WORDS MATTER

A Guide to Inclusive Language for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health

Best practices and terminology recommended by experts
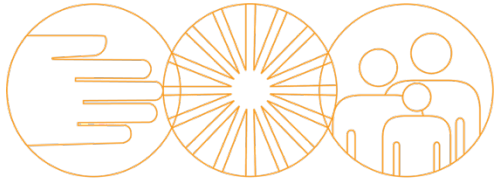
MJ Coppock

Milagros Garrido

Gina Desiderio

Bianca Devoto

Healthy Teen Network

We believe every young person has the right to be who they are and love who they love.

That means living in a world that affirms and celebrates them for who they are. That means having the agency, opportunity, and access to make decisions about their bodies, relationships, and futures. (And feel good doing it!) That includes decisions about if, when, and how to parent—or not.

And we see you—teachers and educators, counselors and clinicians, caring adults—helping them do this. Every day, providing honest, affirming care and education, and empowering the next generation to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

At Healthy Teen Network, we know you do your best when you're connected to great opportunities, resources, and with others working in sexual and reproductive health. That's the magic of the Network—and why we're here every day to help professionals learn, improve, create, and advocate.

We are Healthy Teen Network.

Abstract

Language shapes our world, and the words we choose can build bridges or barriers. That's why, across fields and industries, experts agree: Words matter. Words carry stories of their own, holding the weight of history, power, and social dynamics. In their content and contexts, they reveal human triumph and suffering. Research shows that the use of inclusive language in education and health care benefits everyone, while language that excludes has negative psychological and physical effects on individuals whose identities are left out. Using inclusive language shows we care about the unique communities around us and expresses a dedication to remaining in relationships with them. *Words Matter: A Guide to Inclusive Language for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health* provides you with practical, real-world strategies to use inclusive, affirming language.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to our team of reviewers for sharing their expertise and support to provide feedback and review of the materials. We are grateful to our external reviewers, Kendra King Bowes (she/her), Miami Environmental & Energy Solutions – Tribal 8(a), SDB; Isaiah Lawrence (he/him), Trans Health Navigator, STAR TRACK Adolescent Health Program; Katherine McLaughlin (she/her), Founder, CEO, Lead Trainer, Elevatus Training; and Nefertari Sloan (they/them desired, she/her accepted), Sex Educator, Sloan's Solutions. To our fellow Healthy Teen Network colleagues, Deborah Chilcoat (she/her), Janet Max (she/her), and Nick Sufrinko (he/him), thank you for your helpful and supportive contributions.

This resource was inspired by and builds upon the work of several other valuable resources, such as *A Progressive's Style Guide* by Sum Of Us and the *APA Style Guide*, as well as topic-specific language guides, such as Stephanie Morrison's "Don't Call Me 'Old': Avoiding Ageism When Writing About Aging" and "Avoiding Ableist Language: Suggestions for Autism Researchers" by Bottema-Beutel, et al. These institutional style guides were informed by the contributions of countless lived experience experts, advocates, and researchers, including Kimberlé Crenshaw, Nguyen Toan Tran, Ragen Chastain, and Da'Shaun Harrison. Finally, we are most appreciative of Merck for supporting our efforts to create this important resource.

Suggested Citation

Coppock, MJ, Garrido, M., Desiderio, G., Devoto, B., (2024). Words matter: A guide to inclusive language for adolescent sexual and reproductive health. Healthy Teen Network. www.healthyteennetwork.org/resources/inclusive-language/

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive communication is a critical practice we all must engage in together to improve health outcomes for everyone. Language shapes our world, and the words we choose can build bridges or create barriers. This resource is your guide to fostering inclusivity in communication, drawing on the collective wisdom of advocates and experts across diverse fields. Designed as a practical starting point for professionals in adolescent health, it offers a broad spectrum of best practices to help you navigate the evolving landscape of inclusive language.

We set out to curate a collection of best practices from experts in their fields, relying on their expertise to guide an inclusive approach to language. Aiming for breadth over depth, we compiled general best practices and distilled specific language recommendations for different areas of identity and life experience. The general communication best practices are described in the bulleted list in the "Recommendations" section below, and category-specific recommended terminology is outlined in subsequent sections of this guide.

DEFINITION
WHAT IS INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?

When we talk about inclusive language in this resource, we mean a way of speaking or writing, choosing words, tone, and style that are clear, specific, and free from bias.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Inclusive language is a way of speaking or writing, choosing words, tone, and style that is clear, specific, appropriate, and free from bias.

More than just written or verbal language, inclusive communication encompasses the methods, tools, and strategies used to share information to ensure the communication is inclusive, affirming, and accessible to everyone regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or characteristics. These methods, tools, and strategies may include visuals, storylines, non-verbal cues, captions, transcripts, and more.[1]

INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

More than just written or verbal language, inclusive communication encompasses the methods, tools, and strategies used to share information to ensure the communication is inclusive, affirming, and accessible to everyone regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or characteristics. These methods, tools, and strategies may include visuals, storylines, non-verbal cues, captions, transcripts, and more.

As language evolves, so too will this resource—we will continue to update this resource to ensure it is relevant and impactful. Since language is everchanging, we see this resource as a "living document" and a communal effort: We would appreciate feedback on this resource, and we encourage you to share your thoughts and recommendations in our short survey.

We should take every opportunity to affirm individuals' experiences and to maintain the worth and dignity of all persons.[2] Inclusive communication aims to respect and recognize all identities, and it should be accessible and acceptable to all. Achieving this goal may not always be possible, and part of committing to inclusive practices is recognizing that every person has a unique identity and lived experience influenced by various contexts and social factors.[3][4]

We have numerous culturally and socially constructed categories of identities, including gender, race, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, and more. Each category represents a spectrum of identities, and each identity is influenced by the others a person embodies. The way individuals are shaped by and identify with a vast array of cultural, structural, sociobiological, economic, and social contexts is called intersectionality (a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a civil rights advocate who first introduced the term in 1989 to explain how both racial and gender discrimination affected Black women).[5][6]

Intersectionality acknowledges that each person has a unique lived experience and identity.[7]

Throughout their lives, all people develop and hold many intersectional identities, which respond and adapt to changes in our environments.[8] Because humans are so complex, it's important to show respect for communities by using the most current and accurate language to describe people.[9] [10]

We must also note that while these categories and identities are socially constructed, they have a very real impact. The values attached to all identities have been used to create and foster social hierarchies, and historically, certain groups, such as white people and cisgender men, have disproportionately held power and influence.*[11] When we use inclusive language, we are working toward breaking down those hierarchies to build a more equitable landscape.[12]

For more information about how levels of power are centralized within different identity groups, explore the Wheel of Power and the Wheel of Oppression based on the work by Patricia Hill Collins, Peggy McIntosh, Paulo Freire, Sylvia Duckworth, Bob Mullaly, and Juliana West.[13] [14] [15] [16] [17]

SIGNIFICANCE
WHY SHOULD WE USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?

Across fields and industries, experts agree: Words matter.[18][19][20][21][22][23] Words carry stories of their own, holding the weights of history, power, and social dynamics. In their content and contexts, they reveal human triumph and suffering.[24]

The image below summarizes the importance of using inclusive language.

Importance
Why should we use inclusive language?

✔ Inclusive language benefits everyone.

✔ Inclusive language helps reach and connect with a wider audience for greater impact.

✔ Inclusive language welcomes and encourages diverse viewpoints and ideas.

✔ Inclusive language promotes innovation and greater success in achieving goals.

✔ Inclusive language fosters a sense of belonging and builds relationships.

Inclusive language benefits everyone.

The research is clear: Using inclusive language in education and health care benefits everyone, whereas language and content can have negative psychological and physical effects for individuals who are excluded or erased.[25] [26] People who receive inclusive content appreciated the improved accuracy and scope, found the information to be important and useful, and shared an increased feeling of safety, regardless of their identities.[27]

Using inclusive language in education and health care benefits everyone.

Inclusive language helps reach and connect with a wider audience for greater impact.

Organizations that minimize bias in their communications can reach and connect with a wider audience.[28] For example, students who receive health education curricula with an inclusive perspective feel safer in their learning environment and are more confident that what they learned is accurate and comprehensive.[29] People receiving services in systems of care have a marked improvement in health outcomes when their care teams use an inclusive approach and persuade others to do the same.[30]

People receiving services in systems of care have a marked improvement in health outcomes when their care teams use an inclusive approach and persuade others to do the same.

