

CONSIDER THIS:

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

DO NOT constitute a homogenous subspecies called “the handicapped” or “the disabled”. They are unique individuals.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

DO constitute our nation’s largest minority group—one which will grow in the coming years to include members of the aging “baby-boomers!”

THINK ABOUT IT.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE DESCRIBED?

Our thanks to Kathie Snow.

The text for People First Language is taken from an original article of the same name by Kathie Snow. Read the full article and find other new ways of thinking at disabilityisnatural.com

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PEOPLE FIRST



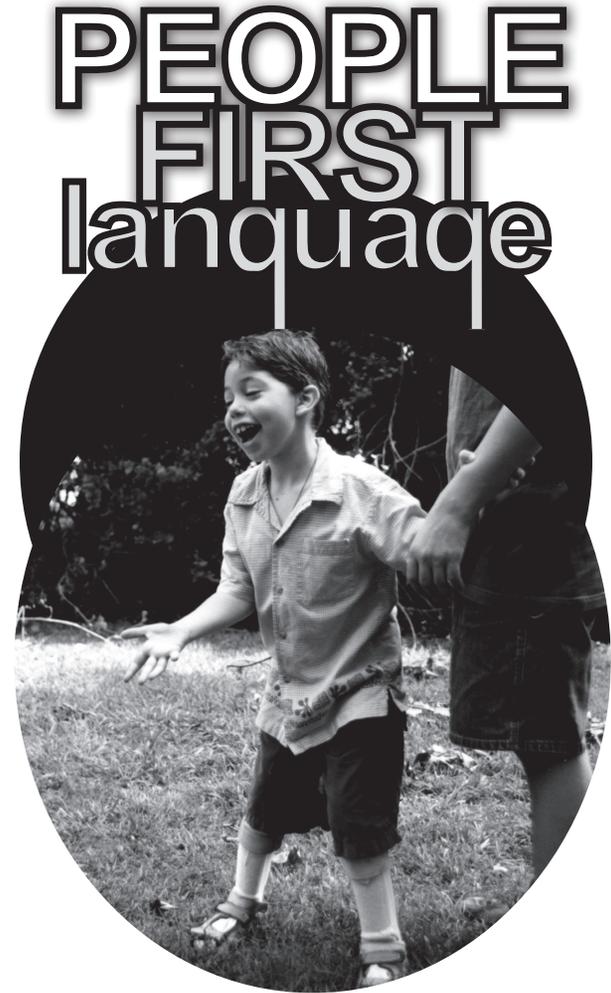
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This child is not handicapped.

This child is a person with a disability.

This child is a person, first.



Institute on Disabilities

Words are powerful!

Remember...self-image is closely associated with the words used to describe or refer to a person.

People First language is just good manners—developed by people who said, “We are not our disabilities!”

“WE ARE NOT OUR DISABILITIES!”

Disability diagnoses are often used to define a person’s value, potential and identity.

Using a diagnosis as a defining characteristic reflects prejudice and also robs a person of the opportunity to define himself or herself.

People First language puts the person before the disability and describes what a person has, not what a person is. } FOR EXAMPLE... If your friend was diagnosed with cancer, you wouldn’t say he is “cancerous”—You would say “he has cancer”...right?
SO...Don’t say your friend is “handicapped/disabled”—instead say “he has a disability.”



Make a habit of using People First language. Pass it on to family, friends and co-workers.



A new paradigm of disability can be created and the world can change in the process.

Begin NOW using People First language!

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

INSTEAD OF SAYING:	SAY:
Handicapped, disabled, special needs.	Children/adults/people with disabilities
He’s mentally retarded.	He has an intellectual disability.
She’s autistic.	She has autism.
He’s Down’s/mongoloid.	He has Down Syndrome.
She’s learning disabled.	She has a learning disability.
He’s quadriplegic/cripple.	He has a physical disability.
She’s confined to a wheelchair.	She uses a wheelchair.
He’s in special ed; a special ed kid.	He receives special ed services.
Normal or healthy people.	People without disabilities.
She is non-verbal.	Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.
Birth defect/Brain damaged	Congenital disability/Brain injury
Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.	Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.
She’s a dwarf/midget.	She’s of short stature/a little person.

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