What To Say

Say This	Not This
• Disability/ disabled	• Differently abled • All abilities • Handicap/ handicapped • Special needs
• Has a disability • Is disabled	• Afflicted by • Suffers from • Victim of
• Person who is able to	• High functioning
• Person who is unable to • Person with high support needs	• Low functioning
• Neurodivergent • Person with Autism/ Autistic person • Person with a cognitive disability • Cognitively disabled person • Person with an intellectual disability • Intellectually disabled person	• Mentally challenged • Mentally handicapped • Slow • Special-ed • On the spectrum
• Abled-bodied (if not physically disabled) • Does not have a disability • Neurotypical (if not neurodivergent) • Nondisabled	• Normal • Regular • Typical
• Person who uses a wheelchair • Wheelchair user	• Wheelchair-bound • Confined to a wheelchair
• Little person • Person of short stature • Person with dwarfism/dwarf	• Midget
• Person with a mental health disability • Person with mental illness/difficulties • Person with a psychiatric disability	• Crazy • Disturbed • Insane • Lunatic • Mad

• Psychiatrically disabled person	• Retard • Psychotic
• Person with a physical disability • Physically disabled person	• Cripple • Gimp • Invalid • Spaz
• Accessible parking • Accessible restroom/ bathroom	• Handicapped parking • Disabled restroom

Apparent and Nonapparent Disabilities

Assumptions can be made that disabled people look a particular way; however, it is important not to make assumptions about a person's disability status based on how they look. This is particularly important as not all disabilities are apparent.

- Apparent or visible disability is noticeable based on communication or an outward appearance
- Nonapparent or invisible disability means that you will not know that the person has a nonapparent disability unless they tell you

2 Main Ways of Referring to Disability

1. **Person-first Language (PFL)**
   - It puts the word "person" first before the reference of disability
   - It acknowledges that they are people first and not only seen as their disability
   - Examples: Person with Down Syndrome, people who use wheelchairs

2. **Identity-first Language (IFL)**
   - It acknowledges that the disability if part of what makes a person who they are
   - Examples: blind person, autistic person

   There is no right or wrong in using PFL or IFL, it is a personal choice. Do not be afraid to ask the person their preference