

# Guidelines: How to Write about People with Disabilities



*Deb Young with her granddaughters. Deb is a triple amputee who uses a power (motorized) wheelchair.*

## For More Information

Download our brochure, *Guidelines: How to Write and Report About People with Disabilities*, at [rtcil.org/guidelines](http://rtcil.org/guidelines)

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You can contribute to a positive image of people with disabilities by following these guidelines. Your rejection of stereotypical, outdated language and use of respectful terms will help to promote a more objective and honest image.

## Say this

How should I describe you or your disability?

## Instead of

What are you? What happened to you?

Disability

Differently abled, challenged

People with disabilities, disabled

Handicapped

Survivor

Victim, suffers from

Uses a wheelchair, wheelchair user

Confined to a wheelchair

Service dog or service animal

Seeing eye dog

Accessible parking or restroom

Handicapped parking, disabled stall

Person with Down syndrome

Mongoloid

Intellectual disability

Mentally retarded, mental retardation

Autistic, on the autism spectrum, atypical

Abnormal

Person with a brain injury

Brain damaged

Person of short stature, little person

Midget, dwarf

Person with a learning disability

Slow learner, retard

Person with mental illness, psychiatric disability

Crazy person, psycho,

Person with spinal cord injury

Cripple

Amputee, has limb loss

Gimp

Nondisabled, person without a disability

Normal, able bodied, healthy

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