

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games one month away

The [2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games](#) are reaching the one month to go mark, with more than 1,600 athletes with intellectual disabilities and volunteer coaches and mission staff set to converge in Kamloops from July 6 to 8. The athletes from all over British Columbia and the Yukon have been training hard and are so excited to compete in Canada's Tournament Capital.

Volunteers are urgently needed, as the Games have not yet reached the halfway mark of the 1,000 volunteers needed to ensure a high-quality experience for the participants from all around the province and the Yukon. The incredible Kamloops volunteers are invited to get involved with this rewarding and inspiring experience, and make a difference through the power of sport.

2017 SOBC Games Chair Karl deBruijn says he has worked on many sport events during his career with School District #73, but none was more rewarding than being involved with Special Olympics athletes during his previous role as a member of the 2015 Special Olympics BC Winter Games Organizing Committee.

"We'll need close to 1,000 volunteers in every aspect of the Games. I know Kamloops is amazing for their ability to pull in volunteers, and highly qualified volunteers," deBruijn says. "The athletes have been working hard in their home communities, and volunteers can give them an outstanding experience here in Kamloops by helping with everything from sports, medal presentations, and ceremonies to meals, accommodations, transportation, and security."

Volunteers can easily register online at [sobcgameskamloops.ca](http://sobcgameskamloops.ca) or call the Kamloops Sport Council office at 250-828-3822.

### Special Olympics BC Games Healthy Athletes screenings open to all local individuals with intellectual disabilities

People with intellectual disabilities experience worse health care and access to services than others in their communities, and they have dramatically higher rates of preventable disease, chronic pain and suffering, and premature death in every country around the world. [Special Olympics Health programming](#) is addressing the range of barriers that affect the health of individuals with intellectual disabilities, which include lack of access, education, and resources. Many individuals with intellectual disabilities have trouble realizing or expressing their health concerns, and many health professionals have not had the

opportunity to receive specific training, or are not familiar enough with this population, to know the best questions to ask to draw out the issues.

To combat these challenges and help ensure individuals with intellectual disabilities get the care they need, Special Olympics offers free [Healthy Athletes](#) screenings in a fun, friendly setting run by volunteer health practitioners who have been trained to work with individuals with intellectual disabilities.

During the 2017 SOBC Games, Special Olympics BC will be hosting Healthy Athletes screenings in a variety of disciplines at McArthur Island Sports and Events Centre. These free screenings will be open to all local individuals with intellectual disabilities on Friday, July 7, from 1 to 5 p.m., and on Saturday, July 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

[LifeLabs](#) has generously signed on as the 2017 SOBC Summer Games Healthy Athletes Sponsor. Special Olympics BC's health programming and screenings also benefit from the ongoing support of the Golisano Foundation, Westminster Savings, and our provincial partners and fundraising events.

To learn more, please contact SOBC Health & Sport Science Coordinator Ashten Black:  
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### Sincere thanks to sponsors

SOBC is very grateful to all the sponsors who have stepped forward to help create life-changing experiences through these Games:

- **Platinum Sponsors:** City of Kamloops and School District #73
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- **Healthy Athletes Sponsor:** LifeLabs
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### About the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games

The 2017 SOBC Summer Games, set to be held in Kamloops July 6 to 8, will be the largest SOBC Games to date, with almost 1,300 athletes with intellectual disabilities from all parts of the province and the Yukon expected to compete, supported by more than 350 volunteer coaches and mission staff. Hot on the heels of the successful 2015 SOBC Winter Games, Kamloops will be the first community to host back-to-back SOBC Winter and Summer Games. The 2017 Games will feature exciting competition and inspiring displays of sportsmanship in the 11 SOBC summer sports: 5- and 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball,

bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming. In 2017, the SOBC Games Opening Ceremony will be held on July 6, followed by competition throughout Friday July 7 and Saturday July 8. A Closing Ceremony will be held on July 8 (open only to Games participants) and volunteer recognition breakfast on July 9.

More than 1,000 volunteers will be needed to help stage this inspiring event. Learn more at [www.sobcgameskamloops.ca](http://www.sobcgameskamloops.ca) and find SOBC on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety; the Games hashtags are #SOBCGames #Kamloops2017.

## About Special Olympics BC

Special Olympics BC is dedicated to providing individuals with intellectual disabilities opportunities to enrich their lives and celebrate personal achievement through positive sport experiences. In 57 communities around the province, we provide year-round training and competitive opportunities in 18 different sports to more than 4,600 athletes of all ages and abilities, thanks to the dedicated efforts of over 3,900 volunteers. For more information, please visit [www.specialolympics.bc.ca](http://www.specialolympics.bc.ca), and find us on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety. To learn more about SOBC – Kamloops, visit [www.sobckamloops.org](http://www.sobckamloops.org) and [www.facebook.com/sobckamloops](http://www.facebook.com/sobckamloops).

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