

Autism Language Guide

Language about Autism:

Research suggests that the individuals within the autistic community prefer identity-first language (e.g. autistic person, autistic individual), however some people you work with may prefer person-first language (e.g., person with autism) and when speaking to individuals we should mirror the preference of the individual. Moreover, research samples often equally represent groups who may be marginalised by race, sexuality and income, thus meaning that our understanding may be flawed or incomplete.

If you are interested, you can read more about this topic here:

[Which terms should be used to describe autism? Perspectives from the UK autism community - Lorcan Kenny, Caroline Hattersley, Bonnie Molins, Carole Buckley, Carol Povey, Elizabeth Pellicano, 2016 \(sagepub.com\)](#)

[How to talk and write about autism \(dy55nndrxke1w.cloudfront.net\)](#)

Whilst we have chosen these phrases to avoid, others may disagree, and that is completely fine. We aim to respect the opinions of everyone, and always will honour the individual's preferences.

Phrases to avoid and how else to say them:

Phrase to Avoid	Why	Better Alternative
High/low functioning	High functioning may minimise someone's difficulties and low functioning may underestimate someone's strengths.	High support needs in... Low support needs in...

The Here to Help 'resources', which include but are not limited to, website, information sheets, and in person workshops are intended to provide general information only. The 'resources' provided by 'Here to Help' do not replace, or supersede, professional and/or medical advice. Users should take professional advice before taking action which contradicts previous medical guidance. So far as permissible by law, SJOG does not accept any liability related to individual's use or interpretation of the 'resources' provided.

Whilst we have selected some resources from other organisations which we believe will be helpful, we accept no liability for the content of these resources.'

Although SJOG has taken all reasonable precautions to ensure that the 'resources' provided are accurate, neither SJOG or any of its employees, can be held responsible for the direct or indirect actions taken by users following engagement with Here to Help 'resources'.

Severely autistic/not very autistic	This does not actually tell us anything about an individual's strengths and weaknesses.	High support needs in... Low support needs in...
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	A lot of autistic people find the term 'disorder' stigmatizing.	Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

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