

GET INTO IT[®]

Curriculum Opportunities Through Special Olympics

HELP PROMOTE
**INCLUSION &
ACCEPTANCE**
of people with
intellectual disabilities.

Dear Educator,

March is **Spread the Word to End the Word[®]** month, when people across the country pledge to stop using the hurtful R-word “retard(ed).” Now is the perfect time to promote understanding of people’s differences in your classroom, school and community with the Special Olympics Get Into It[®] initiative.

Get Into It[®] is developed for regular education classrooms:

- It is designed as a service-learning curriculum to advance students’ civic knowledge and skill development; and to motivate them to become advocates for all people with disabilities.
- It is aligned with character education and anti-bullying initiatives—and combined with other in-school Project UNIFY[®] programs, such as **Spread the Word to End the Word[®]** and **Unified Sports[®]**.
- It is **FREE!** Get Into It[®] is free of charge and available with online resources such as videos, classroom conversation starters, student games and a teacher discussion portal.

We encourage you to use the materials in this guide and download more resources at www.specialolympics.org/getintoit. They will provide direct connections with your local Special Olympics program and help your class develop service-learning projects in your community.

Sincerely,

The Editors of TIME FOR KIDS

WHAT'S INSIDE

Sample classroom activities and discussion starters from the Get Into It[®] curriculum.

Visit www.specialolympics.org/getintoit to access and download all the free resources!

More Quick Links

www.r-word.org

Spread the Word to End the Word[®] site.

www.Project-UNIFY.org

Project UNIFY[®] landing page.

Using the Poster on the Back

Hang the “Pledge to Show Respect” poster in your classroom for the month of March—and beyond. The poster’s pledge list is an important part of the program!

Share Your Feedback and You Could Win Prizes

After you use the Get Into It[®] curriculum at www.specialolympics.org/getintoit, take the survey and provide your feedback. You’ll be entered to win an R-word kit or a magazine subscription for your classroom!



Special Olympics

A supplement to

**TIME
FOR KIDS**

WELCOME TO PROJECT UNIFY®

Special Olympics Project UNIFY®, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, provides activation opportunities throughout the year. The goal of Project UNIFY® is to empower youth around the country in an effort to develop school communities where all young people are agents of change. Utilizing the programs and initiatives of Special Olympics, youth become advocates of respect and dignity for people with intellectual disabilities.



Project UNIFY® Programs....

Unified Sports® teams

Get Into It® curriculum

R-Word Assemblies and **Rallies for Respect**

Young Athletes™—early intervention, social and motor development

Games and sports events

ALPs—Athlete Leadership/Inclusive Youth Leadership

Partners Clubs

To find out more about Project UNIFY®, please visit www.Project-UNIFY.org.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Did you know that 90 percent of youth in the United States do not have a classmate with an intellectual disability (ID)? To help introduce your students to a person with ID and motivate them to be agents of change, share this first-person true story with the class:

Inclusion Is Not a Place, It Is a Feeling

“My name is Troy Daniels, but my friends call me TD. I have Down syndrome. Because my heart is bad, I use a wheelchair. I do not speak very well and sometimes I use a speech device.

Not too long ago, people with disabilities could not go to school with other kids. They had to go to ‘special schools.’ People like me were called ‘retard.’ That breaks my heart. Then the law said that I could come to a regular school. But no law can make me have friends.

But then some kids started to think that I was okay. First it was just one or two kids who were nice to me. They found out that I cared about them and I loved my school. I told them I want to have real friends. Others started to hang out with me, and they found out we could be friends. We started to learn together that in some ways we were different but in some ways we were the same. They called me friend and made sure that I was in everything at school. I cared about them and they cared about me.

I want all people to know and to see that these students I call my friends are the real teachers of life. They are showing you how it should be. They are the teachers for all of you to follow their lead. Yes, I am a person with a disability. The law says that I am included, but it is my friends who say, “TD, come sit by me.””

