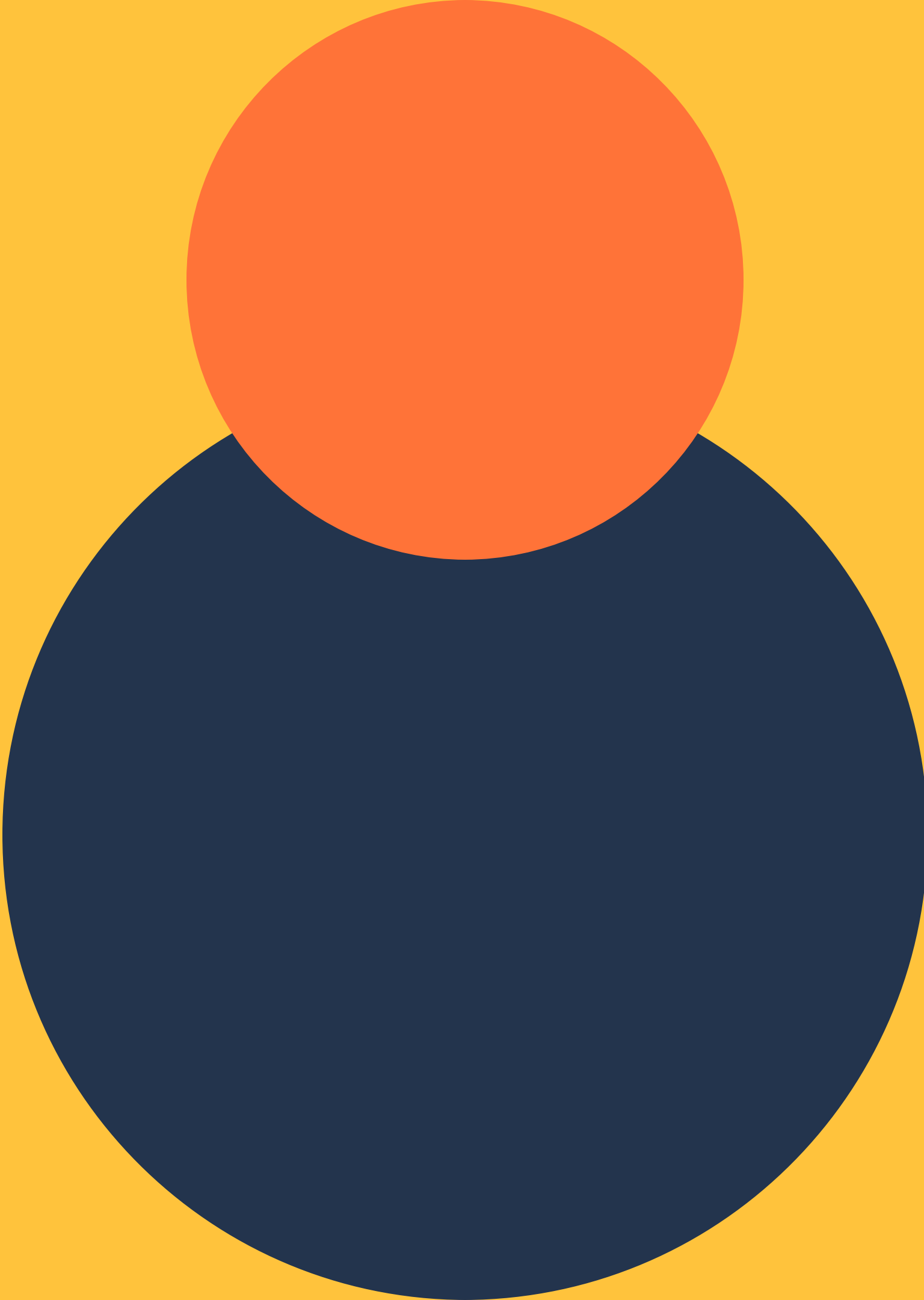


How Do I Use The Disability Inclusion Toolkit?

**SEDAC Inclusion Committee
November 4, 2025**





Today's Discussion

Outline of Topics

- 01 Why Do We Have a Toolkit?
- 02 Purpose of the Toolkit
- 03 Sections of the Toolkit
- 04 How Can I Use the Toolkit Right Now?
- 05 Why Use the Resources in the Toolkit?

Why Do We Have an Inclusion Toolkit?

Disability Simulations & Abilities Awareness

Led by our chair Erin Bell, SEDAC advocated to end the practice of using Disability Simulations as part of Abilities Awareness events during the fall of 2021.

Despite the best intentions of those who invested time in developing and using these practices, some CVUSD families reported feeling more marginalized by Disability Simulations. Also, research shows that simulations reinforce negative stereotypes.

CVUSD agreed to end the practice, and some people were not happy with the change. SEDAC recognized a need to provide an alternative, so we started a Disability Celebrations Committee. After initial discussions, the committee members realized that we needed more than a replacement — we needed a reboot.

