

# “M”[slur] Wrestling Tool Kit

## Little People Of America Advocacy Committee

### The Issue

Public events and private spaces that host Midget/Micro Wrestling events for the purposes of entertainment are promoting objectification and stereotypes of disabled people, specifically people with dwarfism. Disability advocates call on these venues and event hosts to stop booking these events or cancel “M”[slur] Wrestling Warriors/ Micro Wrestling Federation, and Big Little Brawler” performances. The show promotes discrimination and bias against little people and other disabled persons. It has long-lasting consequences, including the normalization of violence and the reinforcement of harmful stereotypes. Instances of physical assault, harassment, and discrimination against individuals with dwarfism are not uncommon and are often fueled by misrepresentations in media and entertainment.

If your organization has a connection with an event, pass on our letter and raise the issue directly to them [[click to download letter](#)]

### Tools and Resources

#### Quotes You Can Use in Your Messaging

- *“The show must go! Our opposition is not solely about the use of the “m”[slur] and its offensiveness, it is to the show itself - which is a visual expression of bias - and the marginalization it incites from the audience members. The visual performance showcases disabled persons chosen specifically for their disability as a form of entertainment.” - Eileen Norman, President of LPA National*
- *“I believe that the intent of it is to be amusing for others who are not disabled, which is exploitation and dehumanizing. The violence displayed in the program, whether real or acted, shows plot and characterizations that could validate bias against people with disabilities. I am a little person, my wife is disabled, we have a child. What happens if someone gets the message that it's ok to act out the sentiments in this show. I am not just being an advocate here; I need to protect my family.” - Eli Gelardin, CEO of Marin CIL*
- *“As an organization that prides itself on empowering others, promoting equity, and fostering diversity, we understand the importance of upholding these values in all aspects of business operations. However, we believe that hosting an event like a micro wrestling event contradicts these principles and poses significant risks to the individuals within our community. Our primary concern lies in the portrayal of little people in the show, specifically the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes and the glorification of physical confrontations involving individuals with dwarfism. Such representations not only perpetuate misconceptions about our community but also contribute to a culture of exploitation and potential harm.” - Samantha Rayburn-Trubyk, Advocacy Director*

## Talking Points & Sample Social Media Posts

*Any of the below talking points can be adapted to also be used as social media posts. Customize them to address the specific needs of the community you represent. When posting on social media, please tag the following accounts.*

- @littlepeopleofamerica
- @ disabilityin
- @ global\_disability\_inclusion
- @ 1in4coalition

### The Show and “M”[slur]

- Shows that make a spectacle out of disabled persons only dehumanize us for the entertainment of others. The show is an expression of ableism.
- The “m”[slur] word was created as a label used to refer to little people who were on public display for curiosity and sport. The national organization Little People of America considers this word a discriminatory slur.
- The choice to use the “m”[slur] on promotional materials is a choice to exploit little people for entertainment.
- When little people and individuals with disabilities are promoted as an amusement it communicates that our lives aren't serious and sets back our fight for civil rights.

### Future Events/Shows

- Future events and shows need to create a diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility committee to review programming before making a final decision. If such a committee gets involved, offensive programming like this will not be included.
- Public events, sponsored by multiple local, state and national public agencies. This is not what taxpayer and education dollars should be used to promote.
- The event should be based on their mission & values and should be rooted in bringing the community together and celebrating a positive image of everyone who makes up that community, instead of dividing the community by supporting bias.

### Employment

- It is not our intention to create hardship for other people with disabilities. These performances further the cliched stereotype held by people outside our community that LPs are unable to find work outside of these trope-style performances. A disappointingly large segment of society still believes that LPs are unable to find work and have no other options other than this.
- The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is twice that of the general population. Thirty-three years after the passage of the ADA this is unacceptable but tells us why so many disabled persons are lured into these types of occupations.

- In 2017, only 18.7% of disabled persons were employed, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In contrast, the employment population ratio for those without a disability was 65.7%.
- Little people hold a wide variety of diverse vocations in a number of industries: Biotech, Legal, Nonprofit, Government, Finance, Marketing, Fortune 500, etc. Career paths are just as diverse ranging from small business owners, sales associates, scientists and medical doctors, brokers and tax specialists, to teachers and disability activists. Disabled persons should be celebrated for their contributions to society not exploited for the entertainment of able-bodied people.
- The performers are not provided health care or appropriate medical attention when they inevitably are injured from these performances. Some injuries do not present themselves until later in life, such as permanent loss of function in lower extremities that can be exacerbated due to complications in skeletal dysplasia diagnosis, like spinal stenosis.

