

People First Language

Person first language is considered the most courteous way to address someone with a disability because the person is recognized first before their disability. Refer to a disability only if it is relevant to the situation. Above all, respect individual preferences for acceptable language. Examples of person-first language are:

Person with a disability
Parent who is hard-of-hearing
Student with a learning disability
Priest who uses a wheelchair

Terminology

People with disabilities aren't asking you to use a special vocabulary just for them. In fact, just the opposite. Speak to them with the same words you'd use with anyone else. Because nothing can better express your respect for them as individuals than that.

Old Terms	Better Terms
Handicap	Disability
Midget/dwarf	Little person, or person of short stature
Deaf and dumb	Deaf
Mongoloid	Person with Down Syndrome
Cripple/gimp	Person with physical disability
Psycho/crazy/maniac	Person with mental illness
Suffers from, or afflicted with, or a victim of (a disability)	With (a disability)
Wheelchair-bound, or confined to a wheelchair	Uses a wheelchair
The blind, the deaf, the disabled, etc. (Don't reduce groups of people to adjectives.)	People who are blind, people who are deaf, people with disabilities, etc.