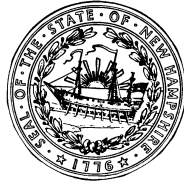


# NEW HAMPSHIRE STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)



**C/o Governor's Commission on Disability  
57 Regional Drive  
Concord, NH 03301  
[www.silcnh.org](http://www.silcnh.org)**

## PERSON FIRST RESOURCE

As human beings we all deserve respect. We are human first, not a blue-eyed person or an old person.

How we view and refer to disability must acknowledge that respect. Disability is a part of every society. The way people who experience disabilities, allow others to define them, and the way that individuals with disabilities sometimes speak of themselves is a major barrier to full participation and citizenship in our communities.

*People First* language eliminates the use of antiquated negative terms, such as birth defect, and handicapped. Most importantly, *person first* language always puts the person first, and if it is necessary to speak of a person's disability, that is always secondary. An individual is always a *Person First*, i.e., a *person with a disability*.

*People First* language is not about political correctness it is an attitude. We are not our disabilities.

### **It is about the PERSON not the disability**

People are not victims of a disability; people are victims of attitudes and discrimination.

\*\*\*Please ask the person how the person wishes to be addressed, as every individual is different and every situation is different.

#### **Consider Using**

#### **Instead of**

Person with a disability	the disabled, handicapped, crippled,
Person with an intellectual, cognitive, developmental disability	retarded, vegetable
Person who is deaf (ask person how they wish to be addressed)	hearing impaired, deaf mute
Person who is blind (ask person how they wish to be addressed)	the blind, visually impaired

Person who uses a wheelchair	confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound
Person with a physical disability, physically disabled	crippled, lame
Person who is unable to speak, or person who uses a communication device; focus on what the person can do i.e. person who uses eye gazes to communicate.	dumb; mute, tongue tied
Person with a mental health issue	crazy, nuts
Accessible parking, entrance, bathroom	handicapped parking, handicapped entrance,
Person with (heart disease, stroke, Polio, dementia, diabetes, depression, etc)	suffers from, victim of, patient

Developed by Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Advocacy Committee, 57 Regional Drive, Concord, NH 03301-(603) 271-0476- (800) 852-3405 voice or tty, [paula.ninivaggi@nh.gov](mailto:paula.ninivaggi@nh.gov)  
[www.silcnh.org](http://www.silcnh.org). June 2008

Adapted from:

1. The Access Center For Independent Living, "Talking About Disability" Dayton, Ohio, <http://www.acils.com/acil/talking.html>
2. The NH Governor's Commission on Disability, "Accommodating Patients with Disabilities," 57 Regional Drive, Concord, NH 03301, 271-2773 – Voice; 271-2774 – TTY, 800-852-3405 (in NH) <http://www.nh.gov/disability/abguidance.html>
3. West Virginia Developmental Disability Council, People First Language, [http://www.wvddc.org/people\\_first.html](http://www.wvddc.org/people_first.html)