DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

LANGUAGE

GUIDEBOOK

COUNTY of SAN LUIS OBISPO

Major Takeaways

1. **Use person-first language**. For example, this would entail referring to someone as "a person with a disability" instead of "a disabled person." Another example would be referring to someone as a "person who misuses alcohol" instead of calling someone an "alcoholic." This prioritizes the recognition of a person's humanity before any other identifier, descriptor, or condition.

2. **Be as specific as possible when describing personal identifiers**. For example, instead of using a broad description such as 'community of color,' specify that the group is a 'community of people who are Korean' or a 'community of people who are Indigenous.'

3. **When in doubt about how to refer to someone, it is best practice to ask for clarification.** This pertains to gender identity, pronouns, racial and ethnic identity, etc.

4. **You won't get it right every time.** Language and connotations of words are always changing, and different groups and individuals may prefer to use different terms or phrases to refer to themselves. With this, be mindful of the words you use, be open to corrections, and always strive to learn more about best practices for DEI language.

Sections

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adapted from National Recreation and Park Association Equity Language Guide

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

accessible = pertains to something that can be used or accessed; this does not necessarily mean that it is inclusive

advocate = an individual who works to support the needs of an underrepresented person, group, or cause

ally = a person who critically examines their status of privilege, going beyond sympathy to support and work for the needs of people and groups that are often discriminated against
  → **performative allyship** = an individual that professes support for a group without taking any meaningful action on behalf of that group

assimilation = the process through which one population is pressured to shed previous identities in order to conform with the standards of another society or culture

belonging = a state of feeling welcomed, included, and important in an environment or setting

bias = a predisposed attitude of being supportive or against something or someone
  → **implicit bias** = bias that affects someone's attitudes, actions, and decisions in an unconscious way
  → **conscious bias** = bias that affects someone's attitudes, actions, and decisions in a way that they are consciously aware of

bullying = threatening, harming, and/or intimidating a person; this is done in physical, verbal, emotional, and/or virtual manners

climate = the factors that contribute to an individual or group's sense of belonging in a certain setting

code-switching = changing one's outward presentation to adapt to their environment, typically to reduce the amount of judgement passed against them

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→ **code switching** = in language it means the practice of alternating between two or more languages or variety of languages in conversation.

culture = shared behaviors, attitudes, opinions, and customs of those in similar circumstances
→ **acculturation** = the process of adapting elements of one's own culture to mesh with another culture
→ **cultural appropriation** = the inappropriate use of cultural elements for personal gain, lacking acknowledgement of their value
→ **cultural competence** = ability to engage meaningfully with those of different cultures
→ **cultural humility** = the process of critically reflecting on one's own culture and being open to learn about other cultures
→ **cultural sensitivity** =being aware of cultural differences without assigning them a value of positive or negative
→ **enculturation** = the process of learning about one's own culture
→ **multicultural/bicultural** = pertaining to two or more cultural groups

discrimination = unjust, differential treatment of a person or group by an individual, institution, or system; often based on sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or spiritual beliefs, nationality, ability status, sexual orientation, age, or socioeconomic status

disparities = systematically different outcomes or metrics between groups
→ **health disparities** = differential health outcomes, care practices, and resources by group

diversity = the vast array of differences between individuals and groups of people

dominant groups, non-dominant groups = a dominant group is a societal group that has power, privilege, and social status, while a non-dominant group does not have these; the dominant group typically classifies the non-dominant group

equality = a state in which everyone has the same opportunities and resources

equity = fair and just access to resources and opportunities that involves removing barriers preventing some groups from having access; this is done through the acknowledgement that there are historically underserved populations
→ **inequities** = systematic differences between groups

