



WDSRA Mission

We enrich lives, connect communities and create fun through inclusive recreational opportunities.

WDSRA Vision

A world of opportunities, belonging and individuals reaching their full potential.



**Western DuPage
Special Recreation Association**
116 N. Schmale Rd., Carol Stream, IL 60188
www.wdsra.com 630-681-0962

Welcome to WDSRA

WDSRA is THE place for fun, engaging community-based social and recreational programs for individuals of all ages with special needs AND inclusion services in our partnering park district programs.

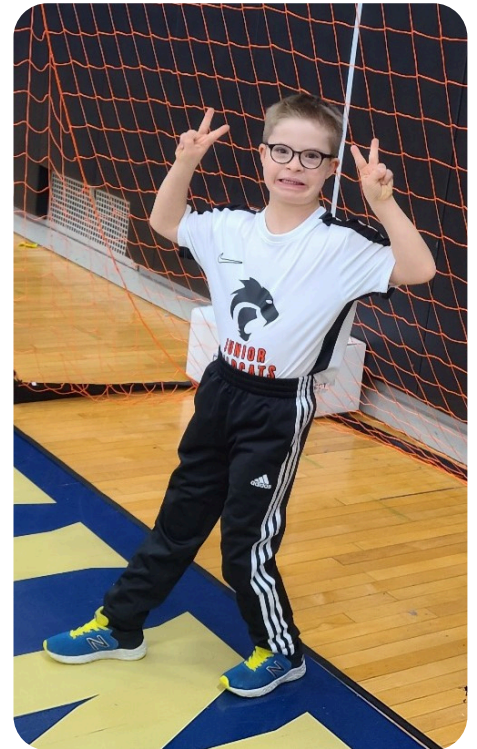
We bring you fun, exciting programs put together by expert staff dedicated to ensuring every experience is positive. You receive creative, innovative programming with opportunities to create social groups and make friends.

WDSRA helps participants perform at their highest ability level. We recognize the need for flexibility to provide the best environment and staff to help each participant based on their level of function, age, and interests.

As a WDSRA family member, you will have access to four seasons of programs and services available to residents of Bloomingdale, Carol Stream, Glen Ellyn, Naperville, Roselle, Warrenville, West Chicago, Wheaton and Winfield.

Our participants include people with the following:

- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism
- Pervasive developmental disorder
- Behavioral and learning challenges
- Deaf / Hard of Hearing
- Developmentally delayed
- Early childhood
- Geriatric
- Mentally ill
- Multi-needs
- Physically challenged
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visually impaired
- Youth at Risk



Award Winning Agency

WDSRA is a two-time National Recreation and Park Association's Gold Medal for Excellence in Programming in community-based recreation for people with disabilities. WDSRA is also accredited by the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association. Additionally, WDSRA has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the US & Canada every year since 2006.

What is Special Recreation?

Special Recreation Associations provide leisure opportunities for individuals with special needs through affiliation with local park and recreation agencies. Funding is provided through member park district communities, program revenues, donations, and other sources. Local businesses, companies, and service clubs are instrumental in providing in-kind contributions, volunteers, and financial donations.

Why is Recreation So Important?

While recreation is great for fun and frolics, it also provides a crucial component to the growth and development of the individual. Through play, we learn life skills that can have carry over in every aspect of our lives such as:

- Fostering independence
- Reinforcing existing skills
- Providing opportunities to develop new skills
- Increasing self-esteem
- Encouraging social interaction and peer relationships
- Reinforcing the social skills of fairness, teamwork and self-control
- Having fun!

WDSRA Programs

WDSRA offers four seasons of programs, to those as young as 3 years old to well into the senior years of life. There is something for every interest including

- Competitive & recreational athletics
- Special Olympics,
- Adaptive sports
- Music, dance, art & theater
- Social clubs
- Camps
- Trips - weekend & weeklong
- Special events
- and more!

We also provide outings to local area attractions and longer trips to special destinations such as Disney and Mexico during Spring Break. There is something for every interest and every age! The full line up of programs can be found in our seasonal brochures at www.wdsra.com.



