

# People First Language

It is important to more than 43 million Americans with disabilities that they be portrayed realistically and spoken to respectfully. People with disabilities prefer that you focus on their individuality, not their disability.

The words 'disabled people' define people as disabled first and people second. The term "people with disabilities" is the preferred usage.

## Tips for speaking to or about people with disabilities:

<b><u>Don't Use</u></b>	<b><u>Use these "People-First" terms</u></b>
<b>1. the deaf</b>	<b>1. people who are deaf</b>
<b>2. the vision impaired</b>	<b>2. people with vision limitations</b>
<b>3. the disabled</b>	<b>3. people with disabilities</b>
<b>4. polio victim</b>	<b>4. had polio</b>
<b>5. a victim of AIDS</b>	<b>5. a person with AIDS</b>
<b>6. bound/confined to a wheelchair</b>	<b>6. uses a wheelchair</b>
<b>7. homebound</b>	<b>7. stays at home</b>
<b>8. victim</b>	<b>8. person who has or experienced</b>
<b>9. crippled</b>	<b>9. person with a disability</b>
<b>10. invalid</b>	<b>10. person who has a disability caused by</b>

In addition to the previous appropriate terms, be careful not to imply that people with disabilities are to be pitied, feared, or ignored, or that they are somehow more heroic, courageous, patient, or 'special' than others. Never use the term 'normal' in contrast.

When talking about people with disabilities, always choose words that carry nonjudgmental connotations and are accurate descriptions.