

PROGRAM TOOLKIT



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

**SPREAD
THE WORD** 



PROGRAM TOOLKIT



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 around the world working to promote inclusion in their communities.

Below you will find event ideas, resources, tips for engaging with schools and organizations, communications materials, and more. Use this toolkit to support teachers, Youth Leaders, coaches, advocates, and leaders in schools and workplaces throughout your community.



**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO
WRITE AND TALK ABOUT SPREAD
THE WORD >> VIEW OUR CORE
MESSAGING TOOLKIT OR
EXPLORE OUR WEBSITE AT**

WWW.SPREADTHEWORD.GLOBAL/PLEDGE

PROGRAM TOOLKIT



As we celebrate 15 years of Spread the Word, we're reflecting on the incredible journey and the impact this campaign has had in fostering inclusion and breaking down stereotypes. Now, we're energized to renew our commitment by returning to the roots of the campaign, reigniting the spark and momentum that defined its early days in 2009. With the same passion and dedication, we aim to journey back to the heart of our mission. We're eager to inspire change, one word at a time.

Spread the Word was created to End the Word and we believe we should stick to the core reason why this campaign was created, to commit to acknowledging the hurt caused by disparaging words towards people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The R-word is not as prevalent, but it is still used, along with other derogatory language words. Words matter because they hold the power to shape perceptions, influence emotions, and drive actions. The language we use can either foster understanding, empathy, and unity, or perpetuate stereotypes, division, and discrimination. Choosing our words carefully is essential for effective communication and building a more inclusive and compassionate society.



CORE MESSAGING TOOLKIT



PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO LOCAL SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZ- ATIONS



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

PROGRAM TOOLKIT



PROVIDE SUPPORT TO BEST BUDDIES AND UNIFIED CLUBS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS

Provide club advisors with resources and guidance on getting involved with Spread the Word. Point school communities to our student and educator toolkits.



ORDER SPREAD THE WORD >> MERCHANDISE

U.S. programs can order t-shirts, hats, and more from our online store using an affiliate log-in. For both Special Olympics and Best Buddies Programs, please select "I am a Special Olympics Program Employee" and use your work email. **Pledge Banners can still be ordered from our legacy store, along with sale inventory.**

PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR INCLUSION EVENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY



- Provide resources for educating others about inclusion and intellectual disabilities.
- Provide ideas for **activations and events**.
- Coordinate guest speakers from Special Olympics and Best Buddies for in-person and virtual events in your community.
- Promote partner events on social media. Tag us @PledgeToInclude and use #PledgeToInclude.

PROGRAM TOOLKIT



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. Use social media to promote local events (in-person and virtual), celebrate inclusion in your community, educate your audience, and connect with schools and organizations.

FACEBOOK

- Like and follow the [Spread the Word Page](#)
- Re-share articles, videos, and events from Spread the Word, Special Olympics, and Best Buddies.
- Ask your audience questions and create opportunities for positive discussion in the comments.
- Share photos and videos from local events using #pledgetoinclude.
- Challenge schools and organizations to host a pledge event.



- Follow [@PledgeToInclude](#), [@SpecialOlympics](#) and [@BestBuddies](#)
- Retweet posts to your own page.
- Use #PledgeToInclude when talking about the Spread the Word Campaign or how you are working to make you community more inclusive.
- Tag community and school leaders and challenge them to take the pledge.
- Create a series of quick tips for promoting inclusion.

INSTAGRAM

- Follow [@PledgeToInclude](#). Share our Instagram Story Templates on your own page.
- Challenge your community members to share their stories of inclusion using our social media templates.
- Post photos or videos from inclusion events in your community.
- Be sure to tag our account and use #PledgeToInclude.



PROGRAM TOOLKIT



SHARE OUR **SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES**
WITH YOUR COMMUNITY TO HELP THEM
TELL THEIR OWN STORIES OF INCLUSION



SAMPLE TEXT FOR ANY PLATFORM

We are celebrating 15 years of Spread the Word, but the work continues. We're eager to inspire change, one word at a time. Join me in taking the pledge and commit to acknowledging the hurt caused by disparaging words towards people with intellectual disabilities. #PledgetoInclude

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/>.

Follow @PledgeToInclude to become part of our movement for a more inclusive world! When was the last time you went all in for something you believe in?

PROGRAM TOOLKIT



BLOGS & NEWSLETTERS

- These channels can be powerful storytelling tools. Start conversations about inclusion, intellectual disabilities, sports, and friendship.
- Use blogs to tell in-depth stories of inclusion in your communities.
- Highlight individuals or organizations making a difference in your newsletter.



MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Use our resources including the template press release and letter to the media to connect with your local media organizations. Emphasize the importance of inclusive and representative storytelling.

SHARE STORIES FROM YOUR COMMUNITY

In addition to social media, newsletters, blogs, and local media outlets, share photos and videos from events in your community with us at spreadtheword@specialolympics.org.

Do you have a story of inclusion you want to share? Let us know!



PROGRAM TOOLKIT



PARTNER ENGAGEMENT



REACHING OUT TO PARTNERS

Reach out to organizations in your area asking them to join you in promoting inclusion. See our [Partnership Outreach Information document](#) for email templates and examples of how partners can support Spread the Word.

- Reach out to local talent and organizations who can help spread inclusion in your community.
- Maintain partnerships from year to year.
- Provide partners with [resources and talking points](#).



IDEAS FOR PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

- Ask partners to produce a short video for social media or write a blog post about how inclusion connects to their work.
- Facilitate collaboration between partner organizations and leaders of the Best Buddies and Special Olympics communities.
- Attend or host an event for employees.
- Provide graphics and sample copy for social media and ask partners to promote Spread the Word >>.

[2024 Resources Dropbox](#)