Inclusion Services

Inclusion services are available to any individual who has a disability and wishes to participate in a member park district program. Accommodations are based on individual needs. Accommodations can range anywhere from training for park district staff to providing a WDSRA support staff member to providing adaptive equipment.

Our staff creates a safe and supportive environment and modifies activities as needed. The goal is for every individual to participate at their highest level possible.

Participant inclusion assistance is free of charge to residents of our member park districts. For more information, please call the Inclusion Team at 630.681.0962.

Staff

WDSRA staff are carefully selected to provide participants with the best experiences possible. Many come to us with previous experience as teachers or teacher assistants and other interests in the special needs population, such as Best Buddies, Peer Tutors, and service clubs.

We train staff to ensure they have the skills necessary to create positive experiences for every individual. Training may include topics such as behavior management, disability awareness, and vehicle safety.





Preparing for the First Day

The first day is always fun and exciting for everyone. Staff are eager to meet participants and participants are ready to engage!

Sometimes the excitement can cause a bit of controlled chaos on that first day. However, staff are trained to plan enough activities to fill the time and to find ways to adjust programs according to each participants' needs.

You can help by taking time before each class to convey any needs your participant might have during the program. This may include informing them of a reward for a job well done or key phrases to use that will help with behaviors. YOU are the best resource and we encourage your partnership!

Schedules

For some programs, a detailed schedule of activities will be sent to you before the program begins. If you have not received the schedule one week before the program start date, please contact the WDSRA office and we will be happy to assist you. Please note that some Special Olympics sports teams will not receive their information until the week of the program due to details required from the tournament committee.

ePACT

WDSRA utilizes ePACT to securely collect all participants' health and emergency contact information. The information you share is valuable and enables staff to offer programs that are safe and appropriate for each person's needs. With ePACT, you must only complete your child's information once. Then, on a yearly basis, you will need to verify that the information is correct. You can make changes at any time. We will be notified of your updates directly from ePACT. Additionally, please verify your phone number as program updates are sent via ePACT in the form of a text message and email.

An ePACT link will be sent to you after you have completed a new participant intake form.

Special Olympics Medical Form and Consent Form

Athletes who want to register and compete in Special Olympics programs must have a current medical form on file with WDSRA. Forms can be obtained from the WDSRA office or downloaded from the WDSRA website.

This form is separate from the Annual Information Form. The medical form is valid for up to 3 years from the date of the physician's examination.

Parents and athletes must return a completed form to the WDSRA office before registering for Special Olympic programs.

The Special Olympics Medical form must have the signatures of both the doctor and parent/guardian.



Transportation

For your convenience, WDSRA offers transportation pick-up points for selected programs. A minimum of 3 participants per pick-up point is required to provide this. For participant safety, the following procedures must be followed while riding in agency vehicles:

- Before the driver moves the vehicle, all passengers must sit in seats or wheelchairs and have seatbelts securely fastened.
- All wheelchairs must have brakes that are in good working condition and can stop the chair from moving.
- WDSRA staff members are responsible for determining whether or not a participant may be transported safely.
- Persons riding in Amigo-type wheelchairs or strollers must transfer to a vehicle seat and use a seat belt.
- WDSRA transport cannot wait more than 5 minutes due to the demanding transport schedule.



Scholarship Information

Participants who need financial assistance can request a scholarship as funds are available.

A scholarship request can be made each season for a maximum of 3 programs and for up to 50% of the program fee; not to exceed \$100 per program. Other arrangements for payment plans or partial payment programs can be arranged if needed. The scholarship request deadline is the same date set for resident registration. Scholarships are not available to non-residents.

Scholarship forms can be found at www.wdsra.com or by calling the office at 630-681-0962.

Registration and Payment

A registration form must be completed before the start of each season. Forms must be thoroughly completed and include a signature. Online registration is the preferred method. It offers you the most up-to-date information on your programs. To register online, a Household account is required. Please obtain this by calling the WDSRA office at 630-681-0962.

Completed forms can be mailed or dropped off at the WDSRA office, including a check or credit card information, or you can drop it by the office Mon – Friday from 9 – 4 pm.

Your registration must include full payment or the required deposit unless specific arrangements have been made. Registrations will not be processed if a balance remains from a previous season. Program fees will not be prorated for late registration.

A \$25 service fee will be charged for each returned check. Payment must be made within 10 days of notification, or the participant will be dropped.

Refund requests for all programs must be received no less than 2 weeks prior to the start of the program. If the withdrawal requests are received prior to 2 weeks, you will receive a refund minus a \$10 drop fee, any pre-purchased supplies/tickets, and non-refundable deposits.

Late Pick Up Policy

In order to be fair to our participants and program staff, WDSRA has enacted a late pick-up policy, and we appreciate your cooperation. Many of our programs have more than one pick-up location and if one person is late, it may disturb the schedule of others who are being picked up at another location. In addition, many of the WDSRA program staff have responsibilities after everyone is picked up. We request your promptness at pick-up.

The first time a participant is not picked up within a 10-minute grace period, a written warning will be issued. After the first warning, each time a participant is not picked up within 10 minutes after the established pick-up time, at \$10 fee will be charged for every 15 minutes or portion thereof.

Registration for programs will not be accepted until all outstanding late fees are paid.



Weather Cancellation Policies

In the event of severe weather, WDSRA may decide to cancel programs in the best interest of our participants. The following guidelines will be used to determine cancellations:

- **Severe winter weather**
 - Outdoor programs or programs with transportation for people with physical disabilities - Temperature of 10oF or wind chill of 0 degrees or colder.
 - For all other programs with transportation - temperature of -5 degrees or wind chill of -15 or colder.
 - All programs (including indoor) will be cancelled due to snowstorms or blizzard situations when driving restrictions and emergency plans are in effect.
- **Severe summer weather** – Outdoor programs or sites without air conditioning: temperatures above 95 degrees, a heat index above 100 degrees or if the National Weather Service issues a heat advisory.
- **Other weather** - All programs will be cancelled when a tornado warning is in effect in DuPage or surrounding counties.

WDSRA will use discretion for all other weather warnings and watches.

Cancelling Programs

1. WDSRA staff will look at all circumstances beginning two hours prior to the starting time of the program or first pick-up to determine if the program should be cancelled.
2. If the program is cancelled, program staff will send a text message (if phone number is verified in ePACT) and/or email to inform everyone of the cancellation.
3. Cancellations for weekly programs will be rescheduled or a refund will be issued. Special Olympics weather refunds will be issued for missed games, but not for missed practices.

For latest program information call the program hotline 630-597-0199



Wellness Guidelines

To prevent the spread of communicable diseases, it is recommended that participants do not attend programs when any of the following conditions exist:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Persistent diarrhea in conjunction with other symptoms
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) or discharge from the eye
- Symptoms of Covid-10, mumps, measles, chicken pox, strep throat, flu, impetigo or Coxsackievirus hand, foot and mouth disease).
- Runny nose with yellow or green discharge – indicating infection
- Lice or mites
- Fatigue due to illness which will hinder participation or enjoyment of the program



Please notify the WDSRA office of a participant's absence due to illness.

Participants should return when symptoms have passed or with a doctor's approval if one is involved in the management of the specific illness.

Say Cheese!

WDSRA staff occasionally takes photographs or videos of participants for promoting/advertising our programs, services, events, activities, and facilities in our brochures, website or social media, and other promotional avenues.

By registering for, participating in, or attending WDSRA programs, events, or other activities, the participant (or parent/guardian of a minor participant) irrevocably agrees to the use and distribution by WDSRA of his or her image (or of his/her minor child/ward) in photographs, video recordings, and any other electronic reproductions of such programs, events and activities for any purpose without inspection or approval and without compensation, rights to royalties or any other consideration now or in the future.



Contacts

To contact any member of the WDSRA full-time staff, call 630-681-0962. A full list of WDSRA staff contact information, including phone numbers and emails, can be found at www.wdsra.com.

WELCOME TO THE WDSRA FAMILY!

