

# Fitness Survey

## Survey of Special Olympics Coaches Regarding Athlete Fitness

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Special Olympics

Healthy Athletes  
Health Promotion

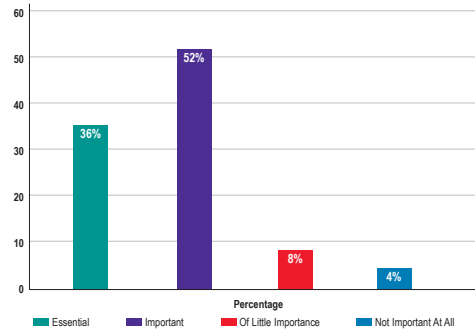
Special Olympics is committed to developing approaches that will directly address its 1.3 million athletes' fitness and health. To gather information to help develop an effective strategy, Special Olympics surveyed 304 Special Olympics coaches from 71 countries (182 coaches from the United States and 122 coaches from 70 other countries).

The Survey of Special Olympics Coaches Regarding Athlete Fitness provides a baseline assessment of coaches' perspectives, interest and involvement in athlete physical fitness and conditioning. The survey:

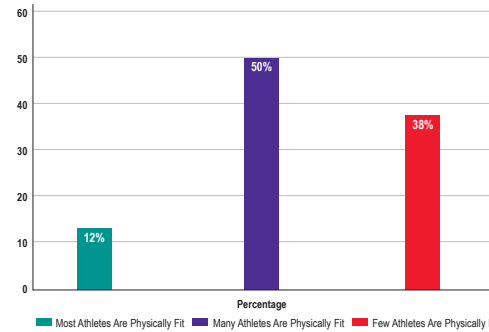
- Reflects the key role coaches play in the ongoing participation of athletes in Special Olympics; and
- Helps determine the role they will need to play if a greater commitment were to be made to athlete fitness and conditioning.

The survey was conducted from November 2002 to June 2003. Coaches surveyed represent all 26 Special Olympics sports.

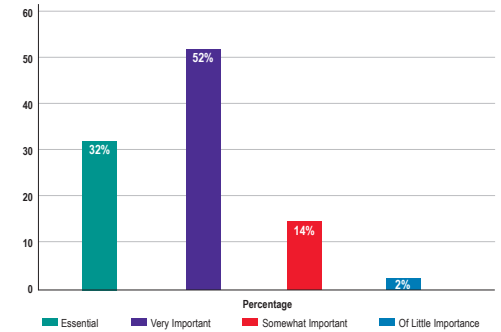
**88 percent of coaches felt that reaching the highest personal level of fitness is either essential or important. 4 percent felt that it is not important at all.**



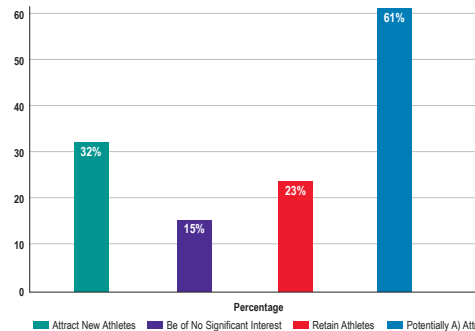
**38 percent of coaches responded that few Special Olympics athletes are physically fit.**



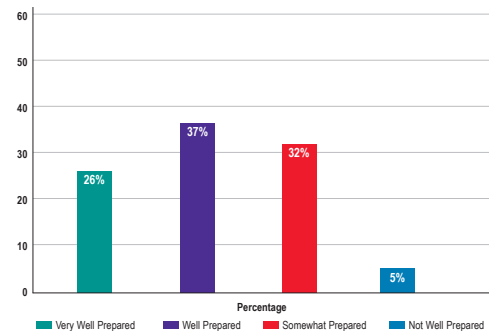
**84 percent of coaches felt their role is either very important or essential to athlete fitness and health.**



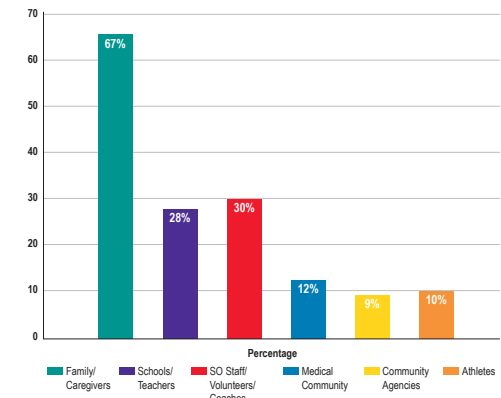
**Coaches felt that greater opportunities for improved fitness and health could attract new athletes and retain athletes.**



**More than 60 percent of coaches felt they were very well prepared or well prepared to assist Special Olympics athletes in improving their fitness.**



**Coaches identified families and caregivers as their most important allies in promoting athlete fitness.**



### Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®

The Special Olympics Healthy Athletes initiative helps Special Olympics athletes improve their health and fitness, leading to an enhanced sports experience and improved well-being. Athletes receive a variety of health services through clinics conducted in welcoming environments at Special Olympics competitions, while health care professionals learn about the health needs of Special Olympics athletes and gain confidence and satisfaction in volunteering their skills to an underserved population. The Healthy Athletes initiative will work with coaches and other important people in each athlete's life to promote and encourage health awareness and good choices.

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