An Inclusive Environment For All
(Compiled by Carole Scheerbaum, Extension Agent)

Here are a few tips for creating an inclusive environment at camp to enhance the educational and recreational activities for all campers.

Talking with the parents/caregivers prior to camp to discuss the camper’s specific environmental needs (assistive devices, a personal aide, etc.) can help the camper have a positive experience.

Other environmental considerations include:

• Daily schedule:
  o Post in an accessible/obvious location;
  o Keep it simple and concise – free of distractions; use words and graphics.
  o Whenever possible, remind students about schedule changes well in advance.
    Repeat the reminders several times.
      ▪ Use a consistent signal when a change in routine is about to happen (e.g., a song, a raised hand).

• Medical information:
  o Keep in a file or binder in the medical area.
  o Can also put a “medical alert” code on the back of a child’s name tag.
  o Be sure to understand the adaptive devices needed – how they are used, maintained, etc.

• Make arrangements for a camper to have an interpreter, an aide with him/her, a guide dog, a sighted guide, etc., at camp. Allow the camper to leave an activity early to assist with transition.

• Physical challenges - change meeting or activity places to accommodate a camper with a wheelchair or other mobility challenges
  o Allow the camper to leave an activity early to assist with transition.
  o Ask the child if you can assist – and assist in the way they choose.

• Distractions:
  o Seat children with attention difficulties at the front of a group or with a “buddy” to help reduce distractions.
  o Reduce visual and auditory distractions in the learning environment as much as possible.
  o Do not use flashing or strobe lights if any campers have a seizure disorder (e.g., epilepsy).
- Keep it simple. Students with FASD learn better in a simple environment with few distractions. One-on-one or small groups work best when possible. They need constant supervision to develop patterns of appropriate behavior. In addition, recognizing the underlying reason for challenging behaviors can help in developing strategies.

- **Structure/Routine:**
  - Be consistent - use the same words for key phrases and oral directions. Follow a routine. Routines help campers with anxiety issues know what to expect and decrease their anxiety.
  - Provide structure. Structure helps students with FASD make sense of their world.

- Design a “calm corner” (e.g., with a rocking chair, beanbag chair) to be used as a privilege, not a punishment.

**Sources:**


Tatman, P., Inclusive 4-H, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, Family and Consumer Sciences Department.

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) (2003), *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness & Education Project*, a project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Newton, Massachusetts; author.
People First Language –
It's all about RESPECT
Jodi Smith, WVU Extension Educator – 4-H Youth Development

Introduction:
People First Language (PFL) is a term that refers to the intentional effort to recognize the person first before the disability.

Respect is a character trait that 4-Hers learn throughout every facet of the 4-H program. Learning respect is part of learning leadership and citizenship. A great way to show respect to others is to not label them. “Treat others as you want to be treated” is the Golden Rule in 4-H.

All youth need to feel a sense of belonging – they need to belong to an inclusive program that is welcoming and offers both a physically and emotionally safe environment with caring adult role models. One way we can help create an atmosphere of belonging in 4-H is to respect all individuals.

Materials you will need:
★ This lesson plan
★ People First Language Pledge
★ Lesson script
★ Paper/markers or pencils
★ Handout – “Same and Different: Respect for All”

Time:
★ 10-15 minutes

Procedure:
★ Split youth into small groups with mixed ages (make sure to have older members in each group). Have members list how to be respectful to others.
★ Talk to youth about respect and what it means to respect others. Have group members share their discoveries.
★ Using the script on the back, talk to youth about what people first language is and how they can help make sure everyone is treated with respect!
★ Do the “Say this instead of that!” activity on the back of this page.
★ Have members sign PFL Pledge and give handout.
Activity Script:
People with disabilities make up the largest minority group in the world – it is the only minority group that any person can join at any time – at birth – as they age – from an accident or illness. At any time someone can become a person with disabilities.

Respect is defined as treating others with regard or simply put, caring for others’ feelings. Treating people with respect means letting them know that their safety and happiness matter and that they are important and worthy simply because they are fellow human beings.

Are you a respectful person? Answer true or false to the following statements. I treat other people the way I want to be treated.

1. I am considerate of other people.
2. I treat people with civility, courtesy, and dignity.
3. I accept personal differences.
4. I work to solve problems without violence.
5. I never intentionally ridicule, embarrass, or hurt other people.

If you answered true to all of the above – congratulations – you are a respectful person! If you answered false, you have some work to do to become more respectful of others! Remember the Golden Rule – “Treat others as you want to be treated!”

People First Language (PFL) is an act of not describing a person with their disability. For example, saying “the special needs child” is not putting the person first – it’s putting a label first! When we define someone by their diagnosis – we are being disrespectful to that person. A better way to ensure you are putting the person first would be to say, “that child has a cognitive disability” or “that child has a physical disability.”

Now, let’s see what you’ve learned.

Activity: “Say this instead of that!” Read the “Instead of that” column and have the 4-H members tell you what they should say instead. Examples are listed in the “Say this” column. You can also have members work in groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of that</th>
<th>Say this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The disabled child</td>
<td>The child has a disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is mentally challenged</td>
<td>He has a cognitive disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s a down’s child</td>
<td>She has Down’s Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s learning disabled</td>
<td>She has a learning disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He’s a dwarf/midget</td>
<td>He is of short stature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He’s wheelchair bound</td>
<td>He uses a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special needs child</td>
<td>Child who needs assistance with activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wrapping Up:
- Allow youth to come up with other examples of PFL on their own.
- Have members sign the People First Language Pledge form.