### Public Funding

- County Fairs or public events often receive funding through local, state, and federal tax dollars, meaning they are supported by public money. If these events host "Midget" wrestling, they are essentially using taxpayer dollars to promote harmful stereotypes and discriminatory practices. This not only perpetuates derogatory portrayals of Little People, but it also undermines inclusivity and respect for all individuals. By allowing such events, the institutions receiving public funding are endorsing and normalizing behavior that contributes to the marginalization of a community.
- This misuse of public funds raises serious ethical concerns and calls for a reevaluation of which events are deemed appropriate for taxpayer support, especially in a society striving for equality and respect for all its citizens.

### Other Sample Social Media Posts

- We as (allies/ little people) advocate for the safety, dignity, and rights of individuals with dwarfism. It is important to distinguish that micro wrestling is not a portrayal of athleticism or genuine competition among athletes; rather, it is a scripted form of entertainment that often sensationalizes physical altercations. We believe that hosting an event like a micro wrestling event contradicts these principles and poses significant risks to the individuals within our community. #Advocacy #Inclusion #DwarfismAwareness
- We are not put in this world to be exploited as derogatory entertainment as it is still happening to this day with micro-wrestling shows like Big Lil Brawlers. Little People of America as a community has worked so hard to be recognized as positive assets to society. We have a responsibility to the next generation of little people and average height people to properly educate and empower that we are more than just entertainment. #Advocacy #Inclusion #DwarfismAwareness

- Hey, Big Little Brawlers and Micro-wrestlers, it is crucial to recognize that the commodification and objectification of dwarf bodies for entertainment purposes have long-lasting consequences, including the normalization of violence and the reinforcement of harmful stereotypes. Instances of physical assault, harassment, and discrimination against individuals with dwarfism are not uncommon and are often fueled by misrepresentations in media and entertainment. #Advocacy #Inclusion #DwarfismAwareness
- County fairs across the country are still allowing harmful events like "Midget Wrestling" — events that degrade and dehumanize Little People. What's even worse? Many of these fairs are funded by your tax dollars.

Did you know? Local, state, and federal tax dollars often help fund public events, including county fairs. If these fairs host "Midget Wrestling," they're using public money to promote outdated, offensive stereotypes that have no place in our society.

What message does this send? That it's okay to mock, belittle, and exploit an entire community for entertainment — and that our government endorses it by funding these events.

We demand better! Taxpayer dollars should be used to create inclusive, respectful spaces for all communities. Let's hold county fairs accountable and demand they stop hosting degrading events that harm marginalized groups.

Take action today! Contact your local officials and demand they put an end to publicly funded discrimination. We must do better.

#EndTheSlur #DwarfismAwareness #InclusiveCommunities #TaxDollarsAtWork #StopTheStigma

### **The Advocacy Partners**

- Little People of America, Inc. (LPA) <https://www.lpaonline.org>
- Disability Community Resource Center, Inc. <https://www.dcrc.co/>
- Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund <https://dredf.org/>
- Marin Aging and Disability Institute <https://marinaginganddisabilityinstitute.org/>
- Disability IN <https://disabilityin.org/>
- World Institute on Disability <https://wid.org/>
- 1 in 4 Coalition <https://www.1in4coalition.org/>
- Disability & Philanthropy Forum <https://disabilityphilanthropy.org/>
- Global Disability Inclusion LLC <https://www.globaldisabilityinclusion.com/>

## Little People of America Leadership Contacts Information

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- Josh Maudlin, Eastern Regional Representative: [Josh.maudlin@lpaonline.org](mailto:Josh.maudlin@lpaonline.org)  
(Oversees Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 13 which are the states CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NJ, NY, PA, DE, DC, MD, NC, SC, VA, FL, PR, AI, GA, MS, TN)
- Allison Lourash, Central Regional Representative: [allison.lourash@lpaonline.org](mailto:allison.lourash@lpaonline.org)  
(Oversees Districts 6, 7, 8, & 9 which are the states IL, WI, AR, KS, MO, OK, LA, TX, IA, MN, NE, ND, and SD)
- Lee Uniacke, Western Regional Representative: [lee.uniacke@gmail.com](mailto:lee.uniacke@gmail.com)  
(Oversees Districts 10, 11, & 12 which are the states AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY, AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, CA, NV, and HI)