

## What Is In A Name

"Confined to a Wheelchair"

"Invalid"

"Disabled"

"Stroke Victim"

These words paint a picture of incapacity and inability when they are used to describe people with disabilities. Fortunately, we have the opportunity to change the way people with disabilities are viewed. Efforts continue in Michigan to promote the independence, abilities, competency, and talents of people with disabilities.

The Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, with the cooperation of the Michigan Jobs Commission-Rehabilitation Services, the Michigan Commission for the Blind, and the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, has compiled a list of appropriate terms and acceptable alternatives to use when writing or talking about people with physical or mental disabilities.

We can help put an end to discrimination by paying more attention to how we communicate, and help reduce the seventy percent of unemployment rate among people with severe disabilities. Together, we can change what it means to be a person with a disability in America today by promoting independence through equality.

The Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns serves as an advocate and information resource for the state's 1.7 million people with disabilities. The Commission's mission is to achieve full participation, choice, and self-determination for each individual with a disability in a way that promotes awareness of disability issues; and values equity, dignity, and diversity consistent with the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For more information, write to or call the Commission at:

**Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns**

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*The Family Independence Agency will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, marital status, political beliefs or disability. If you need help with reading, writing, hearing, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are invited to make your needs known to an FIA office in your county.*

## Terms to Use when Writing or Talking about People with Disabilities

APPROPRIATE TERMS	INAPPROPRIATE TERMS
Person with a disability	Disabled person, cripple, abnormal, cripp, gimp
Person who has mental or physical disabilities	Disabled victim, unfortunate victim, poor, pitiful, abnormal deformed, invalid
Person without a disability	Normal, complete, whole
Person who has a mobility impairment, wheelchair user, or person who uses a wheelchair	Wheelchair bound, confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair victim
Person with quadriplegia, paraplegia, person who is paralyzed, or person who uses a wheelchair	Quad, quadriplegic, paraplegic
Person who uses crutches or cane, or other mobility device	Cripple, gimp
Person who has..., Person who experienced..., Person with...,	Victim of, suffers from afflicted with, stricken with
Person who has a disability, resulting from or caused by...	Invalid, victim, afflicted with...
Person who has had a stroke	Stroke victim, suffered from a stroke
Person with a congenital characteristic or a congenital disability	Birth defect
Person with mental illness or disability, psychiatric disability	Mental deviant or crazy, mentally deranged, insane, former mental patient
Person with mental retardation, person who has mental retardation	Retard, moron, feeble-minded, mentally deficient, defective
Person with a brain injury	Brain damaged, brain injured victim
Person with a closed head injury	Closed head injured victim
Person with Arthritis	The Arthritic
Person who has epilepsy	The epileptic
Person who has a speech disorder, a person without speech, or a person with a speech impairment	Mute
Person of short stature, dwarf, little person	Midget
Person who is deaf or hard of hearing; deaf person; *Deaf person; hard of hearing person; deaf and hard of hearing person; deaf; hard of hearing  <i>Capitalized "D" means Deaf people who are part of the Deaf culture.</i>	Deaf mute, deaf and dumb, hearing impaired, deaf and hearing impaired, the deaf, hearing disabled, communicatively impaired
Person who is blind, person with a visual impairment	Blink, blur, squint, bluff
Person with Down Syndrome	Mongoloid, Down
Person with Cerebral Palsy	Palsied, spastic, spas
Person with learning disabilities	Retard, lazy, stupid