After long hours and months of work, the **Disability Celebrations Toolkit** was launched!



The poster features a collage of four photographs at the top: a person in a wheelchair, a person wearing a blindfold, a person using a cane, and a group of children sitting at a table. Below the photos is the title "DISABILITY SIMULATIONS" in large, bold, white letters on a blue background.

What are they?

Disability simulations are activities for able-bodied people that imitate the experience of being disabled. They are intended to promote empathy and awareness of issues faced by people with disabilities.

Why are they problematic?

Disability advocates, experts and disabled people have long held that they are ineffective and hurtful. Recent studies show that they often reinforce negative stereotypes.

"Herein lies the problem with disability simulation. It may make a person more aware of another person's experiences, but it doesn't dig deep to the root of discrimination against people with minority identities. Instead, it's more likely to evoke empathy or pity than true acceptance."

— Emily Ladau, Disability Activist and Author, *Demystifying Disability*

DISABILITY SIMULATIONS COMMON EXAMPLES

BLINDNESS Wearing a blindfold while completing tasks 	DEAFNESS Wearing headphones or earplugs to block sound 
NONSPEAKING Interacting with others without speaking or using alternative communication 	MOTOR SKILLS Wearing oven mitts while writing or buttoning a shirt 
MOBILITY Using a wheelchair or crutches to move around 	THINKING Trying to read or take a test in an unfamiliar language 
ATTENTION Using flickering lights or loud music as a distraction 	



What is the Purpose of the Toolkit?

Helping students, educators and families
develop the heart set, mindset and skill set
to celebrate and include students with disabilities

* With a focus on social inclusion and disability representation





Landing Page: Welcome Message and Disability Awareness Days and Months

Toolkit Navigation

Table of Contents + What You Will Find In This Toolkit + Tips for Using the Toolkit

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Section Two: [Inclusion Year-Round](#)

Section Three: [Ideas for Any Disability Event](#)

Section Four: Four District-Recognized Disability/Inclusion Events and Ways to Celebrate

- [Disability Awareness](#) (Any Time)
- [National Bullying Prevention Month](#) and [Unity Day](#) (October)
- [Inclusive Schools Week](#) (First Week of December)
- [Disability History Month](#) (March)



Section One

Reframing the Narrative

This section focuses on the reasons why we need to change the negative views of disability and explains some of the concepts that can help shift mindsets in a positive direction.



Nothing About Us Without Us

If we want to achieve true inclusion of people with disabilities in our world, we must learn to center the perspective of disabled people in important conversations, especially when it comes to disability.

#DisabilityPride

Social vs. Medical Model of Disability

The **medical model** of disability approaches people with disabilities as "the problem" and tries to "fix" their disabilities.

The **social model** of disability sees barriers in society as problems that require solutions, rather than as the responsibility of the disabled.

Presume Competence

When interacting with someone with a disability, remember that disabled people are capable.

Rather than assuming a disabled person needs help, **Presume Competence** instead. Allow disabled people the space to fail or succeed on their own.

Using Current Respectful Language

It is important to stay up-to-date on what is the most respectful and empowering way to talk about people with disabilities.

Take cues from the individuals or groups being discussed and avoid ableist terms or phrases.

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Spread the Word Campaign

The Spread the Word to End the Word campaign was founded in 2009 to end the use of the R-word.

In 2019, the focus broadened to the creation of a new reality: inclusion for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Dos and Don'ts of Autism Acceptance

- Say **Yes** to Identity-First Language: use autistic instead of person with autism.
- Say **No** to Autism Speaks and Light It Up Blue.
- Say **No** to the Puzzle Piece.
- Say **Yes** to the Gold or Rainbow Infinity Symbol to represent autism.

Neurodiversity & Affirming Practices

The concept of neurodiversity is that every brain is unique and that differences in how we think, learn and experience the world are normal aspects of human nature.

Neurodiversity affirming practices help all students thrive and feel accepted for who they are.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Neurodiversity Celebration Week is a worldwide initiative that challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences. It aims to transform how neurodivergent individuals are perceived and create more inclusive and equitable cultures that empower every individual.



