



### ***Talking Points for Self-Advocates and Family Members***

During any action around "Tropic Thunder", we encourage chapters to be sure that self-advocates and family members are at the forefront of the issue—that people with intellectual disabilities are not to be marginalized or demoralized for the sake of humor, and can speak up for themselves.

Here are some talking points that may help advocates respond to reporters and community members in a consistent manner:

- "People with Intellectual Disabilities are asking to be treated as any other human being—with respect and dignity."
- "As a person with an Intellectual Disability, I have been affected by the use of the "r-word" and other hate speech by..."
- "Movies and media, like the movie "Tropic Thunder", encourage disrespect of people with intellectual disabilities. We want that to stop!"
- "People with disabilities have been the brunt of tasteless jokes and stereotypes, marginalized in society for too long."
- "Basic respect is universal—disability or not. People with disabilities and their families demand the same respect."
- "We ask our community to join us in boycotting this film, and other depictions like it, as a statement of solidarity on this issue."

If you're unsure how to answer a question, advocates can refer the reporter or others to The Arc of the United States.



## **THE R-WORD— IT'S NOT JUST HURTFUL, IT'S HATE SPEECH!**

You may have heard someone say, "You're a retard." People use this phrase to insult and denigrate another person. Because the word is used in those ways, it's easy to understand why a person with an intellectual disability does not want to be labeled in this way.

### **WHAT IS HATE SPEECH?**

Hate speech occurs when a majority group freely makes jokes about a minority group including negative stereotypes and negative images, not just language. It is commonly seen as harmless by the majority, but it sets the stage for more severe outlets for prejudice, harm and abuse.

### **PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES ARE AT GREATER RISK OF VIOLENCE.**

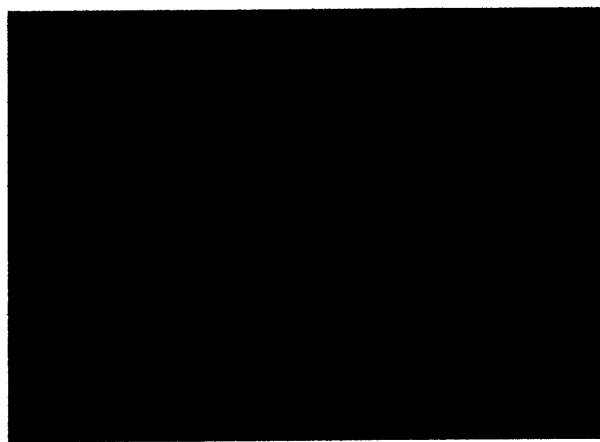
Individuals with developmental disabilities are 4 to 10 more times more likely to be victims of a crime than people without disabilities (Sobsey, et al., 1995).

### **PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES ARE DISENFRANCHISED FROM JUSTICE.**

Abuse often occurs as part of name calling, bullying, hazing, or other targeted attacks based on disability status. THIS IS A HATE CRIME.

### **IT IS NOT ABOUT BEING POLITICALLY CORRECT—THE R-WORD CONVEYS HATE.**

"Retard", "retarded", "idiot", "imbecile", and "moron" are derogatory and dehumanizing terms— on par with the N-word when used to describe African Americans, and various hateful terms used to describe members of the Jewish, gay and lesbian and other minority communities.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE ARC OF THE UNITED STATES AT  
[www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org)**



**When you use the R-Word . . .  
think of me**

### **Facts About People with Intellectual Disabilities**

- Did you know that up to three percent of the world's population have intellectual disabilities...that's 200 million people around the world. It's the largest disability population in the world....perhaps you know someone?
- Did you know that many people with intellectual disabilities go to school, graduate college, compete in sports, live and work on their own...maybe alongside you?
- Did you know Loretta Claiborne, an athlete with intellectual disabilities, has run 26 marathons...have you?
- Did you know using the word "retard" to describe people with intellectual disabilities is harmful and demeaning?

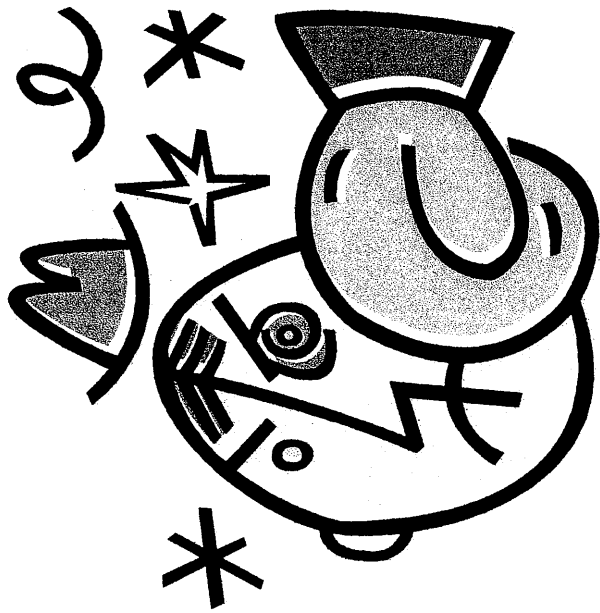
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Visit:  
[www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org)



**Special Olympics**

Be a fan.



**The R-  
Word is  
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