

USE WORDS WITH DIGNITY

Basic Guidelines

Make reference to the person first, then the disability.

For example: “A person with a disability” rather than a “disabled person.”

<p>USE THESE WORDS WITH DIGNITY These words are affirmative and reflect a positive attitude.</p>	<p>DO NOT USE THESE WORDS The following words have strong negative connotations, please do not use.</p>
Disability	Handicap
Person who has multiple sclerosis	Stricken with multiple sclerosis
Person with paraplegia (person with limited or no use of lower limbs)	Para
Person with quadriplegia (person with limited or no use of all four limbs)	Quad
Person who has cerebral palsy	Spastic
Person who has a speech impairment	Speech defect
Person with a head injury	The head injured
Person with AIDS	AIDS victim
Person who has polio, has arthritis, etc.	Crippled with polio, arthritis, etc.
Person with an intellectual disability	Retard
Person with a learning disability	Dim witted, slow
Person with a mental disorder/mental illness	Mentally ill
Person with an emotional disorder	Crazy



Iowa
**Vocational
Rehabilitation**
Services

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<p>Person who is blind, partially blind, or Blind Person</p>	<p>Blind guys, visually impaired*</p>
<p>Person who is deaf, Deaf Person</p>	<p>Deaf and dumb, deaf mute</p>
<p>Person who is hard of hearing</p>	<p>Hearing impaired*</p>
<p>Sign language interpreter</p>	<p>Deaf interpreter</p>
<p>Born with “ _____ ”</p>	<p>Birth defect</p>
<p>Caused by “ _____ ”</p>	<p>Afflicted by</p>
<p>Non-disabled (referring to a non-disabled persons as normal insinuates that disabled persons are not normal)</p>	<p>Normal</p>
<p>Person in a wheelchair</p>	<p>Confined/restricted to a wheelchair**</p>
<p>Person who walks with crutches, a walker, a cane, a limp, etc.</p>	<p>Crippled</p>

Many blind persons and deaf persons consider the words “visually impaired” and “hearing impaired” to be offensive. Blind simply means without the sense or use of sight. Deaf simply means partially or totally unable to hear. They believe these two words describe their situation best. They do not wish to be identified as diminished in strength or value, which the word “impaired” denotes.

**Crutches, walkers, and wheelchairs are mobility aids. Without the use of these mobility aids, the person may be restricted from participation in their community.

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