Inclusive language welcomes and encourages diverse viewpoints and ideas.

With inclusive language, we can lift the voices and experiences of historically underrepresented populations and encourage a variety of viewpoints and ideas. Inclusive language helps to create an environment that is welcoming and encouraging for everyone, including people with diverse viewpoints and ideas.

Inclusive language promotes innovation and greater success in achieving goals.

With the diverse viewpoints encouraged with inclusive language, we also see more innovation and success. Studies have shown that teams and organizations comprised of many different identities, perspectives, and experiences are more innovative and successful than less diverse groups.[31] Using specific and inclusive language can make data stronger, increase the possible audience of the work, and has a real impact in support of a more equitable and inclusive society.[32] [33] The result is more accurate information, improved clarity in communication, and healthier relationships with partners and communities.[34]

> Studies have shown that teams and organizations comprised of many different identities, perspectives, and experiences are more innovative and successful than less diverse groups.

Inclusive language fosters a sense of belonging and builds relationships.

Engaging in inclusive practices and cultural humility fosters a sense of belonging and is an ongoing commitment to co-learn with partners and community members as language continues to evolve.[35] Using inclusive language shows we care about the unique communities around us and expresses a dedication to remaining in relationships with them. It may be impossible to eliminate all bias in a representation or project, but we can and should make a collective effort to promote inclusivity and reduce harm through our communication.

> Using inclusive language shows we care about the unique communities around us and expresses a dedication to remaining in relationships with them.

BASIC GUIDELINES
HOW DO WE USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?

Most people already use inclusive communication practices, even if they aren't aware of it. We often adapt to changing cultures and shifts in preferred language over time. Language is constantly evolving because it's affected by history, politics, technology, social position, geography, and other environmental factors; that is to say, words gain meaning by when, how, and where they are used.[36]

> Language is constantly evolving because it's affected by history, politics, technology, social position, geography, and other environmental factors; that is to say, words gain meaning by when, how, and where they are used.

Every person and story is unique, and no community is completely aligned in how they describe themselves. While no guide or reference could feasibly cover every single best-use example for the vast array of identities held by people around the world, there are some general principles we can follow in most cases to guide the use of more inclusive language.[37] [38]

The image below outlines general principles of inclusive language, and next, we provide more guidance and examples on how specifically to apply these general principles.

Basic Guidelines
How do we use inclusive language?

✔ Use what they use.

✔ Use person-first language when appropriate.

✔ Commit to continue co-learning.

✔ Take a neutral approach to language.

✔ Use active voice whenever possible.

✔ Be appropriately specific.

✔ Use language that equitably values different approaches.

✔ Use parallelism when describing different groups.

✔ Provide working definitions and set expectations.

✔ Give advance notice for any sensitive and difficult subjects.

✔ Assess gaps in your information and representation.

✔ Use caution when referring to a source that uses harmful or outdated language.

✔ Use plain language and recognize systems of oppression that create disparities and inequities.

Use what they use.

When representing an individual or a group of people, use the language and style they use to describe themselves. If you aren't sure what they use, ask.[39]

- Recognize and celebrate the diversity of identities and experiences within groups. Refrain from oversimplifying the experiences of individuals based on their shared traits or identities.

> Recognize and celebrate the diversity of identities
> and experiences within groups.

- Respect the evolution and variety of language used within communities. Some communities are making efforts to reclaim language that has historically been used to harm and stigmatize them (e.g., "fat," "queer") to take away the negative power of those words. Because preferred language can fluctuate by time and location, individuals within a group may disagree on whether certain terms are appropriate to describe their identities and culture.

Use person-first language when appropriate.

Person-first language focuses on individuals' humanity by centering their personhood, while identity-first language centers one characteristic they hold. For example, the person-first "a person in prison" is preferred to identity-first "a prisoner." Apply a holistic view of each individual and celebrate their unique characteristics and strengths, rather than describing the conditions in which they live.[40] [41]

- Use adjectives or nouns with descriptive phrases. For example, use "people who identify as straight" rather than "straights." Even if someone uses a certain word as an adjective to describe themselves, referring to someone as a label is dehumanizing. For example, "male" and "female" are adjectives and should not be used as nouns. If biological sex is a necessary and relevant detail to the message, use it as an adjective: e.g., "male patients," "female participants." Similarly, youth activists have shared that while "youth" is acceptable as an adjective, it is not appropriate to use it as a noun to describe young people.

- **Not all groups prefer person-first language, and some individuals may describe themselves with a label.** For example, some people prefer to be called "autistic" or "Autistic" instead of "a person with autism" or "a person with ASD

(autism spectrum disorder)."[42] [43] We should affirm everyone's values and identities and recognize that individuals have varying relationships to different aspects of their identity. Some people who have lifelong conditions, such as ASD, believe **it is best to** recognize and edify their identity as an Autistic person because ASD is an intrinsic part of their experience.[44]

Respect individuals and groups who choose to use a capitalized label to promote a sense of unity and community.[45] For example, use the capitalized "Deaf" when referring to people who identify with Deaf culture.

- **In-group language is distinct from out-of-group language.** Respect that even if a term or phrase is used by some people within a community, it may not be appropriate for general audiences or anyone outside of that group.[46] An in-group term can be derogatory if used by someone who does not share the group's identity. In some cases, in-group language stems from a historical slur that the affected community is reclaiming. The use of these terms within the group may be controversial as well because language can be charged with a history of violence and oppression. An example of a possible in-group descriptor is "fat"—some people identify with this term, but it should only be used to describe an individual if they have given permission to do so.

<div align="center">
Be thoughtful when referring to a person, identity,
group, or concept to ensure your message is clear
and accurate.
</div>

- **Proper nouns and names for individual places, persons, and organizations convey respect, understanding, and belonging.** Be thoughtful when referring to a person, identity, group, or concept to ensure your message is clear and accurate.[47] In some communities, it is also important to use titles, such as "Dr. Gonzalez" or "Mx. Smith." Make sure anyone named has consented to sharing their information and be clear with them exactly how and where it will be shared.

- In general, the names of diseases, disorders, treatments, theories, principles, models, and concepts are not capitalized. For example, "anorexia nervosa," "bipolar disorder," or "leukemia." The exception to this rule is that we do capitalize personal names that appear within these kinds of terms, like "Alzheimer's disease," "Asperger's syndrome," and "Down syndrome."[48]

Commit to continue co-learning.

Encourage partners to use inclusive language and take authentic accountability when you cause harm.[49] Adapt your approach accordingly and continue to foster relationships with individuals to increase engagement with communities across a spectrum of identities.[50]

- Accountability is a commitment to remaining in relationship with one another, and it's one way we show love and grow as communities. Transformative justice advocate Mia Mingus explains accountability as three major steps: "apologizing, making amends, and changing your behavior so the harm won't happen again."[51]

- The first thing to do once you've caused harm is to deeply understand the negative impact that your language or action has had on a person or group. To genuinely apologize and change your behavior, you must also reflect on why you took those actions and identify why they were harmful.*

---

* To learn more about authentic accountability, listen to advocates' recommendations in Barnard Women's Center's video on the subject and read guides, such as Mia Mingus' in Leaving Evidence.[52][53]

Take a neutral approach to language.

Neutral language is accessible and promotes an objective perspective. When we use unbiased language and an inclusive scope, audiences are more confident that the content is factual and evidence-based.[54]

- We want to reduce prejudice in our communication overall, and using combative words such as "struggle" or "suffer" when referring to a person's situation introduces unnecessary bias.[55] While some people may identify with this language to promote positive bias (e.g., someone living with cancer may say they are "fighting cancer"), please only use this language if the person you are representing has asked for it. In general, experts recommend words like "living with" or "experiencing." For example, "an individual experiencing symptoms of anemia."

- Use thoughtfully apply age-appropriate descriptions and highlight individuals' humanity whenever possible (e.g., "children under the age of 14 who have shoplifted"). In many areas, such as health care and law enforcement,

professionals have historically treated Black children as if they were adults, a form of bias also known as "adultification"* that has negative impacts on affected children and adolescents.[56]

Adultification is the practice of treating a child as if they are older than they actually are, usually in a harmful or wrong way.

- Affirm individuals' health and independence by reserving healthcare-related language for people in active treatment in a healthcare setting.[57] It's more common for writers to use healthcare terminology when referring to certain groups, including older adults, higher-weight people, and people with disabilities, which perpetuates negative stereotypes about health and autonomy for these communities. Instead, champion health at every size and age, and avoid irrelevant healthcare-centered framing, such as "the 'obesity' epidemic" or "patients living in older adult communities."

