

# St. Johns County Special Olympics Florida



Special Olympics  
**Unified Sports®**

***Special Olympics***  
*Florida*



# Our Mission and Goals



**Mission Statement:** The mission of Special Olympics Florida is to provide year-round sports training and competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for people with intellectual disabilities who wish to participate, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

**We serve over 77,173 athletes and with the help of over 45,225 coaches and volunteers.**

**St. Johns:**

<b>Community Athletes: 152</b>	<b>School Based Athletes: 619</b>
<b>Community Partners: 43</b>	<b>School Based Partners: 98</b>
<b>Coaches: 41</b>	<b>Cleared Volunteers: 102</b>

# JR Lobinsky



St. Johns County Athlete Leader JR Lobinsky has been involved with Special Olympics Florida for 23 years. He passionately competes in swimming, athletics, basketball, bowling, and most recently powerlifting. JR has been a proud Publix associate for 15 years. He is also an avid concertgoer and loves all types of music. He competed at the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games in Orlando in the pentathlon, and brought home gold! What JR loves most about Special Olympics Florida is the opportunities for meeting new people and being the best that he can be.



# Sports we currently offer in St. Johns:



## January- May

- Basketball
- Bocce
- Soccer
- Track & Field

## May-September

- Bowling
- Swimming

## August- November

- Golf
- Flag Football
- Pickleball
- Powerlifting

## Sports we could offer with new coaches:

Cheerleading, Cycling, Tennis, Stand Up Paddle, Surfing, Volleyball, Softball, Gymnastics, & Cornhole



# Season Breakdown



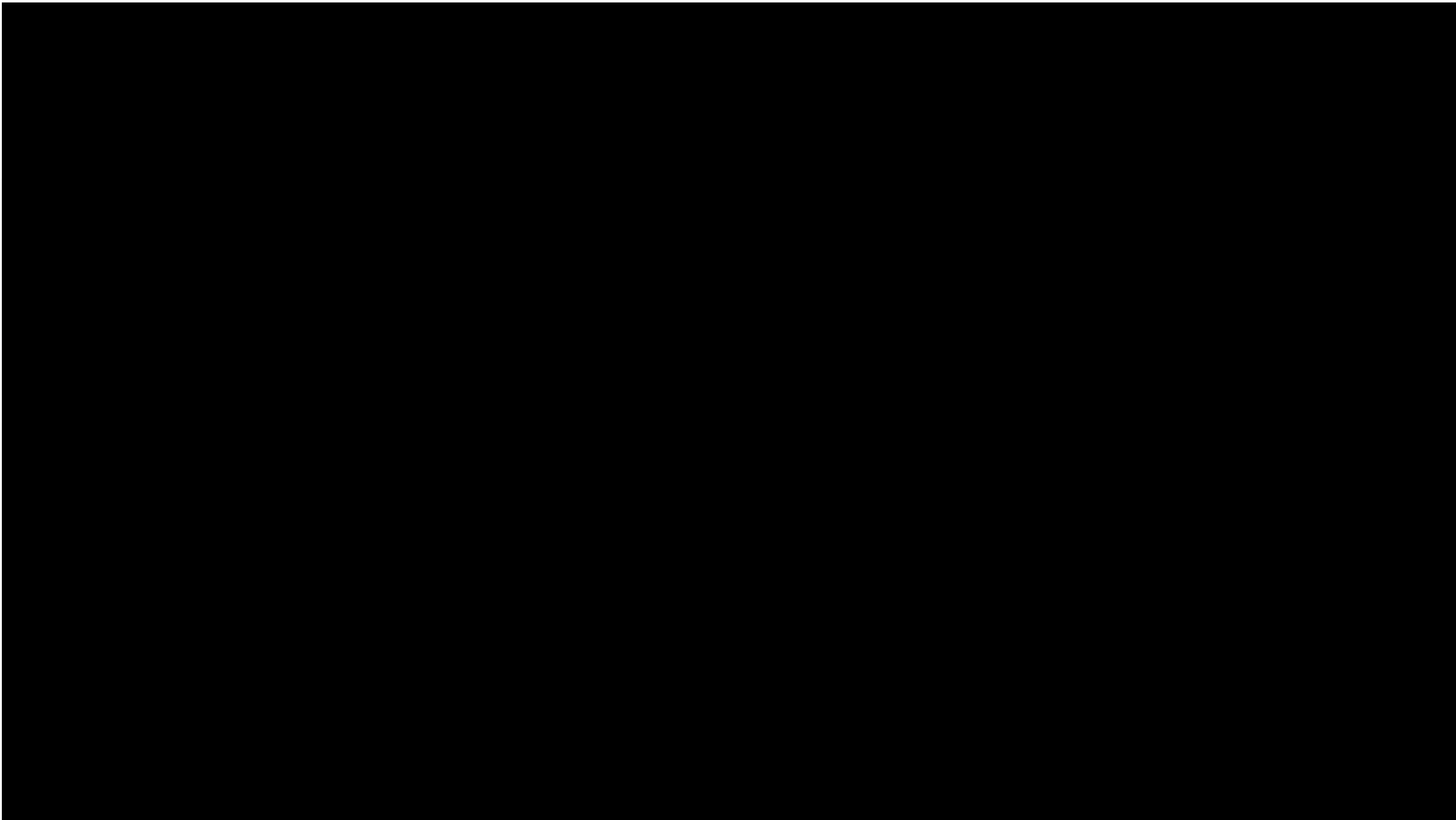
8-weeks of Training-practice once a week