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→ **health inequities** = systematic differences in health outcomes and resources between groups

gaslighting = attempts to undermine a person's sense of reality or sanity using techniques of withholding, isolation, and discrediting; more likely to be inflicted upon underrepresented or less powerful groups

generalization = a principle or concept derived from a limited number of examples, then inappropriately applied to an entire group

historically marginalized, marginalized: this term may come off as condescending, so avoid using in a broad sense; 'marginalized' may be appropriate when describing specific instances where groups were made to feel insignificant in certain settings

inclusion = the process of removing barriers in order to allow previously excluded individuals to participate in the opportunity of interest
→ **inclusive language** = word choice and communication styles that are sensitive to diversity among humans

intergenerational trauma = transference of the psychological effects of an important negative event between generations; thought to be due to a change in genetic chemical markers (epigenetics)

intersectionality = recognition that one's experiences are impacted by the compounding of many different identities

justice = impartial, fair dealing with matters of conflict or difference
→ **environmental justice** = equitable involvement in environmental initiatives and equitable environmental outcomes for all groups
→ **racial justice** = uprooting sources of systemic racial discrimination in order to achieve racial equity
→ **social justice** = fair treatment and access to resources for all groups and individuals

'living with' and **'being treated for'** are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid using the term 'suffering from.'

microaffirmation = small act of inclusion, kindness, or comfort; examples include good listening practices, allyship, and supportive comments

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microaggressions = common verbal expressions or behaviors that insult a component of an individual's identity

oppression = a condition in which one group is abusing another, creating a power imbalance

'person who has experienced…' and **'person who has been impacted by…'** are appropriate terms to use.
  → Use the terms 'survivor' and 'victim' with caution.

'person who is/was enslaved' is an appropriate term to use.
  → Avoid using the term 'slave.'

population = a group of individuals that share a defining characteristic
  → **population health** = health outcomes, determinants, and policies for a particular group of individuals

positionality = the way individual identities (race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, socioeconomic status, etc.) grant a person a certain level of power and privilege

prejudice = an unjustified, typically negative attitude about an individual or group based on a certain characteristic

privilege = an unearned advantage enjoyed by a certain societal group; this advantage is often not fully appreciated by the group benefiting from it

representation = the visible, meaningful involvement of a certain group in a project, organization, social circle, or other designation

rights = entitlements or freedoms bestowed by legal, social, or moral means
  → **civil rights** = equal protection under the law regardless of personal characteristics such as race, sexual orientation, or gender
  → **human rights** = legal rights afforded to all humans to protect individual freedom and dignity

safe space = an environment in which all feel comfortable expressing themselves authentically and participating completely without fear of ridicule or repercussions

social power (also known as **power**) = access to resources that enhance one's quality of life

stereotype = generalizations about members of a group that expedite judgements

stigma = negative attitudes associated with certain people, behaviors, or conditions
- → **public stigma** = society's negative attitudes
- → **self-stigma** = internalized negative attitudes towards oneself
- → **structural stigma** = systems that perpetuate the exclusion of certain groups based on negative attitudes towards them

structural competency = the ability to recognize the ways in which diseases and behaviors are symptoms of big-picture societal issues such as health care systems, zoning laws, and infrastructure

tokenism = the superficial inclusion of one individual from one underrepresented group who is expected to speak or act on the behalf of the whole group; the individual's experiences are not truly invested in

tolerance = the absence of prejudice towards a group

trigger = any stimuli that causes a person to experience a state of distress

underrepresented = groups that are typically not visibly or meaningfully included in certain settings (more specificity is preferred when using this term)

Race and Ethnicity

accomplice = a person who challenges institutionalized racism by working against racist policies

affirmative action = policies and practices intended to remedy and account for the effects of systemic discrimination among a set of applicants

American Indians, Native Americans, Native = all terms to describe Indigenous people of America (when possible, using names of specific nations is preferred)
- → **Alaska Native** = Indigenous people of Alaska

→ **First Nation** = people who are members of native nations in Canada
→ **Indigenous/Indigenous people(s)** = people who are the original inhabitants of a place (not necessarily the United States)
→ **Indigenous land acknowledgement** = a verbal or written recognition of land that, at some point in history, was taken from Indigenous people
→ **Native Hawaiian** = Indigenous people of the Hawaiian islands
→ **Native nation** = an independent, sovereign nation (used instead of "tribe," a term that has been trivialized globally"
→ The term 'Indian' is used to describe people and cultures of India; this word should not be used to describe American Indians.

American Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African (AMENA) = the US Census Bureau recommended the inclusion of this category in the census, given the discrimination experienced by this group following 9/11, however, it was not ultimately adopted

anti-racism = active opposition of racism and racist policies and practices

Asian American = people of Asian ancestry, from Asia
→ Avoid using the phrase Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI); instead, use more specific descriptors.
→ Do not use the term 'oriental.'

people of color = refers to individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds
→ **Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)** = a term used to acknowledge the unique experiences of Black people and Indigenous people in America, as well as other groups (Note: some see this term as diminishing to the experiences of groups that do not identify as Black or Indigenous.)
→ Avoid using the term 'minority.' This term is not sufficiently specific or accurate, and it is being phased out of conversations related to race and ethnicity.
→ When referring to one individual, avoid using the term 'person of color;' instead, be more specific about the person's identity.
→ Do not use the term 'colored people.'
→ Avoid using the terms 'ethnic' and 'urban' in this context.

biracial, multiracial = a person who has descendants from more than one racial group

Black, African American = African American refers to a person who has lineage that can be directly or indirectly traced to Africa, while Black also includes groups such as Nigerian, Kenyan, Jamaican, Bahamian, Puerto Rican, or Panamanian
→ Black should not be used as a singular noun.

color-blind = the pretense of not "seeing" skin color
→ **color-blind beliefs** = the idea that being "blind" to color reduces racial/ethnic discrimination, while acknowledging race/ethnicity and associated issues perpetuates discrimination and prejudice
→ **color-blind policies** = policies that, in adhering to color-blind beliefs, do not employ equitable tactics for reducing racial disparities

colorism = discrimination or prejudice against individuals who have darker skin tones, sometimes by people of the same racial or ethnic group

Critical Race Theory = an academic and legal theory detailing the ways in which systemic racism is embedded in a wide variety of American institutions, causing a myriad of negative outcomes for Black Americans

dual heritage = a way of describing an individual's multiple backgrounds; examples include African American, Mexican American, and Turkish German (no hyphen is used)

ethnicity = a group of individuals with shared culture due to their common ancestry and history
→ **ethnic identity** = an individual's sense of membership in an ethnic group
→ **ethnic bias** = differential treatment of individuals based on their ethnic identity

Hispanic and Latino = people from primarily Spanish-speaking cultures (always be as specific as possible, use the broad term 'Hispanic and Latino' only if necessary)
→ **Chicano** = sometimes used by Mexican Americans in the US Southwest to describe their heritage. It is influenced by generational experience.
→ **Hispanic** = a person whose ethnic origin is a Spanish-speaking country, or a person living in the US whose ethnic origin is a Latin American country (except Brazil). The term was introduced by the U.S. Census Bureau.
→ **Latino/Latina** = an individual living in the US who has Latin American ancestry (Latino is the masculine form, Latina is the feminine form)
→ **Latine** = a gender-neutral term used to describe an individual living in the US who has Latin American ancestry (may be more popular outside the US). The term is not

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approved in linguistic terms as plural forms of nouns is considered gender-neutral. Use it cautiously as each Latin American country does not assign or align with such term, and the term does not necessarily align with generational input.

→ **Latinx** = a gender-neutral term used to describe an individual living in the US who has Latin American ancestry (more popular in California). The term is not approved in linguistic terms and must be used cautiously as it may not include the identity or experience of individuals who are immigrants and does not respond to generational experience.

