



PERSON FIRST LANGUAGE

About 54 million Americans — one out of every five individuals — have a disability.

Person First Language emphasizes the person, not the disability. By placing the person first, the disability is no longer the primary, defining characteristic of an individual, but one of several aspects of the whole person.

Old, inaccurate, and inappropriate descriptors perpetuate negative stereotypes and attitudinal barriers. When we describe people by their labels of medical diagnoses, we devalue and disrespect them as individuals. In contrast, using thoughtful terminology can foster positive attitudes about persons with disabilities

EXAMPLES OF PERSON FIRST LANGUAGE

- Person/student with a disability Person/student without a disability
- Accessible seat/parking spot
- Person/student with Down Syndrome
- The person/student who utilizes/uses a wheelchair
- A dance class for children with disabilities
- Communicates with a device or sign language
- Person/student with an intellectual developmental disability
- They need assistance with...
- An adult with Parkinson's disease

EXAMPLES OF OUTDATED OR INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

- The disabled or handicapped
- Normal healthy person
- Handicapped seat/parking spot
- Downs kid
- The person/student in the wheelchair, wheelchair-bound, confined to a wheelchair
- A handicapped dance class
- Non-verbal
- Special person, retarded, slow, defective
- They have a problem with...
- An adult suffering from Parkinson's disease