



# People First Language

## A Guide for Young People

Utah Governor's Council for People with Disabilities

Phone: (801) 533-3965

Toll Free: (800) 333-8824

[WWW.GCPD.org](http://WWW.GCPD.org)

The way we talk to and about people with disabilities is very important. It is important that we focus more on the person than the disability. To help us do this we can use "People First Language". When



we use People First Language we talk about the person first rather than his or her disability. We can spend our time talking about what we like to do, our dreams and families.

## Why is it Important to use People First Language?

People who have disabilities are all around us and it's important that we learn to be respectful to everyone we meet. People with disabilities are:

- Moms and dads
- Friends
- Actors
- Scientists
- Neighbors
- Students
- Politicians
- Artists

Use the Internet to find out more about these famous people with disabilities and find other famous people with disabilities:

- Chris Burke
- Michelangelo
- Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Harriet Tubman
- Marlee Matlin
- Tchaikovsky
- Casey Martin
- Stephen Hawking



Many words used for disabilities are not very nice. Often we hear these words used in jokes or as a way to refer to something bad or "stupid". We think it is Ok because they aren't being used to talk about someone with a disability. But these words hurt people's feelings and it sends a message that people who have disabilities are stupid or bad.

Some of the words we should not use are:

- Retard or Retarded
- Deaf and dumb
- cripple
- special person

What other words can you think of that are used to describe people with disabilities?

## Using People First Language

When we use People First, we put the person first when we speak. We say “people with Disabilities” rather than “disabled People.” See if you can match these incorrect Statements with the correct statements using People First Language.

### **Incorrect**

- Handicapped
- Wheelchair bound
- He is a retard
- Normal Person
- She has a birth defect
- Handicapped parking or bathrooms

### **People First**

- People with Disabilities
- She *has* a congenital (present at birth) disability
- accessible parking or bathrooms
- She uses a wheelchair
- Person without a disability
- He *has* developmental Disabilities



For more information please contact  
Utah Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities  
155 South 300 West, Suite 100  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101  
Phone: (801) 533-3965  
Toll Free: (800) 333-8824  
Fax: (801) 533-3968  
WWW.GCPD.org

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D	F	V	K	Z	X	C	F	C	P	L	K	G	A	Y
S	U	P	P	O	R	T	C	N	M	I	Q	W	N	E
R	T	Y	U	I	O	U	P	O	A	E	D	F	G	J
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Community  
Respect  
Valuable  
Friends  
Opportunity

Success  
talents  
Diversity  
Love  
Inclusion

Support  
equality  
Independence  
NATURAL  
Language

For the Younger Student