Indian = people and cultures of India
→ Avoid using the term 'brown.'

race = a socially constructed categorization of humans based on shared physical traits
→ **racial bias** = differential treatment of individuals based on their racial identity
→ **racial equity** = addressing the root of societal inequities that have been caused by a history of racist policies, practices, and attitudes; giving each racial group the tools that they need to succeed despite the unique set of challenges that they face
→ **racial identity** = an individual's identity related to membership in a certain racial group
→ **racial socialization** = the process of transmitting information about racial identity and racism from older generations to younger ones

racism = a system in which value is assigned to various physical characteristics associated with race; those of certain racial groups are unjustly disadvantaged, while those of other racial groups are unjustly advantaged
→ **covert racism** = subtle forms of racism that often go undetected; examples include microaggressions, implicit lending bias, and racial bias in hiring
→ **institutional racism** = the multitude of institutional policies and procedures that disproportionately discriminate against BIPOC and benefit white people
→ **internalized racism** = when people of disadvantaged racial groups internalize stereotypes, misconceptions, and determinations about value that work against them
→ **interpersonal racism** = when people of racially advantaged groups diminish or discriminate against those of racially disadvantaged groups
→ **racial privilege (white privilege)** = unearned societal advantages enjoyed by white people on account of their racial identity
→ **racist** = the quality of supporting or perpetuating policies, practices, and attitudes of racism racial/racialized/race-based trauma

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→ **reverse racism** = the misguided notion that any assumptions or prejudice affecting white people constitutes a form of racism; however, because any prejudice affecting white people does not correspond with systemic power dynamics, this is not an appropriate example of racism

→ **scientific racism** = a pseudoscience used to illegitimately claim that white people have biological and behavioral superiority over Black people

→ **structural racism** = the multitude of policies and procedures that disproportionately discriminate against BIPOC and benefit white people

white = people of European origin, Anglo-Saxon

White Fragility = the concept that people of European origin are removed from race-based trauma. This term was coined in an article by Robin D'Angelo, who argues that White Fragility lowers the tolerance of white people for coming to terms with racial issues.

white supremacy = the ideology and power imbalance that results from the notion that white people and their associated characteristics are superior

Nationality

global citizenship = the idea that all humans belong to a shared, worldwide, and interconnected community

immigrants, visitors, travelers = words used to describe people from other countries, nationalities, or locations

→ Avoid using the terms 'alien,' foreigners,' and 'those people.'

→ Avoid the term 'illegal,' instead use the term 'undocumented' to describe an individual's immigration status.

resident = an individual who lives in a prescribed area

→ Avoid using the term 'citizen' in order to better include individuals who are undocumented.

Gender and Sexual Orientation

abrosexuality = a type of sexual orientation in which someone's sexual attraction is ever-changing

androgynous = describes an individual who presents as both masculine and feminine, neither, or both

aromantic = describes a person who experiences little to no romantic attraction

asexual = describes a person who experiences little to no sexual attraction towards other human beings

bisexuality = a type of sexual orientation in which a person has the potential to be sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of more than one gender identity

cisgender = describes a person who identifies with the gender/sex they were assigned at birth

cisnormativity = the belief that being cisgender is "normal"

deadname = the act of referring to a person who is transgender using their name given at birth, instead of their preferred name

demisexuality = a type of sexual orientation in which a person has the potential to be sexually attracted to someone only once an intimate emotional bond is formed

feminism = a movement centered around the goal of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all genders

fluid = used to describe a person whose gender identity and/or sexual orientation changes over time or situationally

gay = a sexual orientation in which individuals who identify as male are attracted to other people who identify as male
  → Do not use slurs including 'fag,' 'faggot,' 'homo,' 'fairy,' or 'puff.'
  → Avoid using the outdated and potentially offensive term 'homosexual,' instead specifically refer to a person as being 'lesbian' or 'gay.'

gender = characteristics commonly associated with being a man, woman, both, or neither
  → **gender-exclusive/inclusive** language = gender-exclusive language

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→ **gender expression** = the ways in which a person expresses characteristics associated with their gender identity, including social behavior, clothing, and bodily characteristics

