

WORDS AND PHRASES TO KNOW:

The Language of Equity



We use many words and phrases in access, equity, and inclusion work. Some of these words may be familiar, and some may not be. Some mean something different in this context. We want our audiences to understand these words. Language matters, especially in the world of equity. If you are unfamiliar with a word, we encourage you to explore further.

Ableism/Anti-Ableism: Ableism is a system that treats people differently based on beliefs about how bodies and minds should work. Society creates a general understanding of what is normal. Intelligence and productivity are valued, but they are rooted in oppression. Anti-ableism means we change and challenge practices that lead to valuing people differently based on appearance, behavior, communication, or ability to produce.

Access/Accessible: People can understand, engage, and fully participate.

Accomplice/Accompliceship: In the social justice context, this means taking down systems that continue inequity. Accomplices do this by using their power. They follow the lead of marginalized groups. They build trust and partner with these groups.

Ally/Allyship: This means supporting a marginalized group. Allies are aware of their privilege. Allies may not always act directly.

Center the Experiences: We put the needs of a group first – a group that is marginalized. We respect their needs. Their priorities inform our work.

Colonialism/Anti-Colonialism: Colonialism refers to the practice of taking land and resources, often from people of color. It also means using power to control others. Often, the group with more power forces its language and values on another group. There is a long history of this practice. This has happened in the United States. Anti-colonialism means we try to undo the harms caused by colonialism.

WORDS AND PHRASES TO KNOW:

The Language of Equity



Cross-Movement Advocacy: Advocacy across social justice movements. For example, a disability organization can advocate for racial justice. A racial justice organization can advocate for disability justice. Often, organizational partners or activists work together to engage in cross-movement advocacy. This helps demonstrate solidarity or even accompliceship.

Diverse/Diversity: People come from different backgrounds. They are different races, ages, and genders. They have different abilities and disabilities. We want people who will bring different ideas and thoughts.

Equity/Equitable/Inequity: Equity/equitable mean we treat all groups fairly. It means we try to shift power from groups that have more to groups that have less. Inequity means we do not treat all groups fairly – we do not try to make power equal between groups.

Identities: The ways we define who we are. Sometimes, society creates or defines identities.

Inclusion/inclusive: People feel welcomed, respected, and valued for who they are. They know they belong.

Intersect/Intersectionality: Intersect means things come together or overlap. Intersectionality refers to the overlap of identities. People can experience more marginalization if they have more than one marginalized identity.

LGBTQIA+: LGBTQIA+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, bisexual, bigender, gay, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, aromantic, and other diverse gender and sexual identities.

Lived Experience: People who live with or have an identity. Often, their identity or experience is marginalized.

WORDS AND PHRASES TO KNOW:

The Language of Equity



Marginalized: Marginalized means that some groups are treated differently than others. The treatment is often negative. Some groups have been treated unfairly for a long time.

Oppression: Oppression means treating a group badly or unfairly. Oppression is rooted in power. Power can exist within people, structures, and systems.

Policies: Documented ways that an organization does things. Often, policies are written down and contain organizational values.

Practices: Informal ways that people or teams within an organization do things. Often, practices are not documented but still may be understood across an organization. Practices are often the result of an organization's broader culture.

Procedures: Formal ways that people or teams within an organization do things. Procedures often regulate how different teams work together.

Resources: Physical and digital documents, presentations, publications, statements, and other materials an organization creates. Resources are typically public facing.

Social Justice: The act of treating groups fairly in society. All groups have equitable access to resources. No group has more power than another group. There are many social justice movements.

Solidarity: Solidarity means supporting another group or issue. Solidarity can lead to allyship.

Racism/Anti-Racism: Racism is a system that treats groups differently based on race. Often, whiteness is valued more than color. Anti-racism means we change and challenge policies and practices that lead to racial inequity.

WORDS AND PHRASES TO KNOW:

The Language of Equity



Stakeholders: Individuals and groups that follow or support The Arc's work. Our common stakeholders include:

- People with IDD
- Family members and supporters
- Chapter staff and leaders
- The Arc's Board of Directors
- The Arc's Committees and Councils

Technical Assistance: Customized support for a group, organization, or individuals. Technical assistance can involve training, sharing resources, or help with a specific activity.

Tokenism: This means including someone from a marginalized group in a meaningless way.

Underserved: A group, community, or region that has less access to services than other groups or regions.

Vision: Our Vision describes how we want the world to be.

White Supremacy: The belief that white people are a better race and because they are better, they should control society. This leads to hatred of, harm to, and exclusion of various groups. These groups include Black, Indigenous, and people of color; Jewish people; non-Christian religious groups; and others.