**Name one disability-positive concept
that is covered in Reframing the
Narrative.**



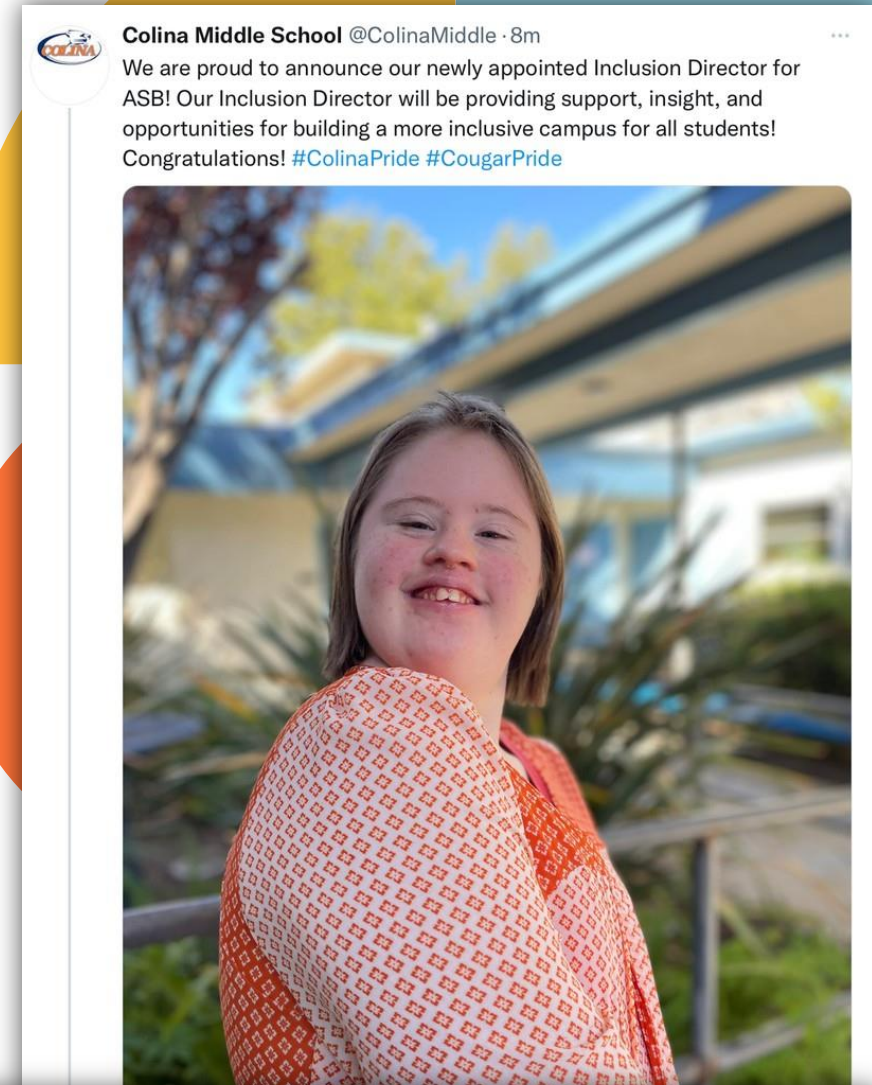
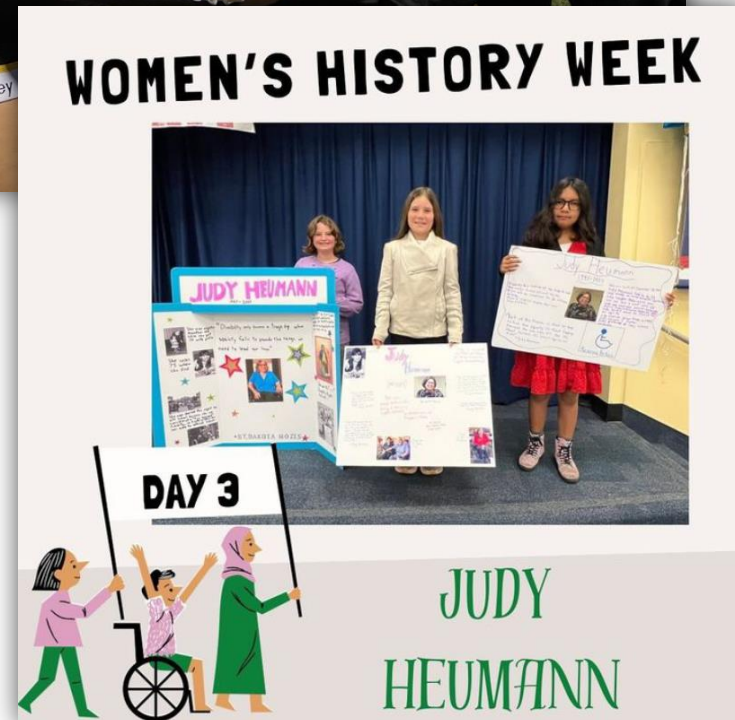
Section Two

Inclusion Year-Round

This section focuses on ideas, opportunities and programs for including students with disabilities all the time.

Ideas, Opportunities and Programs

- Create inclusion goals for campuses and clubs
- Plan school activities with inclusion in mind
- Promote opportunities for authentic connection and friendships like Sparkles Cheer, Unified Sports and Special Olympics
- Include disabled heroes, icons and trailblazers in other awareness months
- Make sure all students have a partner or team for group projects
- Have inclusive elementary plays and performances





What is one idea from Section 2 that can help schools be inclusive year-round?



