

CAC Corner: Language Matters | CPD

Kelly Holt

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By Kelly Holt, CAC Chair

I love March, because March is a Disability Awareness Month and we need to remember and also not to use the -r- word. We all are trying to step up for our rights and also to respect others. And we are also to have a positive way to be strong and we have a choice to choose what we want in our lives. We do have qualities that all of us can do in our lives. Just remember, Language Matters.

Here are some tips on People First Language, courtesy of www.disabilityisnatural.com. See the web site for more examples.

Remember, a disability descriptor is simply a medical diagnosis.

People First Language respectfully puts the person before the disability.

A person with a disability is more *like* people without disabilities than *different*.

Say: People with disabilities.
Instead of: The handicapped or disabled.

Say: He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis.
Instead of: He's mentally retarded.

Say: She has autism.
Instead of: She's autistic.

Say: He has Down syndrome.
Instead of: He's Down's or He's mongoloid.

Say: She has a learning disability.
Instead of: She's learning disabled.

Say: She uses a wheelchair.
Instead of: She's confined to a wheelchair or She's wheelchair-bound.