

Community Model

Young Athletes in the community allows parents to share in the fun their children have while playing with others. They also observe their children achieving skills that will help them in sports and in life.

Structure

Frequency

One time per week, plus two times per week at home

Timing

45 minute – 1 hour sessions

Setting

Indoors or outdoors. A community center, recreation center, or library can be used

Coaches

Community volunteer, specialized professional, family member or university student

Inclusion

Siblings or local community children

Volunteers

Family members, Special Olympics athlete leaders, local sport club members or university students



Implementing in the Community

Safety and Space

- Not too big; not too small. Make sure the space matches the needs of the activity and your group size.
- Indoor vs outdoors. Young Athletes is great for indoors and outdoors – but be mindful of spacing and safety.
- One space vs two spaces. If your class is large, you can consider dividing your class into two groups.

Structure

- Establish a routine. Routines provide clear expectations. Create different skill stations to accommodate children of different abilities and ages.
- Plan for rest breaks. Provide a place where children can rest if they become overstimulated.
- Encourage different modes of movement to transition between activities. Invite siblings, parents or children without ID to support children by modeling activities.
- Use music to signal transitions.

Engage Family Member

Family Support Groups—Provide families with a space to talk and connect while their children are in YA

Weekly newsletters and emails—easy way to connect with parents weekly!

At home activities—share the Activity Guide with parents so they can practice the activities at home

Volunteer—Invite family members to volunteer