



SPECIAL OLYMPICS FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

The **Special Olympics Family Support Network** was founded with a basic premise: that family members of present and future Special Olympics athletes are valuable and have an important role to play in Special Olympics outreach. On a day-to-day basis, families connect by volunteering at athletic trainings, meeting in local gatherings, sharing links and information and talking online via a global network.

The Family Support Network connects Special Olympics families with new families of an individuals with intellectual disabilities and provides support and information in a critical time of need. Opportunities include:

- Become advocates for the Special Olympics movement;
- Match families to share ideas, issues and common interests;
- Volunteer in their loved one's athletic training; and
- Encourage new families to join Special Olympics.

Thanks to the support of Special Olympics Board of the Director Kim Samuel Johnson and the Samuel Family Foundation, Special Olympics is able to offer grants to support the development of Family Support Networks and Family Support Network events.

Global Family Leaders

Special Olympics Global Family Leaders are instrumental in making Special Olympics a success for everyone involved. Global Family Leaders promote, educate and inform families, Special Olympics Programs and the community about the mission, philosophy and benefits of the movement.

Family members of a Special Olympics athlete are eligible to become Global Family Leaders. Simply participate in Special Olympics and share a commitment to the mission and philosophy of Special Olympics; enthusiasm for the movement; and dedication to the development of Global Family Initiatives. Special Olympics Global Family Leaders have summed up their commitment to the movement in the following declaration:

The Global Family Leaders' Declaration to Change the World:

As Special Olympics Global Family Leaders,

WE BELIEVE that any society aspiring to be just must value the ideas, skills and contributions of all of its members, including people with intellectual disability. Intellectual disabilities transcend race, gender, religion, national origin, geography and political philosophy.

WE RECOGNIZE that through sports training and competition, people with intellectual disabilities are inspiring examples for hope, dignity and courage.

WE COMMIT to understand, respect and value all individuals, to improve attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities and to create real opportunities for and with them in friendship, education, employment, self-advocacy, health care and sports participation.

WE PLEDGE to focus our efforts on developing family support through our leadership and devotion to the belief that there will come a day when the families of those with intellectual disabilities can hold their heads high throughout their community, throughout their country and throughout the entire world.

To learn more about the **Family Support Network** visit www.specialolympics.org/families