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**Policy on Use of People First Language**

**I-11-E**

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It is ProAct's policy to ensure that all individuals served are addressed by staff members using respectful language. Some examples of ways to speak respectfully by putting the person first, and mentioning the diagnosed disability afterward, are listed below.

Say:

- People with disabilities, not "the disabled" or "the handicapped".
- He/she has an intellectual or cognitive disability, or has Down Syndrome, not "retarded, a mental, or a mongoloid".
- He/she has autism or has autism spectrum disorder, not "he/she's autistic".
- He/she has a brain injury, not "is brain damaged".
- He/she has a physical disability, or uses a wheelchair, not he/she's a "cripple, a quadriplegic".
- He/she has a learning disability, not he/she's "learning disabled".
- He/she got upset and (state what the person did), not "had a behavior".
- He/she needs lots of assistance/help, not "is low functioning".
- He/she uses (or receives nutrition through) a G-tube, not "is a tube-feeder".
- He/she is very independent or likes to do things his own way, not "is noncompliant".
- He/she has a congenital disability, not "has a birth defect".
- Use the person's given or preferred name, not "hon", "sweetie", or a childish version of the name.