

# CORE MESSAGING TOOLKIT



# GOING ALL IN

**SPREAD  
THE WORD  
INCLUSION**



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## INTRODUCTION

Individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID), a group made up of over 200 million people, representing every country, belief system, sexual orientation, gender expression, race, and ethnicity, continue to be excluded and isolated from their peers in schools, workplaces, and communities around the world. By taking the Pledge to Include and by acting for meaningful inclusion, you can **combat the hurtful and dehumanizing effects of exclusion.**

This toolkit is for Special Olympics and Best Buddies Programs, partners, and participants around the world working to promote inclusion in their communities. Below you will learn how to write and talk about Spread the Word >> Inclusion and the 2023 theme of **Going All In(clusive)**. Utilize this messaging to educate others about Spread the Word, encourage those around you to take the pledge to include, and **build a more inclusive world for all.**



**PLEDGE TO INCLUDE  
AND COMBAT THE  
HURTFUL AND  
DEHUMANIZING  
EFFECTS OF  
EXCLUSION.**

[WWW.SPREADTHEWORD.GLOBAL/PLEDGE](http://WWW.SPREADTHEWORD.GLOBAL/PLEDGE)

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## TOP LINE MESSAGING

In 2022, we saw glimmers of hope, and permission to shift from concern and, frankly, fear to celebration. We were able to again champion those who persevered during this challenging chapter and spark change. So, in 2022, our campaign celebrated the Champions of Change within our communities.

For 2023, our continuing mission with Spread the Word has an opportunity we have not had in three years: We can stop and take a breath. We can assess where we've been and be deliberate about where we go next. We believe that this year offers the opportunity to be even more direct and to channel the passion that lies at the origins of Spread the Word. In 2023, our strategy is clear. Inclusion isn't just about including one more group. It's not about setting one more place at the dinner table. It's not about bringing one more person into the photo. Inclusion is about everyone. Inclusion is about everyone and it is about meaningful action.

Therefore, this year's thematic is Going All In(clusive), which is action-oriented - a motivational rallying cry that doubles down on the belief that everyone is the goal of our efforts. We are calling on our youth, our Special Olympics athletes and ambassadors to share their stories of courage, dedication, and engagement for inclusion. They are encouraged to share when the last time was that they went all in(clusive) – totally committed to something, stood up for something they believed in. In a call to action, each individual message is encouraged to end with a personal commitment on how they plan to "go all in" to take their own action for inclusion.

**SHARE YOUR PLEDGE BY TAGGING**

**@PLEDGETOINCLUDE**

**ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND  
INSTAGRAM AND USING  
#PLEDGETOINCLUDE  
USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO INVITE  
OTHERS TO JOIN YOU.**



## CORE MESSAGING TOOLKIT

ADDITIONAL  
TALKING  
POINTS

## 1

## Why is this campaign so important?

Excluding, dehumanizing, and demeaning language has a hurtful impact on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Therefore, cultivating a respectful and inclusive language is an essential part of our inclusion movement. Going all in(clusive) also means speaking up against the wrong and demeaning use of the R-word in conversations. It is part of an education effort that showcases that language informs attitudes and attitudes impact actions.

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## ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS



## 2

### What does the Spread The Word campaign stand for?

People with intellectual and disabilities (ID) still face exclusion, social isolation, and social abuse in schools, workplaces, and communities. This prevents us from building truly inclusive societal structures, where we can learn and grow together.

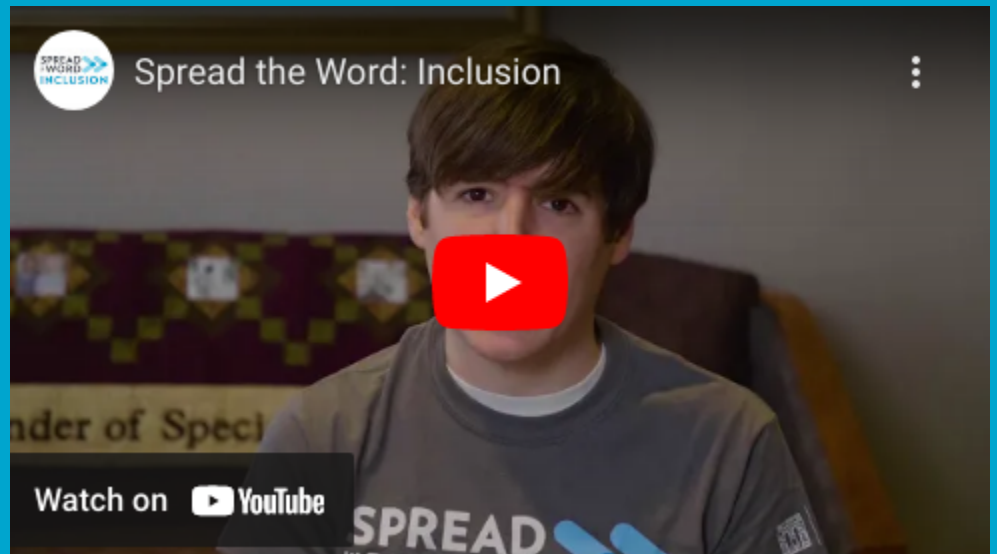
To drive change and help create a more inclusive society, Spread the Word to End the Word® was founded in 2009 by college students Soeren Palumbo (Notre Dame 2011) and Tim Shriver (Yale 2011).

The Spread the Word Inclusion campaign - as part of Special Olympics and supported by Best Buddies and our partners - is aimed at showcasing the impact of inclusive language and actions so that the discrimination of people with intellectual disabilities can come to an end.

Spread the Word Inclusion is led and continuously re-imagined by our youth activists. Their efforts are designed to rally schools, organizations, and communities to commit to the inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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**SPREAD THE  
WORD  
>>  
INCLUSION**



Founded by youth leaders Soeren and Tim in 2009 as Spread the Word to End the Word®, the campaign focused its first 10 years on addressing a particularly powerful form of exclusion: the word 'retard(ed)'. Over 10 years, leaders and self-advocates collected millions of digital and physical pledges from supporters committing to end the R-word. Each pledge was a personal commitment to acknowledge the hurt caused by the R-word and to be respectful in the words and actions taken towards people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

With leadership from Special Olympics and Best Buddies, and support from hundreds of other advocacy organizations, the campaign grew from a handful of events in 2009 to reaching thousands of schools by 2018. In 2019, Spread the Word to End the Word became Spread the Word®, with a focus not just on the elimination of a word but on the creation of a new reality: inclusion for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The global engagement campaign remains committed to empowering grassroots leaders to change their communities, schools, and workplaces, now through a call to their peers to take action for inclusion. With this change, Spread the Word will give community leaders around the world the tools needed to create socially inclusive places to learn, work, and live.

**WHAT WILL  
INCLUSION  
LOOK LIKE  
IN 10 YEARS?**

**VISIT OUR DROPBOX  
FOR MORE RESOURCES**