> When we use unbiased language and an inclusive scope, audiences are more confident that the content is factual and evidence-based.

Use active voice whenever possible.

Active voice is a grammatical structure in which the subject of a sentence acts as the verb, sometimes in relation to another person or thing. Using active voice is an excellent way to improve the accuracy and accessibility of communications because it names the person, group, or system that is acting (e.g., "the girl threw the ball" rather than "the ball was thrown").

Checking for active voice also provides an opportunity to identify and remove any instances of implicit bias that reinforce status quo systems of power.[58] Name actors of oppression whenever possible, whether human, institutional, or cultural.

- For example, instead of the passive phrase "hospitals are affected by systemic racism," use active voice such as "the American healthcare system has perpetuated systemic racism and anti-fat discrimination through biased practices including the Body Mass Index (BMI) system."

Be appropriately specific.

Focus on relevant characteristics, acknowledge differences do exist, and be appropriately specific. When we include an aspect of someone's identity in their description, it implies a connection, effect, or an extraordinary exception.[59] [60] Be thoughtful with the details you include and avoid drawing unnecessary correlations.

- For example, "J. Reed, a ~~Deaf~~ runner on the Hubbard High School track team, finished first place in the all-district 50-meter sprint on Friday."

- Practice thoughtful specificity when discussing oppression and bias, too. Define terms wherever possible for clarity and accessibility.

Use language that equitably values different approaches.

Present topics without prejudice when discussing different approaches or schools of thought. Bias occurs when authors use one group (often a community to which they belong) as the standard against which others are judged. These are also called false hierarchies.[61] (See the glossary for definitions of terms related to bias, discrimination, oppression, and prejudice, e.g., colonialism, microaggression, etc.)

- For example, instead of "Western medicine is more technologically advanced than traditional practices," say "Western medicine and traditional practices offer different approaches to health care."

Use parallelism when describing different groups.

Parallelism is a means of using similar elements to emphasize similarity or compare similar things.[62] To use parallelism with regard to inclusive language, use similar tones and words when talking about different groups or ideas. You can improve the clarity of your message and reduce possible bias by using consistent style and language.[63]

- For example, use "African Americans and European Americans" instead of "White people and African Americans" when discussing population demographics.[64]

Provide working definitions and set expectations.

Explain any labels or acronyms you use and clearly define your scope and context.[65] In general, it's best practice to use plain and simple language to ensure clear and accessible communication and to provide working definitions for any terms that are specific to the subject matter.[66] Audiences should know the limits of your work or research and will benefit from any topic area considerations you can provide. Ideally, everyone receiving your message will understand exactly what you mean, even if they have no prior familiarity with the subject.

- For example, rather than simply saying, "We focus on LGBTQ+ young people in our study," provide more specific information, such as "In this study, we use the term LGBTQ+ to refer to individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or other gender identities and sexual orientations. Our use of this acronym encompasses a broad spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations. Our research focuses specifically on LGBTQ+ young people, ages 13-18, in urban environments."

Give your audience advance notice for any sensitive and difficult subjects.

When discussing a topic laden with a history of violence, give your audience a heads-up to empower them and support their self-care and autonomy. Content warnings don't need to be daunting, but they should provide an audience with enough details to protect themselves from a surprise trigger. When used thoughtfully, these notices can also ease some anxiety about navigating the content. Include informative and gentle disclaimers for any subjects or descriptions that could trigger someone with lived experience of harm or trauma.

- In *A Quick & Easy Guide to Consent*, Isabella Rotman included the disclaimer, "We can't really talk about consent without talking about sexual violence, nor do we want to. Sexual violence is upsetting for anyone, especially survivors of trauma. Please proceed with caution: this book will discuss the reality of sexual violence throughout, along with research and theory on it; but will not show visual depictions or graphic descriptions."[67]

  This content warning briefly provides context for why and how violence will be discussed, it clearly explains the scope of what will be covered, and it reduces reader anxiety by abstractly naming common triggers that are not present in the book.

Assess gaps in your information and representation.

Ensure your data collection methods are accessible to all. Evaluate how you reach out to communities and verify that everyone can engage in your data collection processes.[68][69] If all individuals are not able to participate, acknowledge this. Take steps toward comprehensive representation of your priority or key groups, such as intentionally building authentic and multi-layered relationships with communities.

- For example, "While participants who identify as LGBTQQIA+ were surveyed in this project, we did not invite any Indigenous individuals to participate, and no two-spirit identities are represented in our findings. This exclusion was an oversight on our part, and our team is taking steps to foster our relationships with local indigenous communities, including the Duwamish Tribe and the Puyallup Tribe. We aim to improve our understanding of sexuality in Indigenous cultures and ancestry and to strengthen our representation of local Indigenous identities in future studies."

Use caution when referring to a source that uses harmful or outdated language.

If you refer to a source that uses harmful and/or outdated terminology, limiting, or tools, consider if it's necessary to reference this source at all. If you determine that you should use the source, is there any way to exclude the problematic language? Finally, if you decide you need to reference both the source and the language in question, use quotation marks and explain why the term or tool is harmful or inaccurate.[70][71]

- In *Them*, Da'Shaun Harrison writes, "In 2014, over 70 percent of Americans were considered to be 'overweight' or 'obese.' This does not account for the anti-Blackness and racism inherent to the Body Mass Index (BMI) scale."[72] This example names the violence of the BMI framework and uses quotation marks around the anti-fat discriminatory terms "obese" and "overweight."

- For example, "In their study on adolescent health, Smith (2017) uses a binary framework to categorize participants as either 'male' or 'female.' However, this approach excludes nonbinary and gender-diverse individuals, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The lack of inclusion of gender identity beyond the binary reinforces the invisibility of these groups in health data, ultimately preventing the development of targeted interventions that address their unique needs."

Use plain language and recognize systems of oppression that create disparities and inequities.

When communicating public health information, especially in the adolescent sexual and reproductive health field, avoid terms that place blame on individuals or portray certain groups as passive subjects that need to be fixed or saved by external forces while overlooking systemic issues.

> It's best to use plain language; creating new
> words or phrases becomes jargon.

It's also best to use plain language; creating new words or phrases becomes jargon. Public health jargon can be inaccessible and shift focus away from structural barriers, such as economic inequality or lack of resources, that influence health outcomes. Instead, use clear, plain language that acknowledges these broader factors.[73]

- Rather than using terms such as "opportunity youth," "vulnerable populations," or "at-risk youth," provide more context to introduce the topic and its scope, e.g., "young people who face barriers to education and employment due to systemic inequalities, including limited access to resources and support." Words such as "vulnerable" imply inherent weakness rather than acknowledging that racism and economic exploitation created unequal conditions. This approach shifts the focus from labeling individuals to recognizing the broader challenges they face, placing emphasis on the context rather than burdening the individuals.

> Healing-centered approaches emphasize the
> individual's strengths, resilience, and the
> importance of community and cultural identity in
> the healing process.

- Instead of solely adopting a trauma-informed approach, which often focuses on recognizing and responding to an individual's trauma, consider integrating healing-centered practices. Trauma-informed approaches tend to view individuals through the lens of their trauma, potentially framing them as victims who need to be treated. This framing can unintentionally reinforce a

deficit-based perspective, emphasizing what is wrong rather than what is possible. In contrast, healing-centered practices take a more holistic view, acknowledging not just trauma but also the broader cultural, historical, and systemic factors that shape a person's experience. Healing-centered approaches emphasize the individual's strengths, resilience, and the importance of community and cultural identity in the healing process.

- If we use the term "non-compliant patients," we are indicating that the patient is failing to follow medical advice rather than highlighting the barriers the patient might be experiencing due to cultural differences. Instead, for example, use "patients facing barriers to care," or patients with unmet needs.

- Use the term "youth-supporting professionals" rather than "youth-serving professionals" to convey a more holistic and empowering approach to working with young people. "Youth-supporting" is strengths-based language that promotes a long-term perspective and connotes collaboration and partnership, empowerment and agency, positive associations, and respect for diverse needs.

youth-serving professional

youth-supporting professional

Using the term "youth-supporting professionals" emphasizes the supportive role that adults play in empowering young people rather than framing it solely as a one-way service provided to youth. Using this term highlights the idea that professionals are there to uplift and assist rather than merely serve or cater to youth. The term "support" implies a collaborative relationship where professionals work alongside young people, valuing their input, ideas, and agency, and promoting a sense of partnership and mutual respect. "Youth-supporting" recognizes the agency of young people in their own growth and decision-making. Finally, the term "support" allows for a broader interpretation of how professionals can assist young people, acknowledging that support can encompass emotional, educational, social, and personal needs, among others.