Ask students:

- Who is TD? What do you know about him?
- How do kids in your school make friends? How did TD make friends? How are the two ways the same?
- What do you think TD means by a “real” friend?
- Why do you think a law is needed for TD to go to the same school as other kids in his area?
- How can friends be “teachers of life”?
- The title of TD’s story is “Inclusion Is Not a Place, It Is a Feeling.” What do you think this title means?
- How could you make a difference for someone like TD?

CHANGING THE R-WORD

It is time to address the word “retard(ed)” and raise the consciousness of society to its hurtful effects.

Spread the Word to End the Word® is an effort by Special Olympics, Best Buddies International and our supporters to raise awareness of the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the word “retard(ed).”

WHAT

The campaign, created by youth, encourages people to pledge to stop using the R-word at www.r-word.org.

WHEN

Most activities are held each March, but people everywhere can help spread the word throughout their communities and schools year-round with pledge drives, youth rallies and online activation.

WHY

Respectful and inclusive language is essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities. However, much of society does not recognize the hurtful, dehumanizing and exclusive effects of the word “retard(ed).”

HOW

Start with the classroom activity below—and visit www.r-word.org to learn more about how you can Spread the Word to End the Word®.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY: STEP RIGHT UP!

PREP: Remind students that everyone is unique. Explain that today’s activity will help them think about how people are the same—and different—including ways that can and cannot be seen.

ACTIVITY: Have all students stand side-by-side in a line or a large circle. Explain that they will need to listen carefully and respond to sentences that describe them (their individual traits, experiences, likes and dislikes) by stepping forward.

- Begin with a simple directive, such as: *Step right up if you are wearing sneakers.* Allow time for students to respond. Instruct students to look at the two groups that are created and then have them return to their original spots.
- Continue calling out different categories, beginning with external characteristics (physical descriptions and experiences) and progressing to internal characteristics (preferences and abilities).
- Make sure all students are represented in a number of statements and use several statements that include the entire group to highlight both similarities and differences.

WRAP-UP: Help students process the experience by asking them questions like: *Did you learn anything new about your peers? How much can you tell about people just by looking at them? Which similarities and differences can you see and which ones can’t you see? Were the groups that stepped forward always made up of the same people? Some groups were small and some groups were large—which did you like being in?*

WRITE ABOUT IT: Ask students to write a page about what they learned in the activity, focusing on the idea that everyone in the class has unique talents and that each student has something to contribute.

This is just
one example of the many
**FREE ACTIVITIES
AND CURRICULUM
RESOURCES**
you’ll find at
[www.specialolympics.org/
getintoit!](http://www.specialolympics.org/getintoit!)

ACTIVATE! Spread the New R-Word

Using the word “retard(ed)” can make someone with an intellectual disability feel less than human—whether it’s intentional or not. Demeaning anyone with inappropriate words is always wrong. To discover a new R-word we can all get behind, circle the words in the puzzle. The leftover letters will spell the answer to the riddle.

WORD LIST:

- ALL
- PEOPLE
- HAVE
- UNIQUE
- TALENTS
- TO
- SHARE
- WITH
- OUR
- WORLD

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | H | A | R | E | E | E |
| R | T | T | O | U | H | L |
| W | E | N | Q | S | A | P |
| P | O | I | E | W | V | O |
| O | N | R | I | L | E | E |
| U | U | T | L | L | A | P |
| E | H | R | C | D | T | T |

YOU
 have the potential
 to make a difference—
 you just need to activate
 that power and
GET INTO IT!

RIDDLE:

What is the new R-word?

ANSWER:

_____ !

(Answer: RESPECT)



Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child is taking part in the **Special Olympics Get Into It®** curriculum at school—and learning that the word “retard(ed)” hurts millions of people with intellectual disabilities, and their families and friends. Please complete the pledge form so your child can return it to the classroom and be counted in the program.

Sincerely,

The Editors of TIME FOR KIDS



Home Pledge



My child, _____ ,
CHILD'S NAME

has gone online to www.r-word.org and taken the pledge:

“I pledge and support the elimination of the derogatory use of the R-word from everyday speech and promote the acceptance and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.”

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE