



# Hill & Saks News



Behavior Therapy Providers for Individuals who have Developmental Disabilities

## Agency News

We would like to thank everyone who responded to our *Service Satisfaction Survey*. We have compiled and reviewed for quality improvement. We found that 85% of responses were positive (i.e. always or usually). In under 8% of responses received, we found responses to be "sometimes"; in 2%, "rarely". Our action plan includes increasing communication with ALL team members so that information & planning, access & delivery, and outcomes will continue to be positive and improve.

## Profile of Success

Spring 2009



**Robert Sanchez** has been interested in illustration for many years. He has mastered his favorite subjects which are dinosaurs, tractors and other vehicles. Robert taught himself to illustrate using paper and pencil,

colored pencils and crayons.

Robert's illustrations are very detailed and realistic renditions of his subjects. He is proud to say that he never "traces" and draws everything free-hand. Robert's illustrations can be framed and make wonderful wall art. He has sold pieces in the past and hopes to continue to offer his art for sale in the future.

Congratulations Robert on creating beautiful works of art. You are an inspiration to all who have creative interests!

## Words Do Matter!

**Words Matter!** The wrong words can stigmatize, reinforce ignorance and contribute to discrimination. There is currently much initiative to change old descriptors and labels that are disrespectful to individuals with disabilities. People first language is the term used for language that emphasizes all individuals as people first and not simply a label or diagnosis. Our words can show respect or can unfortunately reduce people to a diagnosis only.

Language changes with each generation and newly acquired information. Sometimes very well-intentioned people can choose the wrong words without meaning to be hurtful. We can all help get new,

positive and respectful language into common use by thinking about people first. See [disability is natural.com](http://disabilityisnatural.com) and back page for some ways to use people first language.

People first language can also include refraining from labeling a person without a disability as "normal". This implies people with disabilities are abnormal. In fact, everyone has particular strengths and needs; this is normal!

People first language can sometimes go awry if misunderstood. We do not want to become too afraid to acknowledge or talk about a disability. Avoiding the disability altogether can invalidate the person as her or she is.

In addition, individuals need information and understanding about their condition. Just as an individual would learn as much as possible about a medical diagnosis such as diabetes, one can also benefit from learning about a disability. What does the diagnosis mean? What helps provide comfort, accessibility, and skills for success? How does this information fit for you, your loved one or someone you care about as an individual?

Let's choose our words carefully and seek important information so that more sensitivity and respect can be experienced in society as a whole.

## Get The Word Out: Use People First Language

*Examples of People First Language by Kathie Snow; visit [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com) to see the complete article.*

Remember: a disability descriptor is simply a medical diagnosis; People First Language respectfully puts the person before the disability; and a person with a disability is more *like* people without disabilities than different!

SAY:	INSTEAD OF:
People with disabilities.	The handicapped or disabled.
He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis.	He's mentally retarded.
She has autism (or a diagnosis of...).	She's autistic.
He has Down syndrome (or a diagnosis of...).	He's Down's; a mongoloid.
She has a learning disability (diagnosis).	She's learning disabled.
He has a physical disability (diagnosis).	He's a quadriplegic/is crippled.
She's of short stature/she's a little person.	She's a dwarf/midget.
He has a mental health condition/diagnosis.	He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill.
She uses a wheelchair/mobility chair.	She's confined to/is wheelchair bound.
He receives special ed services.	He's in special ed.
She has a developmental delay.	She's developmentally delayed.
Children without disabilities.	Normal or healthy kids.
Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.	Is non-verbal.
Customer	Client, consumer, recipient, etc.
Congenital disability	Birth defect
Brain injury	Brain damaged
Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.	Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.
She needs... or she uses...	She has problems with...has special needs.

*Keep thinking—there are many other descriptors we need to change!*

Excerpted from Kathie's People First Language article, available at [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com). Copyright 2009 Kathie Snow, All Rights Reserved, used with permission. Contact [kathie@disabilityisnatural.com](mailto:kathie@disabilityisnatural.com) for reprint permission. Visit [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com) for new ways of thinking!



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