

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

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Remember: a disability descriptor is simply a medical diagnosis.
People First Language respectfully puts the person before the disability.
A person with a disability is more *like* people without disabilities than different.

SAY:

People with disabilities.

He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis.

She has autism (or a diagnosis of...).

He has Down syndrome (or a diagnosis of...).

She has a learning disability (diagnosis).

He has a physical disability (diagnosis).

She has a mental health condition/diagnosis.

He uses a wheelchair/mobility chair.

She receives special ed services.

He has a developmental delay.

Children without disabilities.

Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.

People we serve

Congenital disability

Brain injury

Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.

She needs... or she uses...

INSTEAD OF:

The handicapped or disabled.

He's mentally retarded.

She's autistic.

He's Down's; a mongoloid.

She's learning disabled.

He's a quadriplegic/is crippled.

She's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill.

He's confined to/is wheelchair bound.

She's in special ed; a SPED kid.

He's developmentally delayed.

Normal or healthy kids.

Is non-verbal.

Client, consumer, recipient, etc.

Birth defect

Brain damaged

Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.

She has problems with/has special needs.

Keep thinking—there are many other descriptors we need to change!

Excerpted from Kathie's People First Language article, available at www.disabilityisnatural.com.

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