→ **gender identity** = deeply felt sense of being a man, woman, both, or neither; gender identity may be the same or different from the individual's sex assigned at birth

genderqueer = describes those with a gender identity beyond binary definitions of gender

grey-A = people who identify with a sexual orientation that is between sexual and asexual

intersex = describes an individual born with anatomical characteristics that don't fit typical definitions of a person assigned the sex female or male at birth; for example, a person may have external female genitalia and male internal sex organs

heterosexism = discrimination against individuals or relationships that are not heterosexual; this can include assumptions that people are heterosexual

heterosexual = a sexual orientation in which an individual is attracted to people of the opposite sex or gender; commonly refers to a person who identifies as a woman being attracted to a person who identifies as a man (or vice versa)

lesbian = a sexual orientation in which individuals who identify as female are attracted to other people who identify as female
→ Do not use slurs including 'fag,' 'faggot,' 'homo,' 'dyke,' or 'lez.'
→ Avoid using the outdated and potentially offensive term 'homosexual,' instead specifically refer to a person as being 'lesbian' or 'gay.'

LGBT is an outdated acronym that should be avoided.

LGBTQ = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning

LGBTQ+ = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (the + denotes the many other identifying terms related to sexual orientation and gender)

LGBTQIA = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual/agender

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LGBTQIA+ = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual/agender (the + denotes the many other identifying terms related to sexual orientation and gender)

misgender = to refer to someone in a way that does not coincide with their gender identity

nonbinary = describes a person who does not identify as exclusively a man or a woman

pansexuality = a type of sexual orientation in which a person has the potential to be attracted to an individual regardless of their gender identity

omnisexuality = a type of sexual orientation in which a person has the potential to be attracted to an individual of any gender; for people who identify as omnisexual, gender is an important part of attraction

patriarchy = actions, beliefs, and conditions that put males in a position that is superior to those who are not male

pronouns = used for referring to an individual; some examples include they/them/theirs, she/her/hers, or he/him/his
  → 'him/her' is not appropriate to use when unsure of a person's pronouns; always politely ask someone what their pronouns are if you are unsure.

queer = individuals who do not fit into mainstream categories for sexual orientation or gender identity; a catch-all for many people

queerplatonic = a type of relationship that is not romantic, but is more intimate than a traditional friendship

romantic orientation = type of attraction that an individual feels for another when they desire an emotionally intimate relationship

sex = classification of people as male, female, or intersex based on chromosomal, hormonal, and anatomical characteristics
  → **birth-assigned sex** = sex category into which a person is assigned upon birth
  → Avoid the terms 'biologically male/female,' 'genetically male/female,' and 'born a man/woman,' as these terms oversimplify sex/gender.

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sexual and gender minorities = multiple sexual and/or gender minority groups (note: the term 'minority' is not always considered appropriate)

sexual orientation = type of attraction one feels towards other people, typically classified based on gender identities of individuals involved
→ Avoid using the terms 'sexual preference' or 'lifestyle' to describe someone's sexual orientation.

skoliosexuality = a type of sexual orientation in which a person is attracted to individuals that are nonbinary or transgender

transition = the process of changing one's gender role via methods such as changing names, adopting new pronouns, dressing in a new way, doing hormone therapy, or undergoing surgery
→ **gender-affirming surgery** = surgery with the goal of matching a person's physical body with their gender identity
→ Avoid using the terms 'sex-change' or 'sex-change operation.'

transgender = used to describe people whose gender identities differ from those typically associated with their sex assigned at birth
→ Do not call people 'tranny,' 'she-male,' 'he/she,' 'it,' 'a transgender,' or 'transgenders,' instead, use the term 'person who is transgender' or 'people who are transgender.'
→ Do not use 'transgendered' as a verb to describe a person who is transgender.
→ Do not use the term 'transgenderism' to describe people who are transgender.

