

DROP THE I-WORD

ACTION GUIDE

There is something for everyone, depending on how much time you have and how you'd like to get involved.

Below we have listed some ways you can participate with Drop the I-Word.

In 5 minutes, you can:

Sign the pledge: Go to droptheiword.com or text "IWORD" to 69866.

Spread the word: Ask others to go to droptheiword.com to sign the pledge and read our blog via Twitter, email or Facebook.

In 1-3 hours you can:

Help us track it: I-word watchers help us document usage in newspapers, radio or TV. Note who used it, title of story, date and time and alert us at droptheiword@colorlines.com so we can add it to the national picture or give us a shout on Twitter via [@droptheiword](https://twitter.com/droptheiword).

Write a letter to the editor: Use the sample letter to the editor in the toolkit, as a guide. Remind the outlet that the Associated Press stylebook (the standard usage guide used by journalists) expressly says not to use the i-word because it is widely considered dehumanizing. Ask them to stop using the i-word and any variations in stories or headlines.

Advanced participation

If you have more time to get involved or get your organization involved you can:

Host a teach-in: Plan an event at your school, church or community center, see the teach-in guide in the toolkit for ideas on planning.

Follow up on your letter to the editor:

Make a call or request an editorial meeting: Start with the reporter and editor in chief and ask them for a few minutes of their time. Tell them about why it's so important to drop the i-word. Present them with the media pledge and provide the sample style guide for their use.

Organize a community meeting: If they don't respond at all or refuse to change, organize family, friends and community members for more support. Use the Drop the I-Word video and discussion guide in the toolkit to introduce the campaign and engage in conversation. Ask them to send letters and make calls too, or organize a coordinated call-in day.

Escalate: If they still don't budge, escalate with a petition (offline or online) and other forms of protest. There are free petition and easy-to-use forms you can use online, or you can circulate a hardcopy petition, whatever works best for you.

Document your efforts and tell us all about them at droptheiword@colorlines.com.