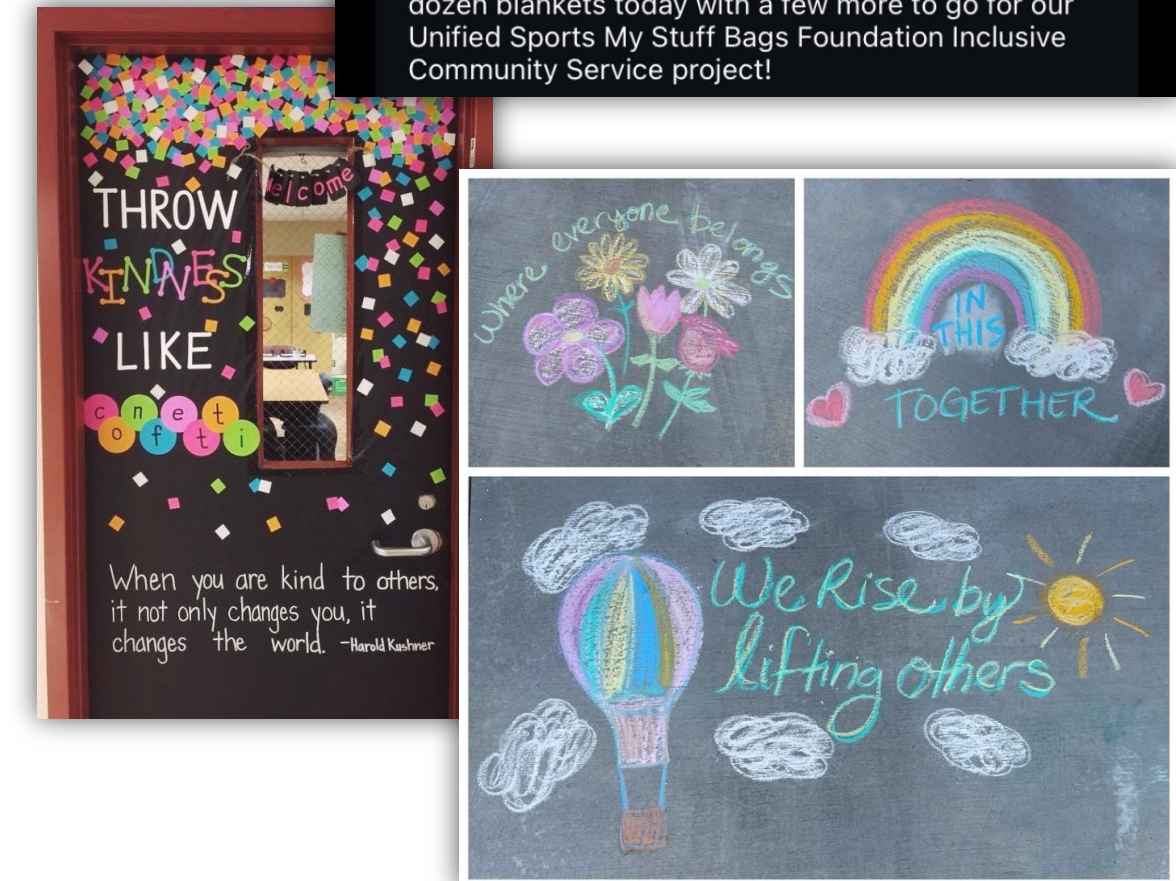
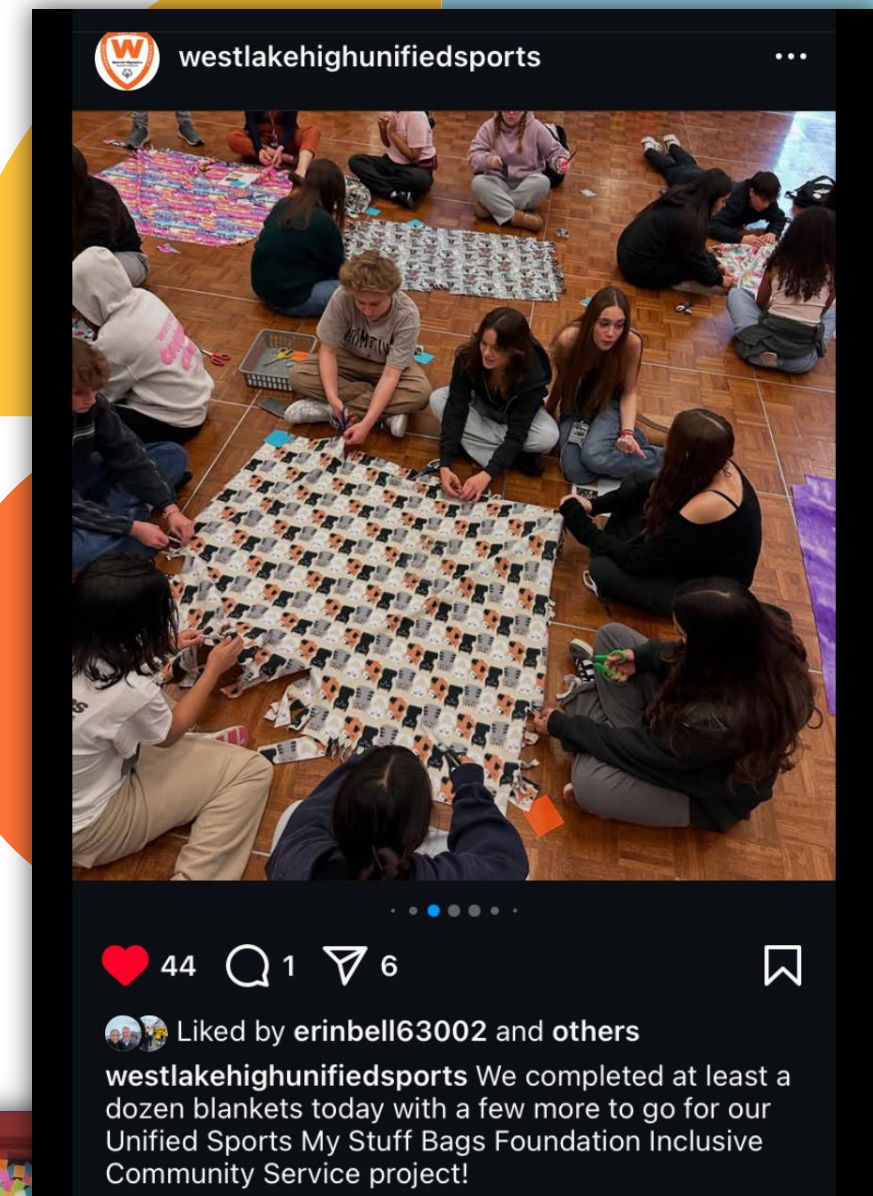
Section Three