Two-spirit = a sexual, gender, spiritual, and cultural identity specific to Indigenous people; people who are two-spirit identify as having both a masculine and feminine spirit, and the term is also used to describe a range of sexual orientation and gender identities in Indigenous culture
→ This term should only be used in the context of Indigenous people.

Mental Health

anxiety disorders = consistent, persistent anxiety that is overwhelming

attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) = a developmental condition characterized by inattention, disorganization, and hyperactivity

bipolar disorder = a mental health condition characterized by episodes of mania and depression

borderline personality disorder = a mental health condition characterized by issues with stability in emotions, relationships, and self-image, often coinciding with impulsive behaviors and self-harm

clinical social worker = trained to evaluate mental health and use therapeutic techniques, also involved in case management, have a masters degree in social work; Licensed Independent Social Workers (LICSW), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Academy of Certified Social Worker (ACSW)

counselor/clinician/therapist = a healthcare professional with a master's degree in a field related to mental health who uses therapeutic techniques; Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), Licensed Clinical Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor (LCADAC)
→ Avoid the term 'shrink.'

depression = a mental health condition characterized by prolonged periods of changes in mood, thoughts, and motivation, often coinciding with negative thoughts and feelings of hopelessness

dissociative disorders = a mental health condition characterized by disruptions in consciousness, memory, identity, emotion, motor control, and behavior

eating disorders = a mental health condition characterized by harmful changes to patterns of food consumption

mental health hospital = an institution for care of mental health
→ Avoid the term 'mental institution.'

obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) = a mental health condition characterized by persistent intrusive thoughts and repetitive behaviors compelling people do compulsive behaviors

'person living with a mental health condition,' 'person with a mental disorder,' 'person who has been diagnosed with a mental health issue,' and **'person experiencing a mental health issue'** are all appropriate terms to use.

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posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) = a mental health condition characterized by physiologic and psychologic responses following a traumatic event

psychiatrist = a medical doctor that can prescribe medication, diagnose mental health conditions, and administer therapy; Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)
- → **psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioners** = can diagnose and provide therapy for mental health conditions and prescribe medication in some states; Master of Science (MS) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in nursing
- → **psychiatric pharmacist** = can monitor and prescribe medications; Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD)

psychologist = a professional with a doctoral degree who uses clinical methods to evaluate mental health and provide therapy; Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) or Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.)
- → Avoid the term 'shrink.'

psychosis = a mental health condition characterized by disruptions to thoughts and perceptions making it difficult to concern what is real

schizoaffective disorder = a mental health condition characterized by symptoms such as hallucinations that resemble schizophrenia in combination with symptoms such as manic/depressive episodes that resemble a mood disorder

schizophrenia = a mental health condition characterized by difficulty thinking clearly, issues with decision-making, uncontrolled emotions, inability to relate to others, lost sense of reality, and hallucinations

'suicided' and **'died by suicide'** are appropriate terms to use.
- → Avoid the terms 'committed suicide,' 'failed suicide,' 'successful suicide,' and 'completed suicide.'

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Substance Use Disorders

'baby born to mother who used drugs while pregnant,' 'baby with signs of withdrawal from prenatal drug exposure,' 'baby with neonatal opioid withdrawal or neonatal abstinence syndrome,' and **'newborn exposed to substances'** are appropriate terms to use.
> → Avoid the terms 'addicted baby,' 'born addicted,' and 'drug addicted infant.'

'opioid agonist therapy,' 'pharmacotherapy,' 'addiction medication,' 'medication for a substance use disorder,' 'medication as a tool for treatment,' 'medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD),' and **'medication for Alcohol Use Disorder'** are appropriate terms to use.
> → Avoid the terms 'opioid substitution replacement therapy,' 'medication-assisted treatment (MAT),' and 'medication as a crutch for recovery.'

'person arrested for drug violation' and **'person with criminal legal involvement'** are appropriate terms to use.
> → Avoid the term 'drug offender.'

'person in recovery/long term recovery,' 'person who previously used drugs,' and **'no longer using __'** are appropriate terms to use.
> → Avoid the terms 'former addict,' 'reformed addict,' 'ex-addict,' and 'stayed clean.'

