

## Respectful and Inclusive Language Guide

Your choice of language is incredibly powerful and can impact how people feel and are perceived, including people with disability.

We can also use language to reshape outdated stereotypes and attitudes.

Remember, how we speak to and about each other influences how we treat each other.

### General Rules

1. Reference a person’s disability only when it’s relevant and required
2. Focus on the person, not the disability
3. Focus on what people can do and not what they can’t
4. Respect a person’s individuality and rights
5. Avoid using excessively emotive language - disability is part of human diversity, not something to be sensationalised or sentimentalised.

The table below provides some further guidance:

Outdated	Favoured
Disabled person, Handicapped, Cripple	People with disability
Able-bodied, Normal	Person without disability
Suffering from... Afflicted by...	Mary has autism
wheelchair bound	Person who uses a wheelchair
Mentally disabled, Mentally retarded, Mentally handicapped, Simple, Special	Person with intellectual disability
Paraplegic, Quadriplegic	Use person with paraplegia Person with quadriplegia
Dwarf, Midget	Short-statured person
Insane, Lunatic, Crazy Psycho	Person with a mental illness

**The best approach to inclusive language is to always ask the child, person, or family their preferred language.**