People First Language puts the **PERSON** before the disability, and describes what the person *has*, not who a person is.

### Examples of People First Language

**Say:**

- People with disabilities
- He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis
- She has autism (or a diagnosis of...)
- He has Down syndrome (or a diagnosis of)
- She has a learning disability (diagnosis)
- He has a physical disability (diagnosis)
- She's of short stature/she's a little person
- He has a mental health condition/diagnosis
- She uses a wheelchair/mobility chair
- He receives special ed services
- She has a developmental delay
- People without disabilities
- Communicates with her eyes/device/etc
- Customer
- Congenital disability
- Brain injury
- Accessible parking, hotel room, etc
- She needs... or she uses...

**Instead of:**

- The handicapped or disabled
- He's mentally retarded
- She's autistic
- He's Down's; a mongoloid
- She’s learning disabled
- He's crippled
- She’s a dwarf/midget
- He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill
- She’s confined to a wheelchair/ wheelchair bound
- He's in special ed
- She’s developmentally delayed
- Normal or healthy people
- Is non-verbal
- Client, consumer, recipient, etc
- Birth defect
- Brain Damaged
- Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc
- She has a problem with... or has special needs

Excerpted from Katie Snow’s People First Language article available at www.disabilityisnatural.com