Ideas for Any Disability Celebration

This section focuses on activities and resources that can work for any event or celebration throughout the year.

Activities and Resources

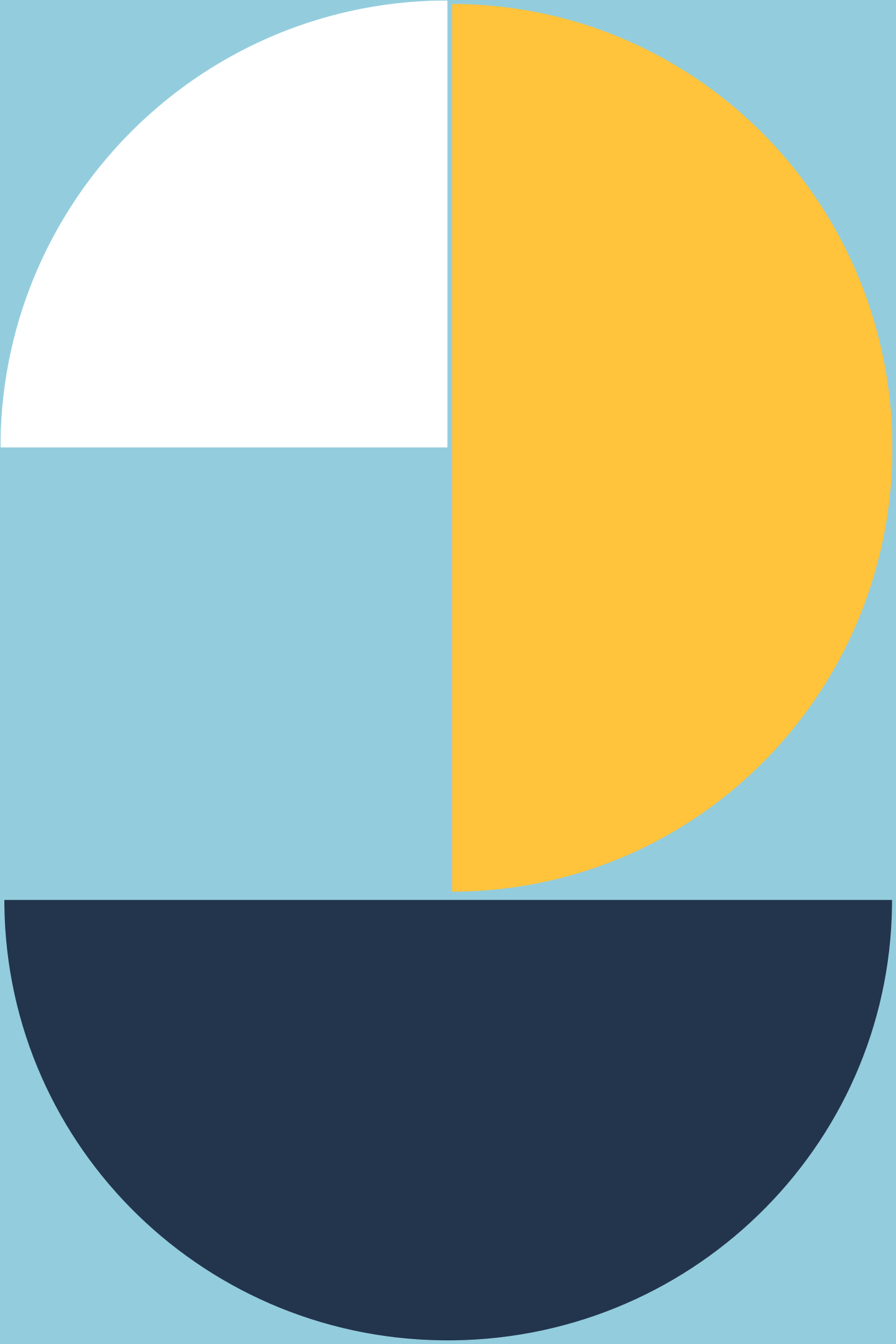
- Host an Assembly with a Speaker with a Disability
- Decorate Classroom Doors
- Create a Chalk Art Gallery
- Make Banners or Have a Poster Contest
- Organize Schoolwide or Classroom Art Projects
- Host a Mix It Up Lunch or Lunchtime Activities
- Create an Inclusive Books Library Display
- Post about Events and Activities on Social Media
- Host an inclusive community project, like a drive for disabled students for the Conejo Closet





