



Group Discusses How Event Promotes Negative Stereotype Of Little People

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A controversy erupted this week over an event being held in Chandler next month: the Rockin' Taco Street Festival.

One of the events at the festival stood out to the Little People of America's Arizona Chapter because of an offensive word used in its title — "Extreme Midget Wrestling."

The M-word used there is offensive to the Little People community and promotes a negative stereotype, the group says. The National Center for Disability Journalism says the same, so we'll avoid using the word from here on out in this story.

But we did want to talk more about why certain terms like this are so offensive.

I got a hold of Phil Pangrazio with disability advocacy organization Ability 360 to talk about this.

But first, we reached out to the city of Chandler about this particular event and the company that organized the event, HDE Agency.

A representative for the city said that they're not the sponsor of the event and that they brought the Little People of America's concerns to the event organizers.

Their representative told us that they didn't want to offend anyone and that they removed any references to the M-word from their marketing efforts and their event website.

Here's Pangrazio on why what we say, especially about people with disabilities, matters.

HDE Agency gave a full statement about the event:

"We are aware that there has been a letter sent to the City of Chandler regarding the Little People of America's concerns. In response, we have taken measures to remove any references to the "m" word in our marketing efforts and on our event website. We do not want to offend anyone in our community, we truly understand that certain terms may be offensive and we are not insensitive to these concerns. The wrestling production is contracted through a company based in Texas called, Extreme Midget Wrestling. This is their official business name. Any concerns regarding the name of the wrestling company should be addressed with the business owner."