

Examples of People First Language

Say:

Children (or people) with disabilities

He has a disability

She has a cognitive disability

People with cognitive disabilities

She has Down syndrome

My son has autism

He has a learning disability

She has a physical disability

My son has a physical disability

She is of short stature

She has an emotional disability

He uses a wheelchair

(or mobility chair)

Typical children; kids without disabilities

He receives special ed services

He needs behavior supports

He has a brain injury

Accessible parking/bathroom

She needs...

She uses...

Instead of:

the disabled, the handicapped

he's disabled; he's handicapped

my daughter is retarded

the (mentally) retarded

she's Down's; she's mongoloid

my son is autistic

he's learning disabled; he's LD

she's a quadriplegic or a cripple

my son is disabled

she's a dwarf

she's emotionally disturbed

he's confined to a wheelchair

he's wheelchair bound

normal kids or healthy kids

he's in special ed

he has behavior problems

He's brain damaged

handicapped parking/bathroom

she has a problem with...

she can't