SPECIFIC LANGUAGE & APPROACHES

Now that we've covered general best practices and guidelines for inclusive language, let's take a closer look at specific subject matter areas and examples.

We have curated a collection of inclusive language examples to replace exclusionary and historically stigmatizing phrases. While we're not providing the rationale for each term listed, we use examples to share recommendations of language preferred by lived experience experts and activists.

The examples are not exhaustive, nor are they permanent. Language and the way we represent ourselves is as dynamic and ever-changing as our cultures.[74] [75] [76] This resource is intended as a living document that reflects a snapshot of current communication norms, with some category-specific suggestions for how to think about language moving forward. We designed these specific examples to be used in tandem with the best practices described above. If your message has a focus on a particular community, refer to the resources listed in each section for deeper learning and respect how individual members of that group self-describe.

We've organized these examples into the following categories:

- Ability & Disability
- Age
- Appearance: Body Image & Size
- Belief: Spirituality, Religion, & Philosophy
- Cultural & Linguistic
- Ethnicity, Race, & Nationality
- Health & Wellness

- Sex & Gender
- Sexuality
- Socioeconomic Status
- Engagement with Systems Of Care (Foster Care, Immigration, Justice System, Incarceration, Transitions & Re-Entry)

ABILITY & DISABILITY

Disability advocates have shared a variety of preferences for self-description within their community. Some people with disabilities prefer to use person-first language (e.g., person on the autism spectrum), while others use identity-first language to describe themselves (e.g., an autistic person).[77] [78] [79] This language can vary by identity or within a group. For example, the Deaf community has, by and large, broadly communicated their preference for identity-first and capitalized language, and most individuals prefer to be called Deaf or Deaf-Blind, rather than person-first alternatives.[80] Use language that emphasizes the need for accessibility, rather than the presence of a disability.[81] For example, consider using "accessible parking" instead of "handicapped parking."[82]

In general, focus on a person's abilities as opposed to any limitations and acknowledge that the level of support a person requires varies by situation. Highlight individuals' specific strengths and needs. Instead of saying "a child or adolescent who is nonverbal," consider instead "a child who uses a communication device."[83] The terms "help," "support," and "assistance" have different connotations, and "support" and "assistance" are preferred when discussing individuals and their needs. Remember, disabilities aren't always visible, and people with disabilities have the right to share, or not disclose, their disability status.[84]

While we are focusing on specific language use guidelines and examples with this resource, it's important to note normalizing accommodations is intrinsic to an inclusive approach. Similar to the philosophy that accessible design benefits everyone, inclusive language practices benefit all individuals regardless of their experiences or identities.[85] Accommodations and language access are civil rights, and it is best practice to ask if anyone would like accommodations, such as captions or American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, especially when planning an event or meeting.

Resources

- [National Center on Disability and Journalism: Language and Style Guide](#)
- [Autistic Advocacy: Identity-First Language](#)
- [UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics: Words Matter](#)
- [Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide](#)
- [APA: Choosing Words for Talking about Disability](#)
- [APA Style Guide: General Principles for Reducing Bias](#)
- [APA Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [Colorado State University Disability Center: Inclusive Language](#)
- [United Nations Office at Geneva: Disability-Inclusive Language Guidelines](#)
- [American Chemical Society: Inclusivity Style Guide](#)
- [Aorinka, Linguise: What is Language Bias and How to Avoid It](#)
- [Botteman-Beutel, et al.: Avoiding Ableist Language: Suggestions for Autism Researchers](#)
- [Morrison, National Institute on Aging: Don't Call Me "Old"" Avoiding Ageism When Writing about Aging](#)
- [Moran, American Medical Writers Association Journal: Inclusive Language: Best Practices and Practical Applications for Medical Writers and Editors](#)

❌ You need to be able to climb stairs to attend a game at the stadium.

✓ The stadium has no ramps or accessible options for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility supports.

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- person with a disability - person who has a disability - neurodiverse - person who is neurodiverse	- special needs - differently abled - handi-capable - abnormal	"The stadium has no ramps or accessible options for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility supports."
- person with a mental health condition - person with a mental illness*	mentally ill	
- a condition present at birth - person with a congenital anomaly*	- birth defect - person with a birth defect	"She is living with a mental health condition."
- able-bodied - neurotypical - nonautistic - typically developing individuals	- standard - normal people - children without disabilities	
person with a developmental or intellectual disability	- mentally challenged - person with mental retardation	
- blind person - person with partial vision	visually challenged person	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
• person with lower support needs • person who benefits from minimal assistance	• low-functioning	
• person with higher support needs • person who benefits from significant assistance	• high-functioning	"We design communication tools for individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions."
• Deaf person • Deaf-Blind person • Deafness	• person who is deaf • hearing-impaired person • person with hearing loss • person with deafness and blindness • person who is hard of hearing*	"I work predominantly with Deaf students."
• co-occurring	• co-morbid	"She has been diagnosed with two co-occurring mental health conditions."
• person who uses a wheelchair • wheelchair user	• wheelchair-bound	
• person with a traumatic brain injury	• brain-damaged	

86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102

AGE

Age-inclusive language benefits people of all ages and identities, and age-based discrimination is harmful to both younger and older people. Prejudice reflected in words or images can lead to negative impacts and harm, including a lower quality of life for older adults and economic instability for younger adults.[103] [104]

Consider first if mentioning age is relevant and necessary for your message. Affirm dignity and reduce bias by plainly describing actions without qualifiers like "still" or "already." For example, "people over 70 who work" is preferred over "people over 70 who still work." Be thoughtful with image selection and story design, use realistic and representative portrayals for age ranges, and avoid stereotypes.[105] [106]

Respect and validate all events, reactions, and emotions expressed regardless of someone's age rather than belittling the experience of a younger adult by saying they're "going through a phase." While it's appropriate to use the word "youth" as an adjective (e.g., youth programs), younger adults and adolescents are uncomfortable with being described as a "youth" in a noun form and often prefer "young people," for example. And as noted above, youth activists have expressed a preference for "young people" rather than "youth."

Resources
- APA Style Guide: General Principles for Reducing Bias
- APA Inclusive Language Guide
- Healthy Teen Network: Young Parents Logic Model
- Changing the Narrative: Ending Ageism Together
- Guidelines for Inclusive Language, Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College
- Van Vleck, Washington University in St. Louis Institute for Public Health: Why Youth-Directed Agesim Is an Issue for Everyone
- National Institute on Aging, Morrison
- Bowman & Lim: Activities, Adaptation, & Aging
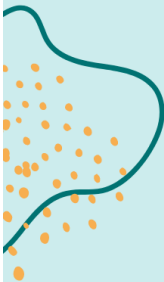
Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- older adult - older workers - the older population	- senior citizen - the aged - aging dependents - pensioners	"He is an older adult living in a multi-generational home, but he's considering moving out to live independently."
- adults ages 68 and older - octogenarians	- elderly - elders* (this term may be preferred in Indigenous and/or LGBTQ+ communities)	
- residents living in assisted living facilities - older adult communities	- patients in old folks' homes - senior communities*	
- adolescent - younger people - children between 5 and 14 - young adults ages 16 to 24	- a youth - youngsters - kiddos - teens	"Children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 18 are eligible for our summer youth programming."
- person with dementia - Alzheimer's disease	- senile person - senility	

107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116

We provide
health
education
resources for
~~youth.~~
adolescents
ages 14-24

I work in youth programming
and I say things like "kiddos"
and "youth" all the time!
Is this wrong?

Young adults and adolescent advocates
have shared that they don't prefer to be
referred to as "youths," "teens," or
"kiddos." We should honor those
preferences and show respect for young
people when we speak with or about
them. However, they've said that using
"youth" as an adjective—like "youth
advocate" or "youth program"—is fine!

