

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

BY KATHIE SNOW; VISIT WWW.DISABILITYISNATURAL.COM TO SEE THE COMPLETE ARTICLE

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's of short stature/she's a little person.
He has a mental health condition/diagnosis.
She uses a wheelchair/mobility chair.
He receives special ed services.
She 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 a dwarf/midget.
He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill.
She's confined to/is wheelchair bound.
He's in special ed.
She'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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