



SOCCER

Played in just about every country, soccer can be enjoyed by children and adults of almost any physical build and ability. The sport requires little in the way of specialized equipment and is organized using simple, intuitive rules. Soccer is so fundamental to the future of Special Olympics' growth that it is the focus of a worldwide initiative. Soccer is perfect for Special Olympics Unified Sports, where people with and without intellectual disabilities play on the same teams.

Dear Family,

Your child's class continues to work with Special Olympics to reverse discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities. This month, we will use the Special Olympics sport of soccer to look at the importance of perseverance in the lives of Special Olympics athletes, as well as in our own lives.

Perseverance is an important quality. It makes the difference in an individual's ability to overcome the obstacles that are common to all our lives in addition to the unique hurdles we all face.

More importantly, as a class we are looking at ways in which we can help each other develop qualities of perseverance. We are examining the many ways in which we can support each other and understand when a person is facing obstacles to learning or participation.

You, your family, and your friends can reinforce the learning that is going on in our classroom. We appreciate the time and attention you give to helping our school community with this important effort.

teacher signature

This month's theme: perseverance

To teach children the importance of perseverance, our class will read the timeless fable *The Tortoise and the Hare*. You are no doubt familiar with this story of how the tortoise overcomes obstacles to defeat the hare—with a little help from his friends.

This story helps children learn

- The meaning of determination
- The meaning of perseverance and situations where it is required
- Words, language, and acts that encourage others to persevere

Students will also participate in a pillowcase soccer game and other activities that teach them perseverance, cooperation, and understanding of themselves and others. We'll need old pillowcases to use in our game, so watch for that request in the days to come. Please note that pillowcases will not be returned.



What you can do:



This month we're spotlighting Special Olympics soccer. Soccer requires very little equipment, and nearly anyone can play.

Get involved in your child's understanding of perseverance by getting outside and enjoying a game of soccer. Include family, friends, and neighbors—anyone who wants to play. Make your soccer game a multigenerational activity that offsets participants' ages and skill levels with rules and accommodations for equal participation. Anytime a participant gets frustrated, talk about perseverance and encourage other players to show their support.

Most of all, get out and have fun!