balance Beam
- Jump Over Hurdles
- Run to Finish Line (Through Ribbon)

2 min. Closing Sports Song

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Striking, pages 20-23) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

**WEEK DAY****seven****1****Kicking Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball; floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. Opening Sports Song

Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. Kicking**6 min. Penalty Kick Prep****5 min. Kicking for Distance****6 min. Kicking for Accuracy****4 min. Closing Sports Song**

If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Kicking, pages 24-27) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes



WEEK DAY**seven****2****Kicking Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball; floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song w/ Leapin' Lizards**
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **Penalty Kick Prep**

5 min. **Kicking for Distance**

5 min. **Kicking for Accuracy**

5 min. **Kickball**

5 min. **Give and Go**

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Kicking, pages 24-27) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**seven****3****Kicking Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball or playground ball; floor markers, cones. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

5 min. **Kicking for Distance**

5 min. **Kicking for Accuracy**

5 min. **Kickball**

4 min. **Give and Go**

4 min. **Bridges/Tunnels**

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide (Kicking, pages 24-27; Foundation Skills, pages 2-5) and videos at: www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**eight****1****Review of Skills as Sports Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – Slow motion ball and small foam ball; floor markers, cones, dowel, bean bags, hoops, balance beam/rope, and blocks. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song w/ Leapin' Lizards**
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **Running Styles**

5 min. **Run and Carry Relay**
Adapted from Week 2

5 min. **Jumping High**

5 min. **Hurdles**

5 min. **Throwing for Distance and Accuracy**
From Week 5

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide and videos at:
www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**eight****2****Review of Skills as Sports Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls – beach ball and small foam ball; cones, balance beam/rope; dowel, junior sized hockey stick, junior size plastic golf club. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

3 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

4 min. **Balance Beam**
From Week 3

4 min. **High Ball Catch**
From Week 4

5 min. **Overhand Throwing**
From Week 5

5 min. **Handball**
From Week 6

6 min. **Beginning Hockey**
From Week 6

3 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide and videos at:
www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes

WEEK DAY**eight****3****Review of Skills as Sports Lesson
Summary Card**

Equipment: Balls - beach ball, slow motion ball, junior size soccer ball, playground ball; cone, floor markers; paddle or junior size racket. All equipment should be set up prior to running Young Athletes™.

4 min. **Opening Sports Song**
Wheels on the Bus melody

6 min. **Beginning Tennis/Softball**
From Week 6

5 min. **Kickball**
From Week 7

5 min. **Penalty Kick Prep**
From Week 7

6 min. **Give and Go**

4 min. **Closing Sports Song**
If You're Happy and You Know It

>> See the Young Athletes™ Activity Guide and videos at:
www.specialolympics.org/youngathletes