

Dos and don'ts:

Talking about disability and chronic conditions



Language to use

Language to avoid

✓ 'Has ADHD'	✗ 'Hyper'
✓ 'Has autism/is on the autism spectrum'	✗ 'Aspie'
✓ 'Has a learning disability'	✗ 'Slow learner/stupid'
✓ 'Has a cognitive disability/ intellectual disability'	✗ 'Handicapped/special needs/ mentally disabled'
✓ 'Has acquired brain injury'	✗ 'Brain-damaged'
✓ Without disability'	✗ 'Normal/healthy/able-bodied'
✓ 'Non-verbal'	✗ 'Mute'
✓ 'Has a mental illness'	✗ 'Mentally ill/crazy'
✓ 'Uses a wheelchair'	✗ 'Wheelchair-bound'
✓ 'Person with disability'	✗ 'Disabled person'
✓ 'Has reduced mobility'	✗ 'Slow'



Interested in reading more? Looking for an example not mentioned above? Check out these great inclusive language guides:

Australian Broadcasting Corporation, [How to talk about disability in an inclusive way](#), 2021.

People with Disability Australia, [PWDA Language guide: A guide to language about disability](#), 2021.

Telethon Kids Institute, [Inclusive language guide](#), 2022.