Area Games- Held on a Saturday in Jacksonville

Regional Game – Held on a Saturday in the  
Jacksonville/Daytona/Gainesville Area

State Games – Held at ESPN World Wide of Sports – Friday/Saturday





# League Play in St. Johns



## Florida Elite Unified Soccer League

Fall October/Nov

## Gridiron Unified Flag Football

Spring April/May



# League Play Breakdown:



## Week-by-Week Schedule:

- Week 1: Practice
- Week 2: Practice/Game \*30-minute practice/30-minute game
- Week 3: Practice/Game \*30-minute practice/30-minute game
- Week 4: Practice/Game \*30-minute practice/30-minute game
- Week 5: Game
- Week 6: Game





# League Play Breakdown:



**Program Overview:** This program fosters inclusivity and teamwork among **Junior Special Olympics Florida Athletes** (ages 11-15 with intellectual disabilities or developmental delay) and **Partners** (ages 11-15 without an intellectual disability) through an engaging and structured unified league.

## Program Structure:

- **Location:** Youth Sports Franchise league venue
- **Fall or Spring Season:** 6 weeks, with one make-up rain date
- **Cost:** Free
- **Teams:** 4 teams (24 athletes and 16 partners)
- **Age Group:** Junior (Athletes: 11-15, Partners: 11-15)
- **Game Time:** Same time every week, for one hour



## INAUGURAL SPRING SOCCER PROGRAM

Florida Elite Soccer Academy is proud to present the inaugural Spring Soccer Program as part of the Special Olympics Unified Sports initiative. This program fosters inclusivity and teamwork among Special Olympics Florida athletes (ages 11-15 with intellectual disabilities) and Unified partners (ages 11-15 without an intellectual disability) through an engaging and structured Unified soccer league.

**MARCH 3 - MAY 5**

Register by February 15, 2024

**COST IS  
FREE!**

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Inclusion: Create a welcoming environment for athletes and partners of diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- Skill Development: Foster the growth of soccer skills while emphasizing teamwork and sportsmanship.
- Community Engagement: Encourage community participation by inviting new athletes and partners to join the inaugural unified soccer league with Florida Elite.

### GAME TIME

Sundays, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

### VETERANS PARK FIELD 6

1332 Veterans Park, St. Johns County

**LEARN MORE  
AND REGISTER**



SCAN ME



## LET'S BE CHAMPIONS TOGETHER

We're bringing Florida athletes with and without intellectual disabilities together on the same flag football teams for training and competition.

A Special Olympics Unified Sports program

**SEASON DATES:** Friday nights, April 5 - May 17

**AGES:** Athletes and Partners, 11-15 years old

**LOCATION:** Ponte Vedra - Davis Park, Florida

**FEE:** There is no cost to participate!

**DETAILS:** All athletes receive official Gridiron uniforms and flag belts. Division champions are awarded custom Gridiron rings.

**REGISTER HERE!**

Registration deadline:  
March 1st







# FLORIDA ELITE SOCCER ACADEMY

THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

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**Florida Elite proudly  
presents**



**Special Olympics  
Unified Sports®**

Team sports bring people together. Special Olympics Unified Sports® teams do that, too and much more. About 1.2 million people worldwide take part in Unified Sports, breaking down stereotypes about people with intellectual disabilities in a really fun way. ESPN has served as the Global Presenting Sponsor of Special Olympics Unified Sports since 2013, supporting the growth and expansion of this program that empowers individuals with and without intellectual disabilities to engage through the power of sports.

