

September 2008

The Connecticut Association of Schools and Special Olympics Connecticut have successfully partnered over the past fifteen years to bring Unified Sports to thousands of students across the state. Unified Sports combines athletes with special needs and typical peers for sport skill development and training. With this partnership, basic skills are learned and friendships develop, improving the life of children and building acceptance and understanding.

We are excited to announce the Young Athlete Program, a new Pre-School program offering all of the same wonderful benefits as Unified Sports, but now to children as young as 3, capturing the children at the very earliest phase of their educational and social development! The goal of the program is to teach the children basic skill activities, such as, walking and running, jumping and throwing by incorporating them into activities of coordination and balance to help children improve, physically, cognitively and socially.

Secondly, we hope to raise awareness by educating the public about the diverse abilities of children with special needs and the unique bond that naturally occurs while working and learning along side their typical peers. We will be monitoring the success of our efforts and will have the opportunity to meet with teachers from other communities implementing the Young Athlete Program to share strategies and successes. Special Olympics provide FREE equipment and instruction on improving school readiness and skills.

We are including a registration form that needs to be completed and signed and returned to school before the program can begin. The form allows Connecticut Association of Schools to track current participants and follow the growth of the program throughout the state.

Please feel free to contact Beth Rasmussen at 203-250-1111 ext 3937 (brasmussen@casciac.org) at Connecticut Association of Schools with any questions regarding the program. Thank you in advance for your support and assistance towards improving opportunities for all children!