

INCLUSION WEEK TOOLKIT



INCLUSION WEEK

March 4-8, 2024

**SPREAD
THE WORD
INCLUSION**



INCLUSION WEEK TOOLKIT



Hooray! It's Inclusion Week!

Each Spring, Special Olympics Iowa and Best Buddies partner together to promote, advocate, and celebrate inclusive efforts taking place in 150+ schools and surrounding communities across Iowa.

We've assembled this toolkit to help make Inclusion Week a meaningful, memorable experience school-wide.

In this toolkit, you'll find:

- Inclusion Week promotion ideas
- Classroom lesson/activity plans
- Assembly and morning announcement scripts
- Dress-up day recommendations
- Social media resources

You are at liberty to modify this content and pick-and-choose what to utilize as you see fit. You'll also be receiving a Spread the Word Annual Day of Awareness pledge banner!

Thank you for your commitment to being a champion for change within the Inclusion Revolution movement!



Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), a group made up of over 200 million people, continue to be excluded and isolated from their peers in schools, workplaces, and communities around the world. By promoting inclusion, you can combat the hurtful and dehumanizing effects of exclusion.

To learn more about the Spread the Word: Inclusion movement, please visit: www.spreadtheword.global.

To discuss programs offered by Special Olympics and Best Buddies, please contact: **Krista Smith**, Special Olympics Iowa Director of Unified Programs ksmith@soiowa.org
Shelby Rietgraf, Best Buddies Iowa Program Manager shelbyrietgraf@bestbuddies.org

GATHERING A TEAM



Who can help
make your
community
more inclusive?



- Start a **Special Olympics** or **Best Buddies** club or get involved if a chapter already exists at your school.
- Reach out to your Special Olympics Iowa or Best Buddies advisor, a teacher, or school administrator and ask them to support you in promoting inclusion.
- Gather a group of students from sports teams, student government, service organizations, or other clubs focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Build a team of people dedicated to planning and carrying out ideas for inclusion at your school. Plan events and work to change social norms that exclude.
- Discuss what inclusion means and looks like with **Inclusion Tiles** from **Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®**. As you create your inclusion journey, think about the ways your journey may be different from a friend's or a classmate's.
<https://www.generationunified.org/games/inclusion-game-page-1/>

CREATE INCLUSIVE SPACES

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Be a role model
for inclusion in
your school.



- Help create a positive school climate by modeling inclusive, person-first language.
- Talk with other students and 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 and peers the meaning of inclusion and why it is so important.
- Encourage students to take action for inclusion.
- Utilize the accompanying lesson/activity plans to get the conversation started in classrooms throughout your school.

INCLUSION WEEK TOOLKIT



HOST AN EVENT

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Bring your school community together to promote inclusion!



- Work with your team and clubs at your school to host an assembly or pep rally for inclusion. Create a theme or challenge for each day. You can create a video or use social media to promote as well.
- **Unified Sports** and **Best Buddies** Clubs are a great place to start, but consider bringing other clubs in that focus on inclusive practices. Host a unified sporting event of students with and without disabilities, and have the whole school to cheer them on.
- Promote your event using posters, flyers, and social media posts. Find templates here: www.spreadtheword.global/resources. Daily announcements over the intercom are great, too!
- Create displays across your entire school by decorating a bulletin board, classroom door, or a hallway.
- 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.

INCLUSION WEEK TOOLKIT



TAKE AN ACTION EVERYDAY.

Look out for those who may be excluded or left out.



- Invite them to join you for lunch.
- Try to get to know them.
- Start simple! Focus on identifying one thing you have in common with one another.
- Welcome them. **Be a friend. Be a teammate.**
- Be a leader. Teach others why inclusion matters.

Dress-Up Days

MONDAY

BE UNIQUE!

Wear mismatched,
funky, or unique
clothing

TUESDAY

BE A HERO FOR INCLUSION!

Dress up as a
superhero or
someone you look
up to

WEDNESDAY

WEAR WHAT YOU KNOW!

Wear your Special
Olympics Iowa and/or
Best Buddies gear

THURSDAY

BE A PART OF THE TEAM!

Wear your
favorite school or
sports team jersey

FRIDAY

LIGHT UP WITH RESPECT!

