

# Words Are Powerful

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## Who are Children Really?

- They are **PEOPLE** and they are **PEOPLE FIRST**
- Children are not their disabilities and their potential cannot be predicted by their diagnosis – it is not important to know their diagnosis in trying to get to know them.

## Who are City of Markham Participants?

- They are **Participants** and are **Participants first**.

## How do we Create Attitudes?

### *Being a Role Model: People First Language*

- Words are powerful – they create attitudes and can create barriers
- The attitudes we as staff create at camp will be the greatest obstacle facing individuals with disabilities if they are not open and positive.
- The concept of “disability” is something society has constructed based on social ideas of “ability”. At camp we have the opportunity to reconstruct how City of Markham campers consider others and the vocabulary they use to describe them.
- By having an inclusive approach to our programs, all campers have the opportunity to participate and play with campers of all abilities and as a result reconstruct their ideas of the needs and abilities of different children through a positive “camper first” understanding.
- Put the child and camper first not the disability – disabilities do not define who a person is and they do not describe them, a disability is simply part of their many characteristics as a person.
- Children have a variety of “needs”, some children need glasses in order to help them see. A similar approach should be taken to children who need a wheelchair to move around and children who need support in social situations.

<b>SAY</b>	<b>INSTEAD OF</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People with disabilities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The handicapped or disabled</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nora uses a wheelchair</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• She is wheelchair bound</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• She needs...or she uses...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• She has a problem with...</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kate has Autism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• She’s Autistic</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anything</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The R word</li></ul>