<https://www.floridaelitesa.com/special-olympics---unified-sports>

# Gridiron Unified Flag Football



Unified Flag football is set to revolutionize inclusivity in sports by bringing together Special Olympics Florida Athletes aged 11-15 with intellectual disabilities or developmental delays alongside Partners of the same age group who do not have intellectual disabilities. This initiative aims to establish an engaging and structured unified flag football league that fosters teamwork, camaraderie, and skill development.

By the Numbers:

4 Teams:

Head coach from the Local High School, Ponte Vedra High School

Helped recruit football players from PVHS to help coach



<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/mcWSwpDmb76LExiT/>



# Health Programs

Our health programs are designed to help Special Olympics athletes improve their health and fitness, to increase the athlete's ability to train and compete as well as enhance their well-being. Through health programs, Special Olympics:

- Ensures quality Health Screenings/Referrals for athletes
- Offers Health Professionals the opportunity to learn how to treat people with intellectual disabilities and be more prone to welcome them into their practices



# Healthy Athletes Screenings



## Fit Feet

Checks athletes' shoe size, toenails, feet, and ankles. Teaches athletes how to take care of their feet.



## FUNfitness

Measures athletes' strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance. Athletes get a personalized workout guide at the end.



## Health Promotion

Educates athletes about healthy habits such as sun safety, nutrition, hydration, exercise, and hand washing.



## Healthy Hearing

Checks athletes' ears and hearing. Athletes can get a hearing aid if needed.



## MedFest

A sports physical (needed to compete in Special Olympics).



## Opening Eyes

Checks athletes' eyes. Athletes can get prescription glasses or sports goggles if needed.



## Special Smiles

Checks athletes' teeth, gums, tongue, and mouth. Teaches athletes how brush and floss their teeth correctly.



## Strong Minds

Teaches athletes ways to handle stress.

# Healthy Athletes Screenings FAQs

## Where do we do screenings?

- At sports competitions (regional and state), in community settings

## How often?

- Year-round and virtually
- We recommend athletes go through each screening at least 1-2 times a year

## How long does a screening take?

- Between 15-45 minutes depending on the discipline and the athlete's needs

## Who can be screened?

- Anyone with an intellectual or developmental disabilities
- Does not need to be a registered SOFL athlete

## What is the process for setting up screenings?

- Sports staff work with Health staff
- Health staff also arrange screenings independently in the community

## What happens after a screening?

- Athletes who need a referral for follow-up care will receive a letter, email, or phone call with a list of providers we recommend

# Local Special Olympics Florida Contacts



Shelley Henry- Northeast Regional Director ([ShelleyHenry@sofl.org](mailto:ShelleyHenry@sofl.org))

Lindsay Jones- School Programs ([LindsayJones@sofl.org](mailto:LindsayJones@sofl.org))

Paula Ouimette- Sports Administration/Registration ([PaulaOuimette@sofl.org](mailto:PaulaOuimette@sofl.org))

Harley Hudson- Sports North St Johns ([HarleyHudson@sofl.org](mailto:HarleyHudson@sofl.org))

Ashlyn MacDonald- Sports South St Johns ([AshlynMacdonald@sofl.org](mailto:AshlynMacdonald@sofl.org))

Zoe Losasso- Community Engagement ([ZoeLosasso@sofl.org](mailto:ZoeLosasso@sofl.org))

Mary Bishop- Health Programs ([MaryBishop@sofl.org](mailto:MaryBishop@sofl.org))

# How to get involved!



[How to get involved?](#)

Contact Paula Ouimette ([PaulaOuimette@sofl.org](mailto:PaulaOuimette@sofl.org)) to get added to the contact list and get information on how to register.



# INCLUSION MANIFESTO

We are not just athletes. We are the ambassadors of an uprising. Peaceful protestors in rebellion against anyone who has a fear of difference.

Our demands are equality, dignity and a recognition of our shared humanity. We will not stop or accept anything less.

We are deserving. When we compete we are fighting for a more inclusive world. We are champions on the field and for this cause.

Today our world is more divided than ever and coming together has never been more urgent.

The revolution is inclusion and it is not optional.



Thank you-

Jana Arnette

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904-568-6681

***Special Olympics***  
*Florida*

