

NOTICE TO ALL  
PARENTS, GUARDIANS, COACHES, TEACHERS OF  
INDIVIDUALS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

A condition exists in about 10% of all individuals with Down syndromes. This condition, known as Atlantoaxial Subluxation, is a weakness between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> vertebrae in the neck. Athletes who have this condition may be seriously injured if involved in certain activities which over-extend the neck muscles.

The Board of Directors of Special Olympics Kansas has developed a policy which will prohibit all athletes with Down syndrome from participation in athletic competition or any Special Olympics Kansas event including training, clinics or any activity sponsored by SOKS or any Area or Local Program, until they have been examined for Atlantoaxial Subluxation. Although the chance that your athlete has this condition is very slight, we do not want to endanger his/her safety.

The only way to check for Atlantoaxial Subluxation is by x-ray. Therefore, if your athlete is Down syndrome, the athlete must have an x-ray to check for this condition prior to any participation. The Headquarters Office has a Down Syndrome Addendum which the physician must complete upon x-ray examination. Please contact the Headquarters Office at 913-236-9290, or 800-444-9803 to request this form.

The examination for Atlantoaxial Subluxation is a one-time examination. If the examination has been performed on the athlete, a new examination is not necessary. However, the current Down Syndrome Addendum must be signed by the doctor. The report of such examination becomes a permanent part of the athlete's record and will be held on file at the Headquarters Office. If your athlete is Down syndrome, please contact the Headquarters Office prior to making arrangements for examination should you have any questions.

Athletes with Down syndrome who have been examined and found to have no evidence of Atlantoaxial Subluxation, will be allowed to participate in a Special Olympics Kansas events, unless as a result of another medical condition the athlete should not participate in an activity, as soon as the Down Syndrome Addendum form is on file in addition to a Parent/Medical Release Form at Headquarters.

If the examining physician finds positive or equivocal evidence of Atlantoaxial Subluxation, the athlete must have approval from his/her examining physician and family physician regarding in which Special Olympics Kansas sports he/she may participate. In addition, the parents/guardian must sign and return to Headquarters an Assumption of Risk Form prior to any participation by the athlete in any SOKS event including training, competition, clinics or any other activity sponsored by SOKS or any Region or Local Program.

If you have any questions, please contact Headquarters at 913-236-9290 or 800-444-9803.