'person with a substance use disorder,' 'person with a(n) __ addiction,' 'patient,' 'person in active use,' 'person who is using __,' 'non-adherent,' and **'person with a(n) __ use disorder'** are appropriate terms to use.
> → **'testing positive'** can be used in reference to a toxicology screening.
> → Avoid the terms 'addict,' 'user,' 'junkie,' 'substance abuser,' 'druggie,' 'dirty,' 'non-compliant' and 'untreated addict.'

'person with an alcohol use disorder,' 'person who misuses alcohol,' and **'person who engages in unhealthy/hazardous alcohol use'** are appropriate terms to use.
> → Avoid the terms 'alcoholic' and 'drunk.'

recovery management = care administered to ensure the longevity of a person's recovery process
> → Avoid the term 'relapse prevention.'

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'substance use disorder,' 'addiction,' 'harmful use,' 'hazardous use,' 'problematic use,' and **'risky use'** are all appropriate terms to use.
→ **'use'** can be used to describe hazardous use of illicit drugs.
→ **'misuse'** or 'use other than prescribed' can be used to describe hazardous use of prescription medications.
→ Avoid the terms 'substance abuse,' 'habit,' 'drug problem,' 'drug habit,' and dependence.'

'being in remission/recovery,' 'abstinent from drugs,' 'not drinking or taking drugs,' 'not currently or actively using drugs,' 'substance-free,' 'adherent,' 'well,' 'healthy,' 'maintained recovery,' and **'no longer using __'** are all appropriate terms to use.
→ **'testing negative'** can be used in reference to a toxicology screening.
→ Avoid the terms 'clean,' 'compliant,' and 'sober.'

'use of ___ substance' is an appropriate term to use to specify the involved substance.
→ Avoid the terms 'drug of choice' and 'drug of abuse.'

'withdrawal management' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'detox.'

Ability

ableism = prejudice, discrimination, and/or oppression of people who have been diagnosed with disabilities
'blind,' 'legally blind,' and 'person who is vision/visually impaired' are proper terms to use.
→ Avoid using the terms 'person with blindness,' 'visually challenged person,' and 'sight-challenged person.'

caregiver = preferred over 'caretaker' to describe someone who takes care of another person

'deaf/Deaf' or **'Deaf person'** are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid using the terms 'person with deafness' and person who is deaf.' Even though typically person-first language is best practice, the term 'Deaf person' is preferred by the Deaf community.

Disability should be described using the terms **'person with a (physical) disability,'** **'person who has a (physical) disability,' 'person with intellectual disabilities,' 'child with congenital disability,'** and **'child with a birth impairment.'**

→ Avoid using the terms 'differently abled,' 'handicapped,' 'handi-capable,' 'special needs,' 'physically/mentally challenged,' and 'mentally retarded.'

→ Do not use slurs including 'retard,' 'cripple,' or 'invalid' to describe a person with a disability.

Health at Every Size = a health movement that prioritizes true wellness despite body weight, size, and shape; this movement challenges the idea that nutrition and movement should be for the sole purpose of weight loss, instead prioritizing body positivity and positive health outcomes

hidden/invisible disability = a person who has been diagnosed with a disability that is not immediately visible

neurodiversity = includes individuals who have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs), dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia, and Tourette syndrome; part of a growing movement to respect neurological differences in the same way as other human variations

'person who is hard-of-hearing' is an appropriate term to use.

→ Avoid the terms 'hearing-impaired' and 'person with hearing loss.'

'person who uses a wheelchair' is an appropriate term to use.

→ Avoid the terms 'confined to a wheelchair' or 'wheelchair-bound.'

'person with AIDS' is an appropriate term to use.

→ Avoid the term 'AIDS victim.'

'person with a traumatic brain injury' is an appropriate term to use.

→ Avoid the term 'brain damaged.'