**Name an activity from Section 3 that
works for any disability event.**





Section Four

Toolkit Navigation

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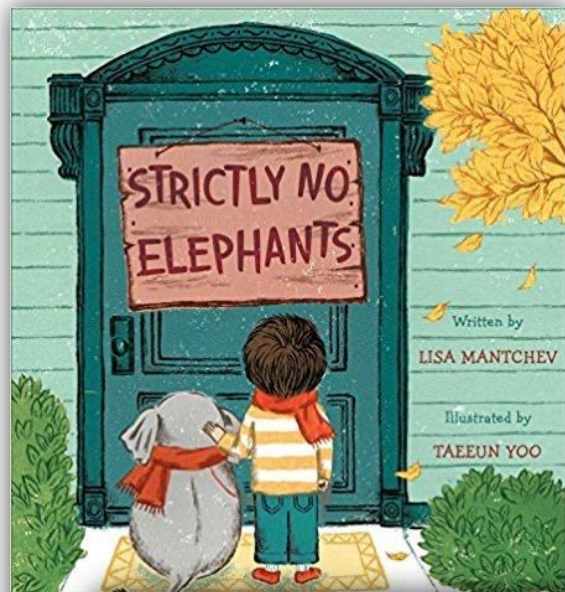
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Disability Awareness

This section provides a structure for Disability Awareness events with activities that promote acceptance, accessibility and inclusion.

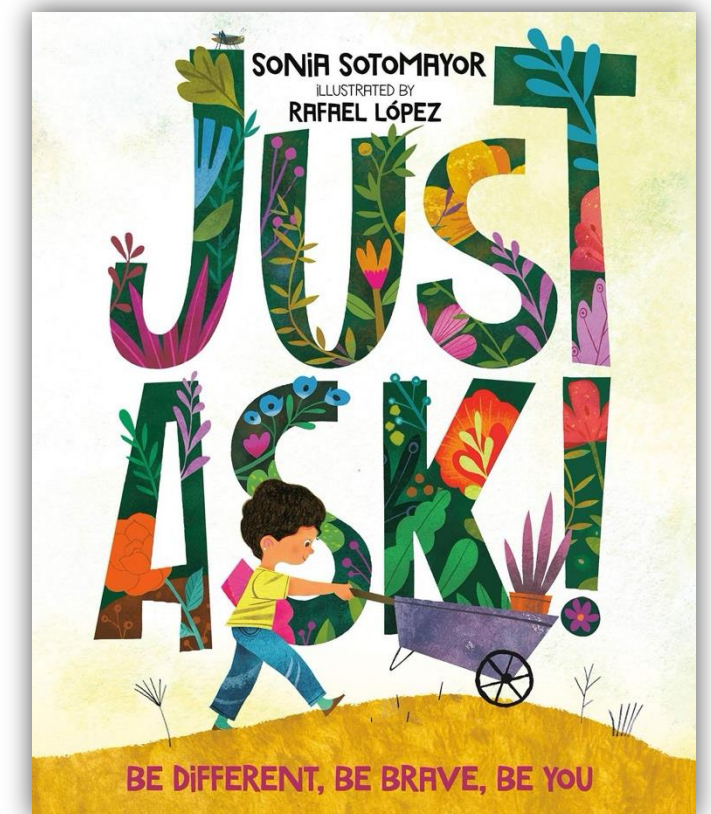


Daily Themes for a Weeklong Event and Plans for a One-Day Event



Themes for Elementary & Secondary Events

- Day 1: Introduction to Disability, Accessibility and Inclusion
- Day 2: Exploring Our Differences
- Day 3: Fostering Friendships
- Day 4: Expanding Empathy
- Day 5: Taking Action for Inclusion



Each Day also has a Spirit Activity and an Exit Ticket



**Name one of the daily themes for a
Disability Awareness event.**



National Bullying Prevention Month & Unity Day

These sections provide resources to promote bullying prevention and to celebrate Unity Day, which is the highlight of the month.