@healthyteennetwork
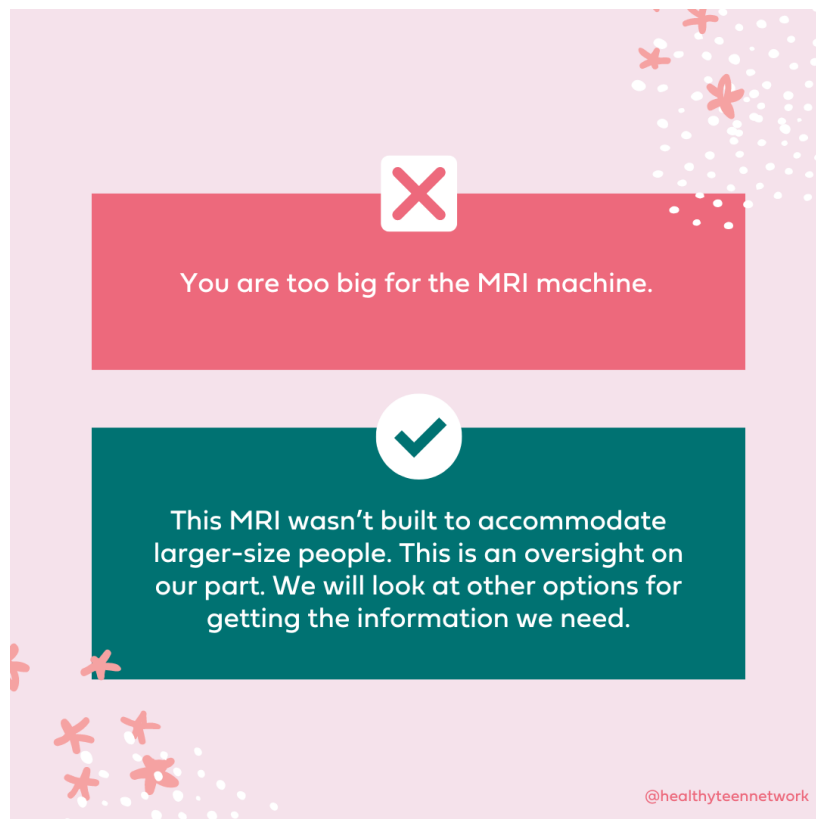
APPEARANCE
BODY IMAGE & SIZE

When we talk about body image and size, we want to shift the focus from a person's appearance to the lack of accessible options or acceptable accommodations. We should be asking, "How can we end anti-fat discrimination?" rather than "How can we prevent or end 'obesity'?"[117] Name anti-fat discrimination in systems and in interactions when it happens, including the glorification of diet culture.

It's important to promote body neutrality in general, as both body shaming and body positivity can be toxic and harmful. If it's necessary to include language, such as "obese" or "overweight," use quotation marks—some activists use asterisks for ob*se—and explain the problematic medical history with anti-fat bias and discrimination.[27] For example, "The majority of people in district X would be classified as 'overweight' or 'ob*se' according to the Body Mass Index (BMI) scale. The BMI framework is rooted in historical practices of anti-Blackness, racism, and anti-fat discrimination."[118]

Treat people of all sizes with dignity and respect: Avoid using euphemisms to describe people's size, and only refer to appearance when relevant. Some fat-rights activists are reclaiming the word "fat," but "fat" should not be used to describe someone unless they use it to describe themselves. Acknowledge *health at every size* (also known as the HAES framework): Make sure people of all sizes are equally associated with health.[119] Use neutral words and avoid combative or healthcare-related language, such as "the 'obesity' epidemic."[120] Take care with both language and visual communications to dispel harmful connotations like implied awkward movement.[121] Inclusive sizing extends beyond size 24 (US women's sizing reference), and representations that are inclusive of higher-weight people should reflect that.[122] [123]

Resources

- [Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide](#)
- [APA Style Guide: General Principles for Reducing Bias](#)
- [APA Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [American Chemical Society: Inclusivity Style Guide](#)
- [Chastain, Weight and Healthcare](#)
- [Lavendier, Reimagining the Experience of the Fat Academic](#)
- [Ruben, Nonplussed: Fashion's Surprisingly Big Problem with Gender and Size](#)

❌ You are too big for the MRI machine.

✔ This MRI wasn't built to accommodate larger-size people. This is an oversight on our part. We will look at other options for getting the information we need.

@healthyteennetwork

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- higher-weight people - larger-bodied people - people in larger bodies - person with a fuller figure	- big boned - chubby - fat*	"These brands offer clothing in a size range of 8-42."
- larger-size people - people of size*	person who is affected by 'obesity'	"Their equipment is comfortable and accessible for people in larger bodies."
- lower-weight people - smaller-bodied people - people in smaller bodies - straight-size people	skinny	"This MRI wasn't built to accommodate larger-bodied people. This is an oversight on our part, so we will look at other options for getting the information we need."
- inclusive sizing with a range from size 8-40 - clothing for all sizes - size-inclusive fashion	- plus-size clothing - inclusive sizing with sizes 8-18	
- little person - short-statured person	- midget - dwarf - vertically challenged	

124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131

BELIEF
SPIRITUALITY, RELIGION, & PHILOSOPHY

Keep all beliefs and philosophies in mind when creating communications, images, and events. Religion, faith, and belief have unique meanings, and people can interpret these terms differently. Someone may hold a faith or belief without belonging to a particular religion. A belief may also be non-religious and encompasses philosophies including humanism and atheism.[132] Acknowledge the diversity of individuals who share a religion or practice, especially across different communities and geographic areas.[133]

Prevent and interrupt stereotyping by using
words, images, or situations that respect
individuality in behavior and spiritual practice.

Show respect by using proper nouns for religious groups, texts, and other religious elements (e.g., Catholic, Baha'i Faith, Quran, Bible, Torah, Bhagavad Gita, Hinduism, Buddhism, Ramadan, Passover). Use language and tone to establish equity across beliefs, religions, and practices. For example, "faith-based organizations" can be used instead of naming specific communities.[134] Another consideration is that holidays happen throughout the year, and we should recognize in our communications that people may hold faith-based observances year-round.[135]

Prevent and interrupt stereotyping by using words, images, or situations that respect individuality in behavior and spiritual practice.[136] Name religious discrimination when it happens, as specifically as possible.[137] Ask a person's preference if they like to be described as "a Sikh" or "a person who practices Sikhism."

Resources

- [APA Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [Pratt Institute Libraries: Inclusive Language](#)
- [University of Bristol: Style Guides](#)
- [GLAAD Media Reference Guide: Religion and Faith](#)
- [Aorinka, Linguise: What is Language Bias and How to Avoid It](#)
- [University of Wisconsin-Madison: Inclusive Communications Guide](#)
- [APA Style Guide: General Principles for Reducing Bias](#)

It's important to respect the traditions and values of people who practice Wicca and other ~~cults.~~

spiritual communities

Recommendations and Examples

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ a Hindu-majority country	▪ a Hindu country	"Individuals who practice Wicca"
▪ given name	▪ Christian name	
▪ non-religious person	▪ heathen	"All employees are asked to submit requests for time off in advance, with an exception for spiritual holidays including Eid, where the date cannot be predicted with certainty."
▪ strong faith	▪ blind faith	
▪ spiritual community	▪ cult	
▪ Wiccan practices	▪ witchcraft	
▪ religious exemption laws	▪ religious freedom laws	

138 139 140 141 142 143 144

CULTURAL & LINGUISTIC

In our increasingly inter-cultural communities, we have more opportunities than ever to affirm people with cultures and customs different than ours. Cultural and linguistic bias is often based on the way that people communicate and can include prejudice against people who have accents in certain languages, or non-fluent language speakers who use untraditional grammar.[145]

