

## LANGUAGE TIPS

<b>Examples of Preferred Terms regarding People with Disabilities</b>	
<b>Acceptable - Neutral*</b>	<b>Unacceptable - Offensive</b>
He had polio She has multiple sclerosis	He was <b>afflicted</b> with, <b>stricken</b> with, <b>suffers from</b> , <b>victim</b> of polio, multiple sclerosis, etc.
He has arthritis	He is <b>arthritic</b>
She has cerebral palsy	She is <b>cerebral palsied</b> , <b>spastic</b>
A person who has had a disability since birth A congenital disability	<b>Birth defect</b>
A person who uses a wheelchair A wheelchair user	<b>Confined to a wheelchair / wheelchair bound</b>
She has a disability	She is <b>crippled</b>
A person who has a speech disability A person who is hard of hearing A person who is deaf	<b>Dumb, deaf mute, dummy</b> (implies an intellectual disability occurs with a hearing loss or a speech disability)
A person who has a spinal curvature	<b>A hunchback or a humpback</b>
He has an emotional disability He has a psychiatric disability	He is <b>chronically mentally ill</b> , <b>a nut</b> , <b>crazy</b> , <b>idiot</b> , <b>imbecile</b> , <b>moron</b>
People of short stature	<b>Midgets, dwarfs</b>
A person who has a speech disability	<b>Mute</b>
A person without a disability as compared to a person with a disability	<b>Normal person, whole person, healthy person, able-bodied person</b> as compared to a disabled person
She lives with a disability	<b>Overcame her disability</b>
A person who has a developmental disability or intellectual disability	<b>Retard, retardate, mentally retarded, feeble-minded, idiot</b>
Use only when a person is actually ill	<b>Sick</b>
Use only when a person is actively being seen or treated by a health care provider	<b>Stroke patient, multiple sclerosis patient</b>
Seizure	<b>Fit</b>
Older people with disabilities	<b>Frail</b>

\* Always subject to change and continuing debate

<b>Other words to avoid because they are negative, reinforce stereotypes and evoke pity include:</b>				
Abnormal	Invalid	Misshapen	Burden	Lame
Spaz	Disfigured	Maimed	Unfortunate	

Excerpted from: Kailes, J., Language is More Than a Trivial Concern, Edition 10, 2010: KAILES -Publications, Revised 1984-2010. <http://www.jik.com>, [jik@pacbell.net](mailto:jik@pacbell.net).