The "R" Word - RESPECT

Jodi Smith, WVU Extension Educator – 4-H Youth Development

Introduction:
When we use the “R-Word” (retard/retarded), we are disrespecting youth with disabilities and their families and friends. This word has become a slang word in our society, and it is degrading and demeaning to individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities.

Respect is a character trait that 4-Hers learn throughout every facet of the 4-H program. Learning respect is part of learning leadership and citizenship. A great way to show respect to others is to not label them or call them names. “Treat others as you want to be treated” is the Golden Rule in 4-H.

All youth need to feel a sense of belonging – they need to belong to an inclusive program that is welcoming and offers both a physically and emotionally safe environment with caring adult role models. One way we can help create an atmosphere of belonging in 4-H is to respect all individuals and not use language that would hurt them or their loved ones.

Materials you will need:
- This lesson plan
- Spread the Word to End the Word pledge sheet
- Lesson script
- Paper/markers or pencils

Time:
- 15-20 minutes

Procedure:
- Use this activity as a follow up to the People First Language activity.
- Split youth into small groups with mixed ages (make sure to have older members in each group). Have members discuss how many times a day they hear the words “retard” or “retarded” at school, work, home, or out in public settings.
- Have group members share their discoveries.
- Read script on back of this activity page to youth.
- Have members sign attached Pledge form.
Activity Script:
A cognitive disability is a medical diagnosis. People who have cognitive disabilities are just like you and me. Mental Retardation is a medical diagnosis just like cancer, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), anxiety, and diabetes. People with cognitive disabilities have feelings and friends, sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents who love them. When we freely use the term “retard” or “retarded” in our everyday language, we often hurt people with disabilities and their loved ones.

Many youth/adults use the “r-word” to mean silly or stupid and are often not referring to a person with cognitive or developmental disabilities. Regardless of how it is meant, it is a hurtful word. When you choose to use the “r-word” in public, regardless of how you mean it, you could be hurting someone around you. You never know who in the room has a family member or loved one with a cognitive or developmental disability.

Each individual has a right to feel like they belong to a group. One of the Essential Elements of 4-H is Belonging. For people to feel like they belong to a group, they need to feel included and respected. Hearing words that refer to their medical diagnosis can often lead young people and families to leave groups because they don’t feel like they belong.

Mark Twain once said, “The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.”

Choose to be respectful and use the right word. The only “r-words” used in 4-H should be RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY. As 4-H members, we are people of character, and it is our responsibility to pledge to respect all individuals.

Activities to Reinforce the Concept: Attached to this lesson are two activities: “Say What You Really Mean” and “Words Hurt!” These activities reinforce the idea of replacing the “r-word” with another word. Do one or both activities depending on the amount of time you have at your meeting/assembly/workshop.

Taking it a step further:
To take it a step further – challenge youth to make every effort not to use the “r-word” and to be examples to others. At the next meeting, have youth share how they made a difference by choosing to use the right “r-word” – RESPECT. At that meeting, ask if they heard other people use the “r-word.” How was it used? Discuss how they reacted to hearing the word? In what ways did 4-H members set the example to others by choosing to say what they really mean?

Wrapping Up:
• Allow for further discussion.
• Have members sign the Spread the Word to End the Word Pledge form attached.

Sources:

Say What You Really Mean!

Use this activity along or with the "R-Word" Lesson Plan
Jodi Smith, WVU Extension Educator – 4-H Youth Development

Materials you will need:
• None

Time:
• 5 minutes

Procedure:
• Read the following statements. Have youth fill in the blanks with words they really mean instead of the "r-word."
• Have group members call out the words that would be better to use than the "r-word."

Activity Script:
Think about ways you have heard the "r-word" used at school, home, club meetings, or events. Come up with alternative ways you could take the same saying and replace the "r-word" with a word you actually mean that other people will not find offensive. What are some words you can think of that people may really mean to say when they use the "r-word"? (Examples might be silly, stupid, crazy, mean, ridiculous, not very good, boring, lazy, funny.)

Statements:
• "You are so _________."
• "He is such a _________."
• "This class is _________."
• "That _______ teacher."
• "That judge was _________."
• "This game is _________."
• "This camp is _________."
• "The referee is _________."
• "That idea is so _________."
• "That rule is so_______."

Wrapping Up:
• Allow for further discussion.
• Challenge youth to make a conscious effort to say what they really mean!
Words Hurt!

*Use this activity along or with the “R-Word” Lesson Plan*

Jodi Smith, WVU Extension Educator – 4-H Youth Development

**Materials you will need:**

- None

**Time:**

- 5 minutes

**Procedure:**

- Read the following script to 4-H members.
- Next, read the statements below.

**Activity Script:**
Think about a serious medical condition someone you care about has been diagnosed with at one time. Also, consider your living or economic situation. If someone made fun of that situation or condition, it would hurt you or someone in your family. (Examples: cancer patient, seizure/epileptic, diabetic, ADHD, adopted child, unemployed person.)

You wouldn’t say to a person whose parent has cancer that things are “cancerous.” You know that would hurt feelings. You wouldn’t say to someone who is adopted that he/she is “so adopted!” Would you? So why would you use a word describing someone’s medical condition in a negative way that could hurt that person? **Note to instructor:** Use some of the statements below with words the 4-H members might find hurtful.

**Statements:**

- “You’re such a cancer patient!”
- “He is such an orphan.”
- “You’re such a diabetic!”
- “That kid is an epileptic!”
- “Man, you’re autistic!”
- “That guy is so unemployed!”
- “You’re adopted!”
- “Foster child!!”
- “You’re elderly!”
- “He’s so poor!”

**Wrapping Up:**

- Allow for further discussion.
- Challenge youth to use words that do not hurt.