Creating an inclusive culture goes beyond just choosing certain words to use or avoid; it involves making decisions that support, validate, and respect cultural and linguistic diversity. While most of the recommendations in this resource focus on terms or phrases to use to promote inclusivity through language, in the below, we suggest ways to support equitable practices, such as offering appropriate language access to resources. Another example of cultural inclusivity is practicing awareness around and thoughtfully avoiding common phrases that have racist or colonialist roots (e.g., "divide and conquer," "peanut gallery," "Indian line," "proper English").
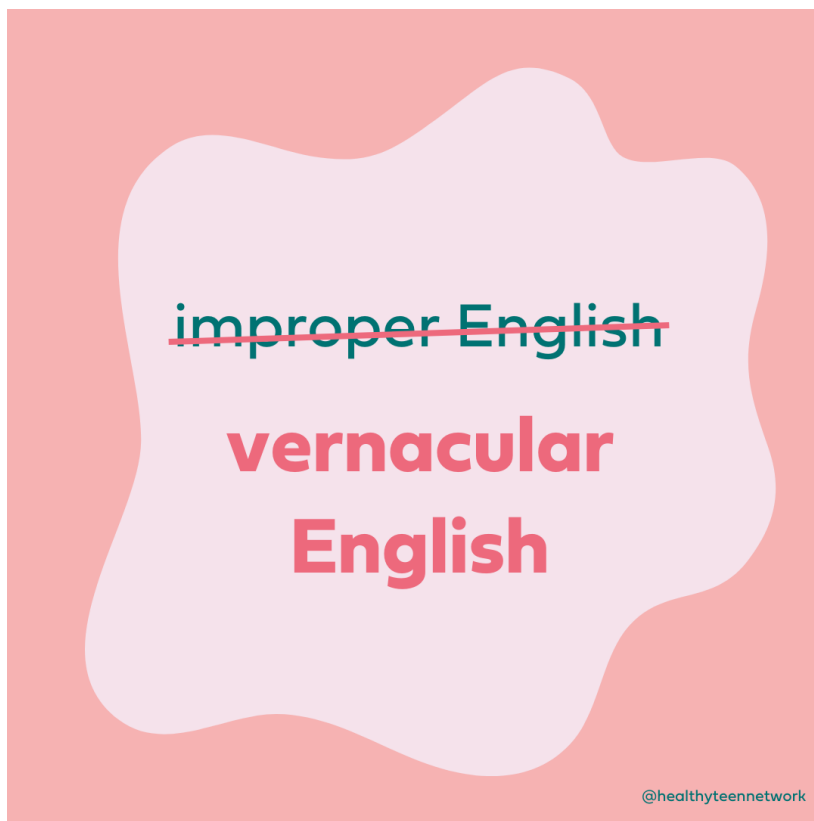
Language access is a civil right, and it is best practice to ask if anyone would like accommodations, especially when planning an event or meeting. There are countless different lexicons, vernaculars, and dialects, and all are equally valid.

> Treat all backgrounds with the same amount of respect, and take care not to imply one culture is "standard."

Treat all backgrounds with the same amount of respect, and take care not to imply one culture is "standard."[146] One way to affirm all cultures and languages is when collecting demographic information on forms: Consider providing space to write in a response or using "a culture, language, or background not listed above" rather than "other."[147 148 149]

Resources

- [Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide](#)
- [APA Style Guide: General Principles for Reducing Bias](#)
- [APA Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [Aorinka, Linguise: What is Language Bias and How to Avoid It](#)
- [National Institutes of Health: Plain Language](#)
- [Boring, Carnegie Learning: Addressing Linguistic Bias to Create a Culturally Responsive World Language Classroom](#)

Recommendations and Examples

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ multilingual individual ▪ English language learner	▪ non-native speaker	"I love the way you put that!"
▪ provide language access and ask ahead of time if anyone would like translation in a particular language	▪ bias against individuals or groups based on accents, grammar use, word choices, code-switching, or register	"Please check this box if you would like language access support including translation and captions."
▪ traditional grammar ▪ traditional English	▪ correct language ▪ proper English	
▪ vernacular English	▪ improper English	"I didn't understand what you said just then. Could you explain it again?"
▪ ask and learn the correct pronunciation of a person's name	▪ Anglicized versions of names	
▪ affirm and seek to understand unconventional language or grammar	▪ "fix" someone's accent or grammar; call out or mock an unconventional language use or "mistake"	"I understand we both speak Farsi and English. Which language would you like for us to use for our conversation?"
▪ provide language access tools and skill-building for all individuals ▪ offer resources and events in different languages	▪ limit the languages that can be spoken in a space ▪ "We must speak English."	

150 151 152 153 154 155

ETHNICITY, RACE, & NATIONALITY

Advocates emphasize the importance of honoring distinct cultural backgrounds, which include ethnic and racial identities. Use language that promotes connection: Focus on shared strengths and goals, and avoid phrases like "those people" which promote an "us" vs. "them" dynamic.[156] Especially when discussing ethnicity, race, and nationality, be as specific as possible. Specificity also acknowledges the distinct culture, traditions, and history of each group. When collecting demographic information on forms, consider providing space to write in a response or using "a race or ethnicity not listed above" rather than "other."[157] [158]

Multiple terms may be appropriate for one community, and terminology may vary based on geographic location and other factors including personal preference. Capitalize the names of racial and ethnic groups, such as Hispanic or Black. Do not use colors other than Black, Brown, or White to describe people, and use these carefully and with consideration to be sure they are appropriate for the population of reference.[159] Note the distinction between the identities of Black and African American. For example, people who identify as Black may not necessarily identify as African American, even if they are in the United States.[160] Terms that denote a person's heritage like African American or Asian American should not be hyphenated.[161]

Name actors of oppression whenever possible,
whether human, institutional, or cultural.

Remember to identify and remove any instances of implicit bias that reinforce status quo systems of power.[162] Name actors of oppression whenever possible, whether human, institutional, or cultural. For example, instead of "marginalized community," use "communities affected by systemic oppression, including racism and redlining," or "historically underrepresented or excluded group."

It is appropriate to include a thoughtful and specific statement acknowledging Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of the land we live and work on—and recognizing the history of violence, genocide, and forced displacement caused by European settlers on Indigenous land in the United States—when that message is backed by anti-colonial action, such as partnering with Indigenous communities or setting aside proceeds for a symbolic voluntary land tax, or "real rent."[163] [164] Labor acknowledgments are a way to recognize and highlight that much of the economic and industrial development in the United States has resulted from the forced labor of kidnapped and enslaved people, primarily of African descent.[165] Dr. Terah "TJ" Stewart advocates for labor acknowledgments as one way to "honor and remember the violent histories and legacies of settler colonialism," as we work to break down barriers that exist in part due to exploitative, racist, and colonialist legacies.[166]

I've heard some people use "BIPOC" to describe communities, but I've heard other people don't prefer the term "BIPOC." What should I do?

The term "BIPOC" has increased in popularity in the United States to refer to individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color. While "BIPOC" includes many different identities, some argue it can blur the differences between the communities it is meant to highlight. Before using this term to describe a group of people, see if a more specific description could be appropriate in its place.

Naming each identity present improves clarity and accessibility, and honors unique identities.

The term "BIPOC" has increased in popularity in the United States to refer to individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color. This term is inclusive of many different backgrounds and identities, but some argue it can also blur the differences between the communities it is meant to highlight; before

using this phrase to describe a group, see if a more specific description could be appropriate in its place.[167] Naming each identity rather than using the shorthand "BIPOC" improves clarity and accessibility and honors the unique identities represented. Similar considerations should be taken for People of Color and other phrases that cluster multiple identities: The best practice is to name the specific group(s) referenced. If details about the community are unknown, consider why and work to improve your level of understanding.[168]

IN LOS ANGELES,
THE LATINX COMMUNITY
~~IS MARGINALIZED~~

has provided the city with unique and valuable insights, cultural events, art, and more. Historically, this community and their contributions have been excluded and underrepresented in local institutions including museums and universities.

Resources

- Washington DC Mayor's Office of Racial Equity
- Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide
- University of Wisconsin-Madison: Inclusive Communications Guide
- APA Style Guide: General Principles for Reducing Bias
- APA Inclusive Language Guide
- National Institutes of Health: Style Guide
- Native Governance Center: Beyond Land Acknowledgement
- Crenshaw, Stanford Law Review
- Batra Kashyap, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
- Tran et al., BMC International Health Human Rights
- Moran, American Medical Writers Association Journal: Inclusive Language: Best Practices and Practical Applications for Medical Writers and Editors
- Cooper, A Call for a Language Shift
- Stewart, On Labor Acknowledgements and Honoring the Sacrifice of Black Americans

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
• communities affected by systemic oppression, including racism and redlining • historically underrepresented or excluded group*	• marginalized groups	"Redlining, or discriminatory housing zoning practice, has historically been used as a tool to reinforce residential segregation for Black communities in the United States."
• White supremacy • White privilege • colorism	• post-racial • colorblind	
• ethnic minority* • linguistic minority* • visible minority*	• minority	
• cultural	• multicultural	"Participants identified as African American, European American, Native American, Asian American, and/or Hispanic and Latino American."
• biracial • multiracial	• mixed race	
• White • European American • Scandinavian • Irish	• Caucasian	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- People of the Global Majority (PGM)* - people of color* - Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and/or Multiracial Groups (BHANAM) - Latinx	- non-white - diverse	"The exhibit, with a theme of cross-cultural connection, exclusively features work from multiracial artists."
- Indigenous Peoples - Native Americans - Pacific Islander - People of the First Nations - Māori	tribe or Indian (when referring to people not from India)	"Hawaiian Islander students are an ethnic minority at the university, representing 4% of all enrolled students."

