

EDUCATOR TOOLKIT



GOING ALL IN

**SPREAD
THE WORD
INCLUSION**



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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, you and your students can commit to acting for meaningful social inclusion and combating the hurtful and dehumanizing effects of exclusion. This toolkit is for educators who want to support their students with and without ID in promoting inclusion at all school levels.

Below you will find ideas, resources, and more so that you and your students can engage every day of the year on what it means to fully include those with ID. To learn more about how to write and talk about Spread the Word >> Inclusion, view our Core Messaging Toolkit or explore our website at www.spreadtheword.global.

GOING ALL IN

We believe that 2023 offers the opportunity to be even more direct and to channel the passion that lies at the origins of Spread the Word. 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.

Therefore, the thematic for 2023 is Going All In(clusive): This thematic 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.

PROVIDE GUIDANCE & SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Respectful and inclusive words and actions are essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities. You can support your students in their efforts to make their schools and communities inclusive for all.



CREATE INCLUSIVE SPACES



Be a role model
for inclusion in
your school.

- Help create a positive school climate: Model inclusive language, use multiple and diverse examples that speak to all students.
- Talk with students and other educators about how they can promote inclusion.
- Plan activities that can be easily adapted.
- Create opportunities for inclusion through group projects and activities.
- Teach your students the meaning of inclusion and why it is so important.
- Encourage your students to take action for inclusion.

BE A MENTOR

Support your
students' efforts
in promoting
inclusion.



- Start a **Special Olympics** or **Best Buddies** club with your students or get involved with an already existing club as an advisor. Coach a **Special Olympics Unified Sports** team at your school.
- Help your students speak with other teachers and school administrators about their ideas and needs.
- Encourage students to reach out to sports teams, student government, service organizations, or other clubs focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as the Gay-Straight Alliance at your schools.
- Create a network of students, educators, and community members dedicated to fostering inclusion. Work with students to bring new people into the conversation.
- Challenge your students to learn more about inclusion. Lead the **Inclusion Tiles** activity from Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools and encourage

HOST AN EVENT

Help your
students plan an
inclusion event at
your school.



- Work with students at your school to host an assembly or pep rally for inclusion. You can host an event on Zoom, create a video, or use social media when in-person gatherings aren't possible. View [this guide from Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®](#) for more ideas for virtual events.
- [Unified Sports](#) and [Best Buddies Clubs](#) are a great place to start but consider bringing other clubs in that focus on inclusive practices such as racial justice, LGBTQ+ rights, culture, mental health, and more.
- Talk to your students about planning an Inclusion Week around Spread the Word Day in March. Create a theme or challenge for each day, use social media, and have students and community members sign the banner throughout the week. Involve them throughout the year promoting Spread the Word, using flyers and social media. [Find Social Templates Here.](#)
- Share why it is important to Pledge to Include. Have students and community members sign the banner or take the pledge online at www.spreadtheword.global/pledge.

Social Media is a powerful way to raise awareness for Spread the Word. It allows people to engage in conversations that help change attitudes and drive people to pledge to take their own action for inclusion at www.spreadtheword.global. Here are some ideas for using social media channels. Here are some ideas for using social media channels to start discussions about inclusion. Educators can use these tips on their own social media platforms, or provide this information to their high-school and college-aged students.



FACEBOOK

- Like and follow the [Spread the Word >> Inclusion Page](#)
- Re-share articles, videos, and events and your own narrative on inclusion. Contribute to positive discussions in the comments.
- Post on your own page inviting friends to take the [#pledgetoinclude](#) and [#GoingAllIn](#).
- Share your own story of inclusion with photos from Special Olympics of Best Buddies events.
- Network with other schools and educators to share best practices.



