



What Do You Call People with Disabilities?

Men, women, boys, girls, students, mom, Sue's brother, Mr. Smith, Rosita, a neighbor, employer, coworker, customer, chef, teacher, scientist, athlete, adults, children tourists, retirees, actors, comedians, musicians, blondes, brunettes, SCUBA divers, computer operators, individuals, members, leaders, people, voters, friends or any other word you would use for a person.

People First Language recognizes that individuals with disabilities are - first and foremost - people. It emphasizes each person's value, individuality, dignity and capabilities. The following examples provide guidance on what terms to use and which ones are inappropriate when talking or writing about people with disabilities.

People First Language	Instead of Labels that Stereotype and Devalue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• people/individuals with disabilities an adult who has a disability a child with a disability a person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the handicapped the disabled
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• people/individuals without disabilities typical kids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• normal people/healthy individuals atypical kids
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• people with intellectual and developmental disabilities he/she has a cognitive impairment a person who has Down syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the mentally retarded; retarded people he/she is retarded; the retarded• moron, idiot, imbecile he/she's a Downs kid; a Mongoloid; a Mongol
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a person who has autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• autistic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• people with a mental illness a person who has an emotional disability with a psychiatric illness/disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the mentally ill; the emotionally disturbed is insane; crazy; demented; psycho a maniac; lunatic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a person who has a learning disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• he/she is learning disabled
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a person who is deaf he/she has a hearing impairment/loss a man/woman who is hard of hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the deaf
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• person who is deaf and cannot speak who has a speech disorder uses a communication device uses synthetic speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is deaf and dumb mute

- a person who is **blind**
a person who has a visual impairment
man/woman who has low vision
- a person who has **epilepsy**
people with a seizure disorder
- a person who **uses a wheelchair**
people who have a mobility impairment
a person who walks with crutches
- a person who has **quadriplegia**
people with paraplegia
- he/she is of small or **short stature**
- he/she has a **congenital disability**
- accessible **buses, bathrooms, etc.**
reserved **parking** for people with disabilities
- the blind
- an epileptic
a victim of epilepsy
- a person who is wheelchair bound
a person who is confined to a wheelchair
a cripple
- a quadriplegic
the paraplegic
- a dwarf or midget
- he/she has a birth defect
- handicapped buses, bathrooms, hotel rooms, etc.
handicapped parking

(Prepared by the Texas Council on Developmental Disabilities)