



Special Smiles is the dental health discipline of Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® that provides athletes with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to take charge of their oral health.

**Special Smiles provides comprehensive oral health care information, offers free dental supplies and instructions on correct brushing and flossing techniques to Special Olympics athletes.** This also includes issuing preventative supplies, like toothpaste, toothbrushes and fluoride varnish.

### Importance and Impact

Special Smiles screenings have found that a large percentage of Special Olympics athletes are unaware of the condition of their oral health.

- **46%** have periodontal conditions
- **36%** have untreated tooth decay
- **14%** are in need of urgent care
- **15%** have dental pain

### CONTACT

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### Purpose of the Screening:

#### Special Smiles is an event designed to:

- Increase access to dental care for Special Olympics athletes, as well as people with intellectual disabilities.
- Raise dental professionals' awareness of the oral health concerns of people with special needs, including difficulties involved in accessing care.
- Develop a body of knowledge about the oral health care needs of children and adults with disabilities.
- Provide a list of regional dental professionals who care for people with special needs to all athletes who participate in Special Smiles.

