

Respectful Language

People First & Person-Centered

Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee

Do not try to fix me because I am not broken. Support me. I can make my contribution to the community in my way.

Respect the person



PEOPLE
FIRST



Use my name, not my label



See my humanity



Never use the R-word



People with disabilities have a lot to offer- notice what we can do!



There's no such thing as a 'sped kid'



Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee

Colorado Department of Education
Office of Special Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1175
Denver, CO 80202
303-866-6694

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/CSEAC.asp

Respectful Language

People First & Person-Centered

Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee



Speak & Write with Respect!

Use my name
not my label

See the person, use their name

People first language is about respect, about seeing the person. It is about valuing the person as an equal. It is about seeing the child/teen/adult as a person and realizing that labels really don't matter when you get to know a child or a person with a disability.

"Do not admire me. A desire to live a full life does not warrant adoration. Respect me for respect presumes equity." - Norm Kunc

My name is
Emma, what
is yours?

Who, not what

Language influences what we think

The minute we put a label on a person, their future is changed. If the language is respectful, caring and empowering, it has a positive effect. If the language has a negative connotation, it can damage confidence and self-esteem. Labels can help us understand an individual's needs but we have to be sure we see the person before the label and use the label to help, not hurt.

Do you want to be called by your label (physical features, disease, condition, skills, age, gender) ????????

Respect choice



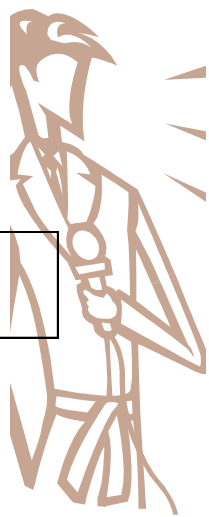
Some people value their differences

And prefer to be called an 'autistic' person. They feel that their brain differences are not separate from who they are and want to be seen as whole and not a person with a part of them that is 'broken'.



NeuroDiversity values all kinds of brain and body diversity

No R-word



Spread the Word to End the Word

When people use the r-word and other derogatory terms towards themselves or others they are displaying not only a lack of respect but intolerance. Take the pledge to end the use of the r-word (from www.r-word.org)

I pledge and support the elimination of the derogatory use of the r-word from everyday speech and promote the acceptance and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.

It's not funny to say that is so re*&rded, it is offensive to people with intellectual disabilities and the people who love them.

Media



Journalists and reporters

Anytime you write, speak or refer to a person with a disability, please use person-first language:

- ⇒ He is a boy with Down syndrome.
- ⇒ She wears glasses and has a learning disability.
- ⇒ Her son is a four-year old with autism.
- ⇒ My child receives special education services.

The only exception is if the person you are writing about tells you something different. And always ask the person!

School

There are no 'sped kids'

When we think and use respectful language, we see that saying things such as 'the sped kids eat lunch together' or 'that's the sped class' or 'those are my special ed students' or 'that's the autism room' we are not using person-first language. Teachers, staff, parents and students can support each other to use respectful language at all times, in all places.



Schools have classrooms, not sped rooms

Talk with,
not about



Talk to and with a person with a disability

Don't talk about them without them! In whatever way is appropriate for the person with a disability, include them in any discussion about them.

"Do not try to control me. I have a right to my power as a person. What you call non-compliance or manipulation may actually be the only way I can exert control over my life." -Norm Kunc

Nothing about us, without Us!