



People First Language - It MATTERS!

- ➔ In EVERY Draft
- ➔ In EVERY Context
- ➔ In EVERY Communication

Using People First Language (also called “person first” or “person centered” language) is a concrete and respectful way to focus on the individual rather than the disability. Please be mindful in all communications, both written and verbal, that ***a person with a disability is a person first.***

| Say or Write:* | Instead of: |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Person with a disability | Disabled person |
| People with disabilities | The handicapped, the disabled |
| He has autism | He is autistic |
| She has a developmental disability | She is developmentally delayed |
| Congenital disability | Birth defect |
| Communicates with his eyes/device/etc. | Is non-verbal |
| She uses a wheelchair | She is confined to a wheelchair |
| Children without disabilities | Normal or healthy kids |
| He has a physical disability | He’s a quadriplegic/crippled |
| She has high support needs | She is low functioning |
| Accessible parking/Restroom | Handicapped parking/Restroom |
| Non-ambulatory | Wheelchair-bound |

*This list is excerpted from an article by Kathie Snow at www.disabilityisnatural.com