Health & Safety Guidelines

The health and safety of athletes, volunteers, family members and spectators is the highest priority at every Special Olympics Kansas competition or training. Risk reduction and accident prevention requires good planning, effective communication, and a high level of awareness by all stakeholders and participants.

General Information to be aware of:

**Accident/Incident Reporting:** Should an injury occur or a behavior incident arise it’s important that a Special Olympics First Report of Accident/Incident form & Accident form be completed as promptly and accurately as possible. Why this is important...This procedure allows claims to be processed quickly. These forms may be found at the following locations: 1) Games/Competition pick-up packet. The Local Program Coordinator or a team coach should have this form with them 2) State Basketball- These forms may also be found at the registration table at the high school.

**Hydration:** Dehydration is a serious danger. Please be sure everyone is drinking plenty of water throughout the competition and related activities. The current recommendation is 85 ounces of water per day. Water is available for athletes and coaches at competitions. However, we still recommend that each individual brings a refillable water bottle with them.

**Injuries:** Injuries may occur at any time, but are more likely to occur when athletes become fatigued or dehydrated. In the event an injury occurs:
- Keep the injured athlete calm and stationary; do not move an injured athlete.
- Contact the on-site medical personnel, venue manager or Special Olympics staff.
- Stay with the injured athlete until medical personnel arrive.

**Athlete Medical Releases:** It’s the Local Program Coordinators responsibility to be sure they or a designated coach carry copies of the Special Olympics Kansas Medical/Release form with them at all times. In the event of an injury or medical emergency, coaches will be asked to provide this form for medical personnel.

**Crisis Communication:** A crisis is an unexpected situation or incident posing potential or actual harm to the SOKS reputation and viability. Information or mis-information about any incident that could have a negative impact on the image of SOKS can lead to a crisis situation. While it is not always possible to anticipate or prevent a crisis, the following crisis communication plan will be in place to assist at all levels of the organization.

In the event of a “crisis” immediately contact Special Olympics Kansas staff at the competition or event. Special Olympics Kansas staff on-site should be the first point of contact to handle the issue. If Special Olympics Kansas staff are not available at the event or cannot be immediately located, please contact John Lair/CEO, SOKS (cell) 913-333-7800/(office) 913-236-9290 ext. 104 or Chris Burt/COO, SOKS, (cell) 785-760-3519/(office) 913-236-9290 ext. 107.
In case of emergency, determine whether proper authorities have been notified (police dept., fire department, rescue squad). The first priority is to prevent further injury and give necessary treatment to individuals who are injured.

**Lost Athlete:** If an athlete is missing or unaccounted for, contact Special Olympics staff at the event or the Venue director. Be prepared to provide a complete description of the missing athlete, including clothing, physical characteristics and location where the athlete was last scene.

**On-Site Orientation:** When teams arrive at the different venues, coaches and chaperones should take a minute to orient themselves and athletes to important contacts and locations:
- Special Olympics staff and Venue Directors
- First Aid stations and medical personnel
- Emergency exits and site evacuation plan
- Locker rooms or restrooms

**Safety Checklist**

**Transportation:** Participating teams are responsible for their own transportation. We recommend vehicles to be equipped with the following items:
- Jumper Cables
- De-Icer/Scraper
- Flashlight with spare batteries
- First Aid Kit and manual
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Drinking water
- Snacks (i.e. Power Bars)
- Full tank of gas
- Cell Phone

**Reminder of Coaches Responsibilities:**
- If an athlete must be transported to the hospital, a coach, chaperone or family member must accompany the athlete.
- Ensure athletes bring extra medications in the unlikely event of being delayed in returning home. (Recommend 2 days).
- Carry current Athlete Medical Releases with you.
- If you have any health or safety concerns locate medical personnel, SOKS staff, or Venue Director immediately. **“If you see questionable behavior say something”**.