TWITTER

- Follow [@PledgeToInclude](#), [@SpecialOlympics](#) and [@BestBuddies](#)
- Retweet posts to your own page. Include your own words.
- Use [#PledgeToInclude](#) and [#GoingAllIn](#) when talking about the Spread the Word Campaign or how you are working to make you community more inclusive.
- Tag teachers, school administrators, and community leaders and challenge them to take the Pledge.



INSTAGRAM

- Follow [@PledgeToInclude](#).
- Join discussions in the comments or share posts to your own page or story.
- Post photos or videos from school, Best Buddies, or Special Olympics events and talk about why inclusion is important to you.
- Be sure to tag our account and use [#PledgeToInclude](#) and [#GoingAllIn](#).



BLOGS, TIKTOK, AND MORE

- These channels can be powerful storytelling tools. There are conversations taking place every day about inclusion, people with intellectual disabilities, sports, or friendship.
- Find a topic you care about and share your perspective. Engage online communities and spread the word about inclusion.
- Keep interactions respectful and moving forward by always encouraging people to join in taking the pledge to include.



USE OUR SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES TO HELP SHARE YOUR STORY.



SAMPLE TEXT FOR ANY PLATFORM

Everyone needs to be heard. Everyone needs to feel included. Everyone needs to be included. Join me in building truly inclusive schools, workplaces, and communities, where we can learn and grow together. Visit <https://www.spreadtheword.global/> to go all in.

This year's theme for Spread the Word >> Inclusion is #GoingAllIn. When was the last time you went all in for something you believe in? Share your story using #GoingAllIn and tag @PledgeToInclude.

When was the last time you totally committed to something? Bring that level of courage and commitment to our movement for a more inclusive world! Learn more at <https://www.spreadtheword.global/>



ONLINE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

RESPONDING TO NEGATIVITY ONLINE:

- It is important to keep yourself safe. If you feel like you need to, hide negative accounts from your feed.
- If you see bullying or negative comments online, respond with positivity and information. Lead with compassion and kindness. Arm yourself with your honest feelings. Try to foster understanding.
- Use those comments as an opportunity to engage the person in conversation. Prepare a few lines of text expressing why inclusive words and actions matter to you. Have it ready to engage in positive conversation. We cannot effect change without confronting the attitudes we hope to change.
- Most people will respond to this positively. Those who don't, brush it off! It's likely they've heard your message and it sticks with them – maybe they will pledge to include next year! You know why you

STAYING SAFE AND INCLUSIVE ONLINE **INTERNET SAFETY AND WELL-BEING** IN A TIME OF VIRTUAL CONNECTION

- Keep your accounts private.
- Mute, unfollow, or block accounts that make you feel uncomfortable.
- When responding to hurtful behavior, lead with **compassion** & thoughtful counterpoints.
- Invite others to take the **#pledgetoinclude**
- Follow accounts that **inspire** you or bring positivity to your feed.
- For more resources, go to spreadtheword.global



RESOURCES FOR ONLINE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- The Trevor Project's [guide for protecting your own space and well-being on IG.](#)
- <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- 2023 Spread the Word Resource Dropbox
- Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools: **Build Back Inclusive Guide**
- Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools: **Back to School Resources**
- Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools: **Inclusion For All Toolkit**
- Best Buddies: **Resources for Advisors**
- Special Olympics **Resources for Educators**
- Special Olympics: **The Importance of School Climate**
- **Special Olympics and Bullying Prevention**
- **Spread the Word >> Inclusion Fact Sheet**
- Advocacy and Inclusion Opportunities from Best Buddies International
- Intellectual Disabilities and Language and Terminology Fact Sheet: A **one-page reference about intellectual disabilities** and the language to use when talking about people with intellectual disabilities
- Special Olympics: Coronavirus Outbreak - What You Need to know



THANK YOU EDUCATORS!

Educators are a vitally important part of Spread the Word >> Inclusion. Thank you for all you do to make your schools more inclusive! We would love to hear from you with any questions, ideas, or suggestions at spreadtheword@specialolympics.org.

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