

# Healthy Athletes® Program Testimonials

"What we are trying to do is gather all this health information about our athletes so we can pile it together, look at it, and see what kind of health needs our athletes have and what we can do to make their lives better."

~Dr. Matthew Holder MD,  
Global Medical Advisor Special  
Olympics, Inc.

"I love the Healthy Athletes Program! It's helped not only me, but thousands of athletes in Wisconsin... young and old. The recreation spectacles protect my eyes so I'm not afraid of the volleyball or tennis ball when they come to close to my eyes. Sometimes my friends tell me they have a doctor, but they don't have insurance. I tell them when you're at the state games, take the opportunity to attend [the Healthy Athletes Program], they teach you how to stretch and check your eyes and mouth."~Cindy Bentley, *Special Olympics Athlete*

"In Milwaukee Public Schools, we serve many athletes that are considered low income. That means, unfortunately, many have difficulty getting doctor's appointments and are only seen by a health professional when they are given an opportunity such as this. MedFest 2009 not only allowed them to participate in Special Olympics, but also helped detect various health issues that had previously gone undiagnosed." ~Annie McGinnity, *Special Olympics Coach & Milwaukee Recreation Supervisor for Adaptive Athletics*

"The athletes really get a good physical. For one patient, they caught a fairly serious eye disease. The athletes get basic medical care, but really if they didn't have their medical form filled out every three-years, some of them would never get a physical." Kathy Holcombe,  
*Special Olympics Parent*

"Each athlete will be instructed in an individualized exercise program that has been developed just for them. It encourages them to continue with regular exercise outside of their sport and continues to improve their flexibility strength and balance."  
~Lois Harrison, PT, DPT, MS, *Physical Therapy Faculty Member at Concordia University & SOWI Fun Fitness Clinical Director*

"Not only does Healthy Athletes benefit athletes by teaching health education and offering free health screenings and exams, but it also gives health care professionals interaction and training in assessing the health status of persons with intellectual disabilities." ~Missy Schoenbrodt, *Special Olympics Director of Sports Training & Athlete Wellness*





# Healthy Athletes® Program Testimonials

"This program helps a lot of athletes all over the world. There are athletes out there who don't have glasses. There are a lot of athletes who can't afford the dental care they need. Those athletes are able to be treated by a doctor when they go to the Healthy Athletes Program, Special Smiles or Opening Eyes. They actually get glasses ground on-site for them so they can see. That's really amazing."

*~Martha Hill, Special Olympics Athlete*

"The reason I do it is because there is such a need for it. We usually see between 250 and 300 athletes at each event. There are so many athletes that we find really need eye care and don't get it. In this population, there are a lot who have high prescriptions and really need glasses, but don't have them. Every time I think about not doing it the next year, I see all the athletes that need our help and it certainly makes us come back."

*~Dr. Kellye Knueppel, OD, FCOVD, Developmental Optometrist, Vision Therapy Center, & SOWI Opening Eyes Clinical Director*

"All the doctors were very professional and pleasant to work with! They were able to explain the vision correction that Charlie required in a way we hadn't heard before. We were surprised and very grateful to learn that he would receive a new pair of glasses as well as swimming and sport goggles. The family time we've spent at Special Olympics events has been a wonderful experience for us. The medals that Charlie won were an extra bonus, and your program was the icing on the cake!"

*~Special Olympics Family, Anne, Dan, John, Charlie, & Catherine Gainey*

"For a lot of the athletes we see, it's not so much tooth decay; it's the issue of gum tissue and periodontal disease. If we can get them routine care it's going to be a lot easier to get them healthy. We make it fun for them and try to take away the issue of being afraid to see the dentist."

*~Kathleen Endres, RDH, CDHC, & Special Smiles Clinical Director*

"The athletes are walking away with free eye glasses, free sunglasses, and getting their eyes examined. There are a lot of good doctors here donating their time. It's another good way to keep the team together."

*~ Special Olympics Coach Glen Kozicki of Waukesha*