Resources for Elementary & Secondary Activities

- PACER Websites, Resources and Toolkits
- SELPA Community Advisory Committee Toolkits
- Section on Mean Kids or “Mean Girls” Behavior
- Videos
- Books
- Activities that Promote Kindness, Acceptance & Inclusion
- Anti-Bullying Pledge

Judy French is also an amazing local resource!

Contact her at judy.french@pacer.org for posters, programs and additional resources for all grade spans.





**What is one of the most common forms
of bullying?**

Inclusive Schools Week

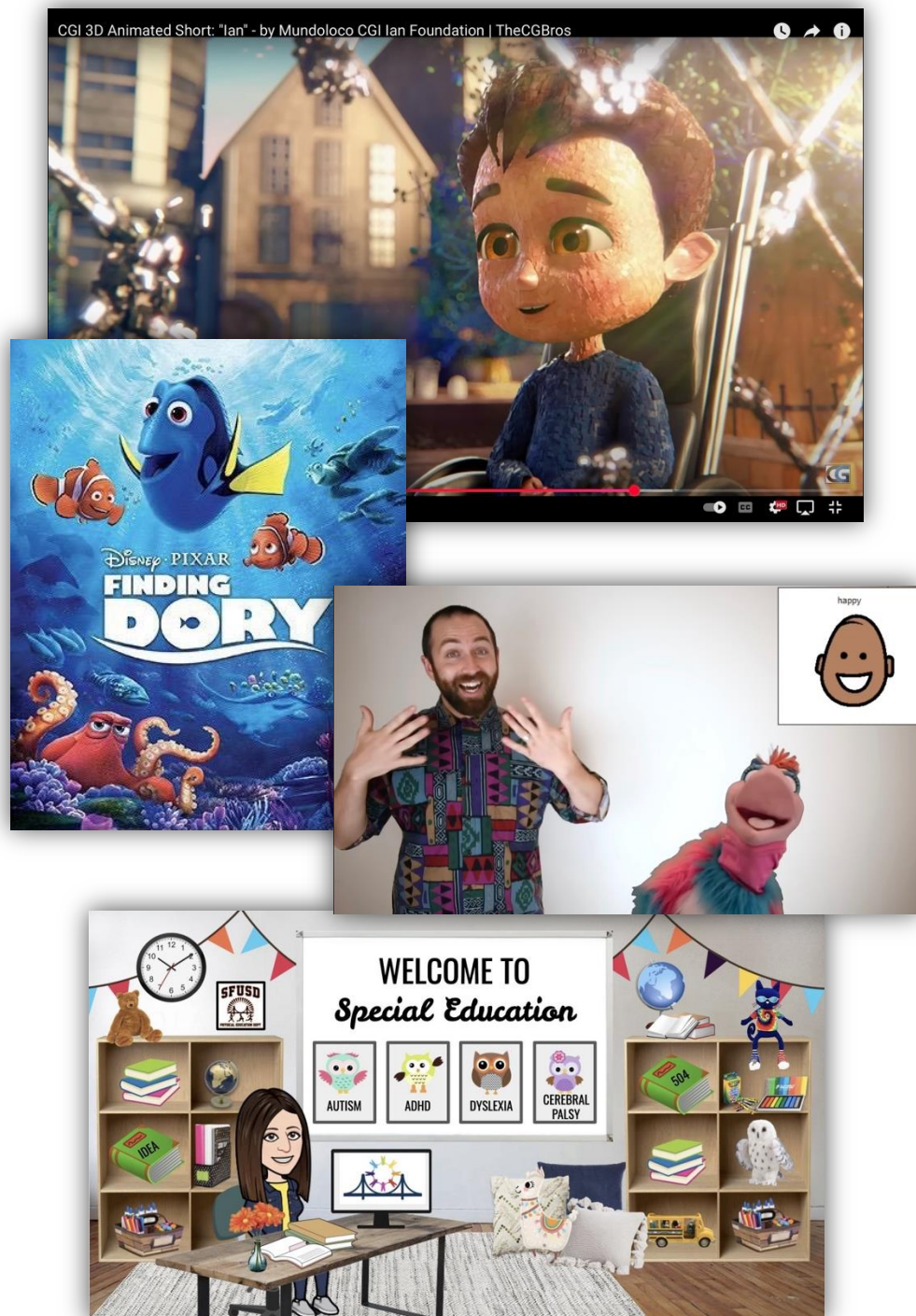
This section provides resources to celebrate Inclusive Schools Week and promote understanding of how crucial inclusion is.



