The Power of Person First Language
Presented by CJ Webb (VR) and Heather Lindsey (ODE)
For Oregon Statewide Transition Conference 2019

Proposed outcomes of this session

- You will learn about person first language and the influence it has on a student, family and members in the community.
- You will understand the key components in a One-Page Profile.
- You will walk away with your own One-Page Profile as well as resources.

What does this mean to you?

- Thoughts?
- As Kathy Snow puts it...
2019 OSTC Conference – PC Language and One-Page Profile

Sticks and stones… Words do matter
- Margins are the borders on your paper, not something we do to each other
- Prejudge – something we do without adequate information
- A Child Called “It” by Dave Pelzer

WordsHavePower

There are two ways to look at this…

**Person First**
- This is putting the person before the disability.
- Describes what a person has, not who a person is*
- Honors the person more than the disability.

**Dignity and Respect**
- This is even outside the work we do:
- The “R” word story…
- Using a person’s name.
- Etiquette – customary code of polite behavior…
- How would you want someone to talk about you?

*Source: A Few Words about Person First Language, Kathy Snow, 2008

Words to **think about**

- MY student, MY person or MY group: Possessive
- Refused or non-compliant: Disrespectful and controlling
- Transported: Objectifies
- I have two behaviors and one wheelchair in my group today: Disrespectful, objectifies

Possible changes

________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
Words to think about

Words and reasons to think about them
- Place someone (such as I place him at Home Depot): Disrespectful, objectivities
- Out in community: Not common language, leaves person out
- Non-verbal: Disrespectful, not person first

Possible changes

Little things do matter

“The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—it’s the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

~ Mark Twain
When has this happened to you?
How did you address it?

Video about language
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REkCB7eP6ek

So what can we do...
- First, we do NOT need permission to change our language.
- Just start doing it.
- Talk about a student’s strengths first.
- Those negatives can be worded in terms of supports rather than a label.
- This can change our perception of a student...and the student’s perception of self.
When is it okay to say...

- Autistic – when you are a person with Autism and want to call yourself “autistic,” you can!
- Basically when you are whatever it is (the type of person, the group, etc.), you can use the words you want about yourself.
- This goes beyond disabilities...

Power of Language

“It’s how we use the word (disabled) very casually as a label to try to encompass somebody’s value to our community and the worth of their contribution to our community.”

~ Aimee Mullins
Record setting athlete, actress, model

Language affects our perceptions, attitudes and beliefs.

Using Person First Language in Person Centered Planning and One Page Profiles

[Image of a bulletin board with the word "Empower"

[Image of a person doing a handstand]
One-Page Profiles

- They always have a purpose.
- They are not just one thing. They recognize opportunity.
- They are a great introduction of a person.
- Everyone can benefit from a one-page profile.

Samples of One-Page Profiles

Now It Is Your Turn...
Your Goal – The Purpose for the One-Page Profile

Starting with the person...

Name

Picture

Things to Know About Me:

- Special activities
- Interests
- Family information
- Favorite things
**What works:**

- What does a good day look like?
- What makes it a good day?
- Examples of possible components:
  - Time of day
  - Well-rested
  - High expectations
  - Transitional warnings

**What doesn’t work:**

- What does a challenging day look like?
- What makes it a challenging day?
- Examples of possible components:
  - Time of day
  - Tired
  - Unmet sensory needs
  - Lack of clear direction or time to process direction

**Next Steps:**

- What do you want to do with this one-page profile?
- How can you reach your goals?
- Who can support you?
- When to revise this profile?
Show and Tell

Thank you!

CJ Webb
Carolyn.Webb@dhssoha.state.or.us

Heather Lindsey
heather.lindsey@state.or.us

Resources

- https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/
- https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/people-first-language.html
- https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/pfl-articles.html
Resources

- http://www.sheffieldkids.co.uk/adultsite/pages/onepageprofilestemplates.html
- https://tinyurl.com/y2nsz2qo
- http://factoregon.org/person-centered-plan-samples/
  - https://tinyurl.com/y3f8n2hp
  - https://mprofile.ca/
- One-Page Profile templates: https://oregonisp.org/1ppa/