



Fit Feet offers podiatric screenings to evaluate ankles, feet, lower extremity biomechanics, and proper shoe and sock gear to participating athletes. Many athletes suffer from foot and ankle pain, or deformities that impair their performance. In fact, **up to 50 percent of Special Olympics athletes experience one or more preventable or treatable foot conditions that can affect their sports participation.** Often, these individuals are not wearing the most appropriate shoes and socks for their particular sport. To alleviate these problems, volunteer foot specialists work with athletes to evaluate problems of the feet, ankles and lower extremity biomechanics.

### **Importance and Impact**

Fit Feet screenings have found that a large percentage of Special Olympics athletes have untreated foot conditions.

- **50%** have gait abnormalities
- **53%** have skin and nail problems
- **21%** have bone deformations
- **51%** of Special Olympics athletes in the U.S. are wearing the wrong size shoe



### **Purpose of the Screening and Goals:**

The mission of Special Olympics Fit Feet is to improve the quality of life and long-term health of Special Olympics athletes and people with intellectual disabilities. Fit Feet screenings give athletes, coaches and caregivers a better understanding of any existing and previously unknown foot problems. They also:

- Offer a free podiatric screenings to evaluate ankles, feet, lower extremity biomechanics, and proper shoes for Special Olympics athletes.
- Increase access to foot care for Special Olympics athletes, as well as all people with intellectual disabilities.
- Raise podiatrists awareness of foot concerns of people with special needs including difficulties involved in accessing treatment.
- Provide a list of regional podiatrists who care for people with special needs to all athletes who participate in the Special Olympics Fit Feet program.
- Develop a body of knowledge about proper foot care of children and adults with special needs.

### **CONTACT**

**Meggin van der Hilst, Au.D.:** Senior Manager, Special Olympics Fit Feet  
*E-mail: [mvanderhilst@specialolympics.org](mailto:mvanderhilst@specialolympics.org)*

**Dave Jenkins, D.P.M., FACFAS, FAAPSM:** Global Clinical Advisor, Special Olympics Fit Feet  
*E-mail: [djenki@midwestern.edu](mailto:djenki@midwestern.edu)*