Socioeconomic Status

classism = the assignment of worth or ability based on perceived or actual social class

→ **class privilege** = unearned advantages afforded to those in higher social classes

'food insecurity' and 'food poverty' are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid the term 'food desert.'

'hard-working' and **'working hard to make ends meet'** are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid the term 'working poor.'

'hunger' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'the hungry.'

'low income' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'low-class people.'

'person without housing' and **'person experiencing homelessness'** are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid the term 'homeless.'

'poverty' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'poor.'

socioeconomic status = quality of life related to a combination of income, education, occupation, and social status/class

'under-invested,' 'under-resourced,' 'low opportunity,' and **'high poverty rate area'** are appropriate terms to use when describing neighborhoods or communities.
→ Avoid the terms 'inner city,' 'disinvested,' 'disadvantaged,' and 'distressed neighborhoods.'

'worker welfare' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'food stamps.'

Religion

Anti-Semitism = prejudiced and/or hostile views towards people who are Jewish

Islamophobia = discrimination against or fear of people that follow Islam (people who are Muslim)

monotheistic = describes religions that focus on the belief in one God

polytheistic = describes religions that focus on the belief in multiple gods or deities

religion = a set of customs, traditions, and beliefs related to a supernatural authoritative power or force

Age

ageism = prejudice or discrimination against people due to their age

'older adults,' 'the older population,' and **'persons 65 years and older'** are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid using the terms 'the elderly,' 'elderly people,' 'the aged,' 'aging dependents,' 'seniors,' and 'senior citizens.'

Occupational Justice

occupational alienation = when people lose autonomy over their occupational choices and experience a sense of meaningless

occupational deprivation = lack of occupation for extended periods of time, resulting in negative health outcomes

occupational justice = the right of all individuals to equitably choose their occupation and provide for themselves

Veteran Status

veteran = a person who has served in the armed forces with an honorable discharge, record, or service history

Intimate Partner Violence

'child who has been raped' is an appropriate term to use.

→ Avoid the term 'sex with an underage person' in this context.

'child who has been trafficked' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'child prostitute' in this context.

'rape' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'nonconsensual sex' in this context.

'relationship with a person who is abusive' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'abusive relationship' in this context.

Criminal Justice

'person who is/has been incarcerated,' 'person in prison,' 'person on parole,' 'person with criminal convictions,' and **'person formerly convicted'** are appropriate terms to use.
→ Avoid the terms 'convict,' 'prisoner,' 'ex-con,' 'felon,' and 'predators.'

'person who engages in sex work' is an appropriate term to use.
→ Avoid the term 'prostitute.'

Common Microaggressions to Avoid

freshman: Instead, use 'first-year' to describe a student in their first year of high school or college.

"Hey guys!": Instead, use "hey everyone!" or "hey all!" to greet a group.

Indian-giver: Instead, use more specific terms to describe a person who takes something back.

"Long time no see!": Use "it's been a while!" instead as a greeting.
→ "Long time no see!" is derogative towards people for whom English is not their first language.

mankind: Instead, use 'humanity,' 'people,' and' human beings.

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native/invasive/alien plants: Instead, be more specific when referring to plants' natural habitat.

"No can do": Instead, use "sorry, I can't."
→ "No can do" is derogative towards people for whom English is not their first language.

pipeline: Instead, use pathway, unless specifically referring to an oil pipeline.
- 'pipeline' can be a frustrating term for Indigenous people who have had oil pipelines installed on their lands.

powwow: Instead, use 'meeting.' 'party,' or 'gathering.'

spirit animal: Instead, use 'favorite animal.'

"sold down the river": Instead, use 'betrayed.'

"that's so gay": Use a different term or expression when describing something negative.

to get "gypped": Instead, use the term 'to get ripped off.'

to get "Jewed": Instead, use the term 'to get haggled down.'

tribe: Instead, use the terms 'friends,' 'group,' 'pals,' and 'team' when referring to a group of acquaintances.

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