

Stand Up! Speak Out!

EVERY ONE OF US: “Every one of us is special...”
Guide for Discussion, Reflection or Role Play

Vocabulary

Person First: a respectful way to talk about a person with a disability. We say a “person” with a disability (rather than “a disabled person”) because we want to show respect for the whole person, and not define someone by a limitation or condition

Person with a disability: A person who doesn’t have full use of some part of their body, which can make some everyday activities challenging. These activities could include walking, talking, reading, or writing, depending on what kind of disability the person has. But no matter what their disability, a person with a disability is a “Person First” (not a “disabled person”)

Person with a physical disability: might get help moving around with a cane or wheelchair

Person with an intellectual disability: A person who doesn’t have the full use of the brain, because their brain wasn’t fully developed at birth or because their brain was injured by illness or an injury. We never use the R-word (“retarded”) to describe anyone or anything, because that is disrespectful

Special Olympics

An organization that provides training and competitions in Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. The focus is on what they *can* do, not what they *can’t* do.

Paralympics

Olympics for professional athletes with physical disabilities; from the Greek word “para” (beside) because the Paralympics are parallel to (or run alongside) the Olympic Games

Everyone of us is special / Every day is another Olympic meet

What’s the difference between the Special Olympics and the Paralympics?
Research the history of each. When, why, and how did each one begin?

Every one of us is challenged / We face different challenges everyday

1. We all have some kind of challenge, whether it is a disability others can see, an “invisible disability” that no one knows about, or just a personal challenge. What every-day activity would you like to be better at? How can you make it a little easier every day?

We take each other’s hand / We do the best we can / Taking on our challenges one by one

2. Check out [Who to Watch](#) among the London 2012 Paralympic Athletes. Pick an athlete and tell his or her story: How did s/he become disabled? How did s/he become a Paralympic athlete?
3. [Believe in yourself](#) is a great motto for anyone, of any ability. Follow that link to see how Paralympic Athletes stay motivated, what keeps them going when they discouraged?
4. Write or talk about one or more of your goals. What, or who, motivates you? How do you keep moving forward with your goal(s)?
5. Do you ever get discouraged and think about giving up? Who or what do you turn to for encouragement, to help you stay on track?
6. Do you ever see someone in school who is having a hard time and seems discouraged? Write a letter to that person offering encouragement. Can you imagine giving that person the letter, even if s/he is a total stranger? Why or why not? Would that take a lot of courage? See if you can do it.

Every one of us is special

7. Being special isn’t just about winning Olympic medals or getting famous. It’s about being kind. Pair up with a classmate. You are both reporters. Tell each other about something you each did that was very kind. Write an article about your classmate. Tell us why she is so special.