



## Spread the Word to End the Word<sup>SM</sup> Fact Sheet

### WHAT

**Spread the Word to End the Word<sup>SM</sup>** is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics, Best Buddies and our supporters to raise the consciousness of society about the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the R-word and encourage people to pledge to stop using the R-word.

The campaign, created by youth, is intended to engage schools organizations and communities to rally and pledge their support at [www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org) and to promote the inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### WHEN

The official annual day of awareness is held the first Wednesday of every March. While most activities are centered on or near that annual day in March, people everywhere can help spread the word throughout their communities and schools year-round thru pledge drives, youth rallies and online activation.

### WHO

Spread the Word to End the Word was founded by college students Soeren Palumbo (Notre Dame 2011) and Tim Shriver (Yale 2011) in 2009, and continues to be led by passionate young people, Special Olympics athletes and Best Buddies participants across the United States and in many other parts of the world.

### 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 R-word.

Language affects attitudes. Attitudes impact actions. Make your pledge to choose respectful people first language today at [www.R-word.org](http://www.R-word.org).

### HOW

Visit [www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org) to learn how you can **Spread the Word to End the Word**.

**The word “retard(ed)” hurts millions of people with intellectual disabilities, their families and friends. Take the pledge and help promote the new R-word: Respect.**

**SPREAD THE WORD  
TO END THE WORD**