It's okay to stand out!
Wear all things neon

Morning Announcement

MONDAY

Good morning, (school's name or mascot)! Today, we are kicking off Inclusion Week with being unique - wearing all sorts of crazy, mismatched clothing. We want to celebrate the beauty of diversity and individuality that makes our school community truly special. Our school is made up of students with different abilities, backgrounds, talents, and interests. Today we challenge you to say hi to one new person. Embracing our uniqueness and respecting the differences in others is what makes us a strong community!

Morning Announcement

TUESDAY

Good morning, (school's name or mascot)! Today, let's talk about the power we all have to be heroes of inclusion in our school community. Just like superheroes come together to make the world a better place, we too can unite to create an environment where everyone feels valued and included. Being a hero of inclusion means embracing and celebrating the differences that make each of us unique! Let's unleash our inner heroes of inclusion today and every day. We can create a community where everyone feels heard, valued, and embraced. Be the hero that promotes unity, and let's make our schools a place where every student's story is celebrated. Have a wonderful day, heroes of inclusion!

Morning Announcement

WEDNESDAY

Good morning, (school's name or mascot)! Today, we are wearing what we know - two organizations that embody the spirit of inclusion and community - Special Olympics Iowa and Best Buddies. They provide many opportunities for our students with disabilities just like our Inclusion Week this week! Today is Spread The Word Annual Day of Awareness, which gives us all an opportunity to make the pledge to break down barriers and celebrate the abilities and uniqueness of every individual. By making the pledge, we are contributing to building a more compassionate and inclusive world. Don't forget to make the pledge by signing your name on our school's banner today!

Morning Announcement

THURSDAY

Good morning, (school's name or mascot)! Today, let's talk about the importance of being part of the team - not just in sports but in all aspects of our school community. Whether it's in the classroom, on the field, or during extracurricular activities, we are all part of one big team working towards a common goal: creating a positive and supportive environment for everyone. Being part of the team means supporting each other, lifting each other up, and celebrating each other's successes. It's about recognizing that each one of us plays a unique and valuable role in making our school community the best it can be. Have a great day, team (school name)! Let's show the world what we can achieve when we work together!

Morning Announcement

FRIDAY

Good morning, (school's name or mascot)! Today, we're closing out Inclusion Week by talking about the power of respect and embracing our individuality. Today we are wearing neon to stand out as individuals who make a positive impact on our community. By treating everyone with kindness and understanding, we create an atmosphere where everyone feels valued and accepted. By doing so, you contribute to a school environment where inclusion is the norm, and everyone feels free to be themselves. Have a brilliant day, and let your unique light shine bright!

Leveraging Social Media

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.



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**
- Share your own story of inclusion with photos from Special Olympics or Best Buddies events.
@specialolympicsia @bestbuddiesia



TWITTER

- Follow **@PledgeToInclude**, **@SpecialOlympics** and **@BestBuddies** Retweet posts to your own page.
- Include your own words.
- Use **#PledgeToInclude** when talking about the Spread the Word Campaign or how you are working to make your community more inclusive.
- Tag friends 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**
@specialolympicsia @bestbuddiesia



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.

INCLUSION WEEK TOOLKIT



Leveraging Social Media



Use our Social Media Templates to help share your story. Access from our website: spreadtheword.global/resources



I pledge to be inclusive by...

01

02

03



INCLUSION BINGO

draw or use emojis to show what you have already done, then add to it throughout the year!

Take the pledge online	Suggest a way for your school to be more inclusive	Attend a Special Olympics Event	Host an inclusion event	Create and share a video about inclusion
Invite a local media personality to take the pledge	Attend a Best Buddies Event	Join a Unified Sports Team	Call a friend that you haven't talked to recently	Tell 5 people why inclusion matters
Give someone a compliment	Invite other clubs or groups to your events	Invite someone to join you for lunch	Wear your Spread the Word T-Shirt	Invite a celebrity on social media to take the pledge
Say "Hi" to 10 people	Invite a local politician to take the pledge	Thank someone who made you feel included	Invite 5 friends to take the pledge	Go for a walk with someone
Tell someone how they impact your life	Sign a Spread the Word banner	Host an inclusion week	Be active during awareness weeks + months	Post on social media showing how you spread inclusion



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 www.spreadtheword.global

How will you build a more inclusive society? Let us know using [#PledgeToInclude](https://twitter.com/PledgeToInclude)

Follow [@PledgeToInclude](https://twitter.com/PledgeToInclude) to become part of our movement promoting inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

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