169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Inclusive language advocates have noted the tendency to use words from justice systems in healthcare settings and have explained the harm in criminalizing people undergoing treatment or reducing someone to their health condition. Inclusive language aims to accurately represent and support people who are living with a health condition and people who have experienced harm.

> Inclusive language aims to accurately represent and support people who are living with a health condition and people who have experienced harm.

Technically, a person is a victim only if they have experienced a crime. Some people who have experienced harm prefer the term "survivor," while others don't identify as either a survivor or a victim.[183] Don't use "victim" to describe people living with health conditions, disabilities, or survivors of violence unless they identify with this language.[184] When discussing an act of violence or crime, active voice is an important tool to name the parties who committed the crime or did harm rather than solely focus on who was affected: e.g., "he assaulted her" rather than "she was assaulted."

> Explain any terms or phrases that may be new to your audience and use descriptive terms whenever possible.

Explain any terms or phrases that may be new to your audience and use descriptive terms whenever possible. For example, use "anti-abortion rights" rather than "pro-life" to minimize misunderstanding.[185]

When talking about the body or anatomy, use
language that refers specifically to the body part,
rather than the person or their sex or gender.

When talking about the body or anatomy, use language that refers specifically to the body part, rather than the person or their sex or gender. For example, "The IUD is inserted through the vagina and cervix into the uterus." As relevant, make sure all people regardless of sex or gender are included. For example, "When choosing a method, the person and their provider must consider a number of reasons they are or are not a good candidate for this option. One important variable is which reproductive organs the person has or doesn't have, overall health, and other medications they are taking, including hormones, if they need them to transition or maintain their ideal body and self."

> ✖ Girls going through puberty can use tampons or pads during their period.

> ✔ People who menstruate have several options for period supplies, including tampons, pads, and menstrual cups.

Sometimes, terminology is not inclusive, appropriate, or preferred by some within a community, but language constraints are established by federal agencies or funders. In these cases, it's acceptable to use different language in different settings and to explain why you use a particular term in some contexts and not in others. For example, if a funding notice uses the term "teen pregnancy prevention," you may sometimes need to use this term when referring specifically to the funding or to legislation related to the funding (e.g., the funding acknowledgment), but otherwise, use "sexual and reproductive health and wellness" instead.

Use unbiased language and refrain from conveying judgment about health conditions or substance use. Make sure all people are described respectfully and accurately across the many different possible experiences of substance use. For example, sobriety is a spectrum that includes "sober curious" people who abstain from substances for periods of time without a lifelong commitment, as well as "California sober" individuals who use cannabinoids but abstain from alcohol and other substances.

> Make sure all people are described respectfully
> and accurately across the many different possible
> experiences of substance use.

As another example, "STI" or "sexually transmitted infection" refers to an infection, which may or may not result in symptoms (e.g., herpes or HPV can exist in a person's body and never show symptoms). The term "STI" (i.e., sexually transmitted infection) is more accurate than the term "STD" (i.e., sexually transmitted disease) because when people have sexual contact, it's an *infection*, not a *disease*, that can be passed to others.[186] Not all STIs can lead to diseases, and a person who has symptoms of an STI may never develop a disease. Moreover, testing positive for an "STD" or "sexually transmitted disease" has been used to stigmatize and oppress people, by, for example, imprisoning certain groups, such as women and LGBTQ+ identities. Early public health campaigns stigmatized testing positive with an STD by connecting it with "immoral" or "uncivilized" behavior.[187] Although U.S. federal agencies continue to use the term "STD," the non-governmental sexual and reproductive health field most frequently uses "STI" to be inclusive and affirming.

Public health most often approaches health from a risk reduction and prevention point of view; however, this approach is limiting and fails to consider the full range of health and well-being.[188] For example, rather than using "teen pregnancy prevention," speak more comprehensively and holistically of "adolescent sexual and reproductive health and well-being." Young people need—and have a right to—the full spectrum of support around sexual and reproductive health.

<blockquote>The age at which someone becomes a parent is not a determining or predictive factor for their or their children's future.</blockquote>

Moreover, "teen pregnancy prevention" framing is stigmatizing and problematic.* Embedded in most teen pregnancy prevention models is the myth that teen parents are a drain on public resources and cost taxpayers money. The reality is that these so-called social costs are inaccurately attributed to young parents, when really, the "costs" should be attributed to pre-existing and systemic poverty.[189] Blaming young parents fails to address systemic inequalities and resulting disparities.[190] [191]

---

*To call out the stigmatization and dehumanizing effects of many pregnancy prevention efforts, for example, young parent advocates created the #NoTeenShame campaign to elevate the voices of teen parents. Founded in 2013 by young mothers who felt rejected due to their decisions to have children at younger ages, #NoTeenShame provides education about the issues facing young parents while fighting negative stereotypes.[192] [193]

The age at which someone becomes a parent is not a determining or predictive factor for their or their children's future. For some young people, the decision may be a rational one given their economic and environmental circumstances. In some communities, young parenting may be a protective factor against low birth weight and infant mortality, for example, given the health disparities.[194]

When referring to young people who are pregnant or parenting, avoid the term "expectant." While this term is used (instead of "pregnant") in an attempt to be inclusive of fathers, this term also unfortunately conveys the message that a pregnancy will be carried to term and thus is not recommended. "Pregnant" refers to a specific state of the body, whereas "expectant" assumes expectation or anticipation of something (i.e., full-term pregnancy). Use "pregnant" instead of "expectant" to be inclusive of all people who may be pregnant, including those who may choose abortion, and to appropriately recognize the right to bodily autonomy. You may find it helpful to use the phrase "pregnant and parenting adolescents/students" (or "parenting adolescents/students" if only referring to those who are parenting) to be precise about the population, but once clearly defined, it is also appropriate to use the people-first term, "young people who are pregnant or parenting" (or "young parents" or "young families" again, if only referring to those who are parenting and/or their families).

Pregnant

~~Expectant~~ and parenting adolescents under 25 years old are eligible for our services.
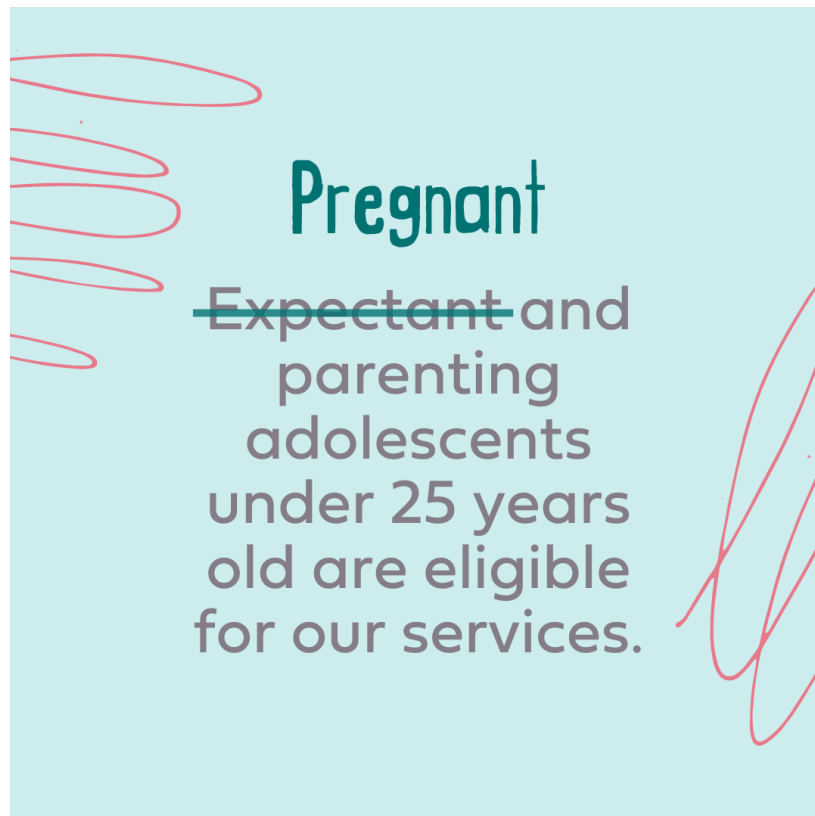
With this risk reduction and prevention point of view, we also see stigmatizing and shaming messages about sexual behavior. Inclusive language, however, takes a sex-positive approach and avoids shaming or framing sexual activity as something to be avoided or as abnormal. Sex positivity, simply put, is the idea that all sex (as long as it's healthy and consensual) is a good and normal thing. Sex positivity promotes healthy and open attitudes towards sexuality, emphasizing consent, communication, and respect for diverse sexualities. Sex positivity is an understanding that sexuality is a natural and healthy aspect of being human—and it requires access to medically accurate and affirming education and services that allow people to make the choices that are right for them.[195] Shame is associated with an increased risk of substance abuse, eating disorders, contracting STIs and HIV, and lowering rates of treatment.[196] Shame can also prevent the reporting of sexual assault crimes.[197] For all of these reasons, using inclusive language that incorporates sex positivity is important.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Instead of:
unsafe or unprotected sex