Resources for Elementary & Secondary Activities

- Inclusive Schools Network Website, Resources and Toolkit
- SELPA Community Advisory Committee Toolkit
- Videos and Books
- Decorate Your School with Messages of Inclusion
- Make Your Own Inclusive Schools Week Video
- Host an Inclusive Movie Night
- Inclusive Schools Week Bitmoji Classroom
- Spread the Word Inclusion Pledge

Be a **teammate**. Be a **friend**.
Welcome someone who has been left out.
Sit next to someone alone at lunch.
Say hello to someone in the hallway.
There are so many ways to spread inclusion. Choose yours.



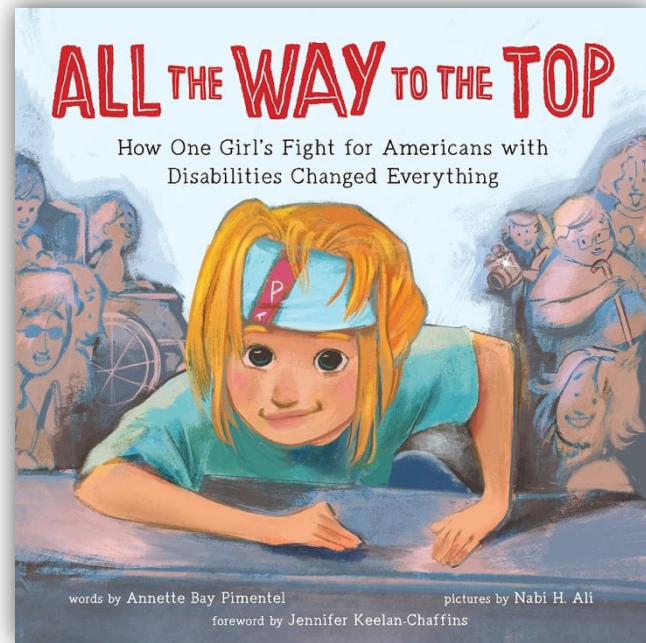


**Share an idea that you would
like your school to try for
Inclusive Schools Week.**



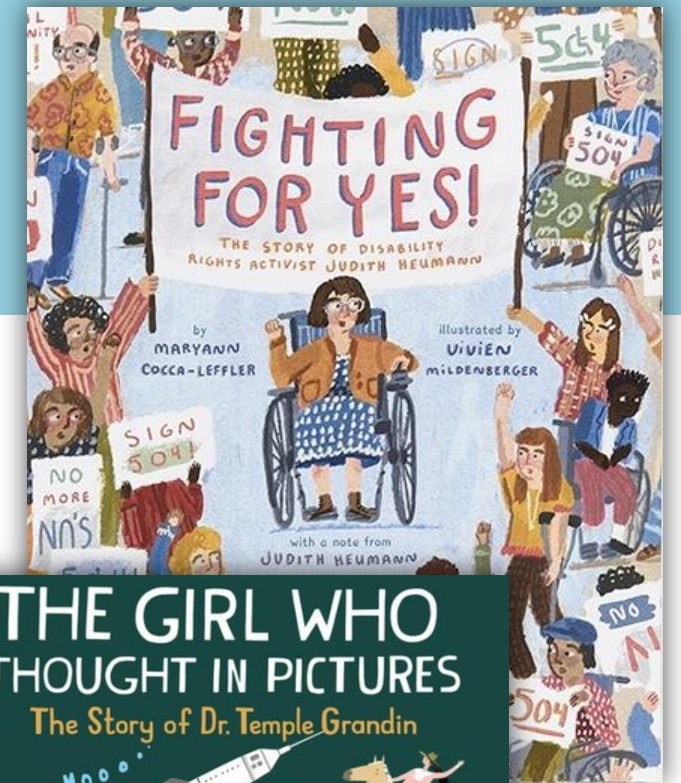
Disability History Month

This section provides resources for all students to learn about the Disability Rights Movement and disabled heroes, icons and trailblazers.



Resources for Elementary & Secondary Activities

- Info about Disabled Heroes, Icons and Trailblazers
- Storybooks, Teacher Guides & Videos
- Using Art & STEM to teach Disability History
- Social Media Posts
- Promotional Slide Deck





**Name a disabled hero, icon or trailblazer
featured in the toolkit.**



How Can I Use the Toolkit Right Now?

- Share an idea at School Site Council to recognize Inclusive Schools Week (December 8-12)
- Promote the Disability History Month Resources
- Plan a Disability Awareness Event



Why Use the Resources in the Toolkit?



Because if we can change minds, we can change the world.

One more surprise!

Questions?