Try this:
having sex without contraception

Resources

- National Center on Disability and Journalism: Language and Style Guide
- UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines
- National Institutes of Health: Terms to Use and Avoid When Talking About Addiction
- Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide
- Healthy Teen Network: Young Parents Logic Model
- Children's Bureau: Language Bias in Child Welfare
- APA Inclusive Language Guide
- Hadland, et al., Pediatric Clinics of North America
- Tran et al., BMC International Health Human Rights
- Avoiding Ableist Language: Suggestions for Autism Researchers, Botteman-Beutel, et al.

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- priority population - intended population - key population	target population	
- seropositive (for HIV) - person living with cancer	- infected with HIV - cancer victim	
person diagnosed with major depressive disorder	suffers from depression	"She's living with cancer."
- pro-abortion rights - reproductive justice (advocate)	pro-choice*	"Individuals in recovery from opioid use disorder (OUD) benefit from a supportive community and network."
anti-abortion rights	pro-life	
(adolescent) sexual and reproductive health and well-being	teen pregnancy prevention	
- pregnant teen or student, pregnant and parenting teens or students - young people who are pregnant or parenting - young parents, young families	- expectant teen or student, expectant or parenting teen or student - teen mom, teen dad	"Some sexual and reproductive health indicators, such as sexual assault, are experiences rather than behaviors."
sexual and reproductive health indicators	sexual and reproductive behavioral indicators	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- behaviors - behaviors and experiences	- risky behaviors - risk-taking behaviors	
- external condom - internal condom	- male condom - female condom	
- reproductive anatomy - reproductive system of a person with a penis - reproductive system of a person with a uterus	- male anatomy - female anatomy	"Our findings show that engaging in sex without barriers or contraception increases the chances of conception and the transfer of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs)."
youth-supporting professional	youth-serving professional	
- patient with barriers to care - patient with unmet needs	non-compliant patient	
person with substance use disorder	addict	"Pro-abortion rights activists have advocated for comprehensive and age-appropriate sexual health education for adolescent students."
- person actively using methamphetamines - person with opioid use disorder (OUD)	- user - drug abuser - junkie	
- person with alcohol use disorder - person who misuses alcohol - person who engages in hazardous alcohol use	- alcoholic - a drunk	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ person in recovery ▪ person who previously used drugs or substances	▪ former addict ▪ reformed addict	
▪ substance use disorder ▪ drug addiction	▪ habit	
▪ use other than prescribed ▪ off-label use of a medication	▪ abuse prescription medication	"When choosing a method, the person and their provider must consider a number of reasons they are or are not a good candidate for this option. One important variable is which reproductive organs the person has or doesn't have, overall health, and other medications they are taking, including hormones, if they need them to transition or maintain their ideal body and self."
▪ testing positive	▪ dirty	
▪ testing negative	▪ clean (regarding toxicology or STI testing)	
▪ in remission ▪ in long-term recovery ▪ abstinent from drugs ▪ not drinking or taking drugs ▪ not actively or currently using drugs ▪ sober	▪ clean (regarding substance use)	
▪ return to use	▪ relapse	
▪ baby born to a mother who used drugs while pregnant ▪ baby with signs of withdrawal from prenatal drug exposure	▪ addicted baby	"The IUD is inserted through the vagina and cervix into the uterus."
▪ sexually transmitted infection (STI)	▪ sexually transmitted disease (STD)	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- gender-based violence - intimate partner violence - non-partner sexual violence - sexual coercion - sexual harassment	violence against women	
- key populations - priority population	high(er)-risk group	
chance of developing a condition	at risk of developing a condition	
caregiver	caretaker	
- survivor* - person with lived experience of abuse	victim*	

198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208

SEX & GENDER

Widespread understanding and acceptance of identities across the spectrums of gender and sex has increased dramatically over time, thanks to countless hours of work and advocacy from the LGBTQ+ community, educators, healthcare professionals, and more. Gender and sex are distinct from each other, as well as from sexuality—be specific and recognize the differences between these ideas.[209] The World Health Organization (WHO) provides some context for the distinctions:

- **Sexuality** is defined as a core and lifelong aspect of being human that encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, pleasure, intimacy, reproduction, and more.[210]

- **Gender** refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women, men, and many more gender-expansive identities. These characteristics include norms, behaviors, roles, and unequal power dynamics associated with being a certain gender that change over time and vary by community.[211]

- **Sex** refers to the biological characteristics that humans have defined as female or male (intersex individuals may have characteristics that are associated with both male and female identities, or neither).[212]

There are more than two genders and more than two sexes, and it is inclusive to use language that speaks to expansive gender identities, rather than reinforcing a gender binary. Because sex is distinct from gender, be clear about identities and refrain from using someone's anatomy as an indicator of gender.

> There are more than two genders and more than two sexes, and it is inclusive to use language that speaks to expansive gender identities, rather than reinforcing a gender binary.
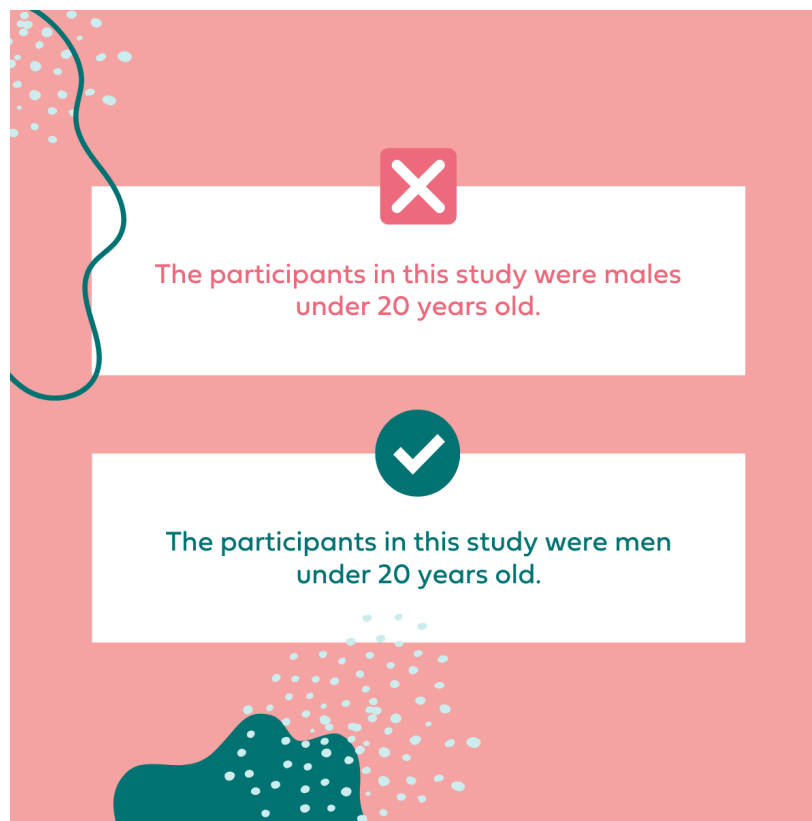
Ask people what language they use to describe their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression before using a label.[213] It is acceptable to respectfully ask someone for their pronouns, and if you aren't sure of a person's pronouns, the singular "they" is the appropriate alternative.[214] Some people choose not to use personal pronouns; in these cases, use the person's name only.[215]

It is usually best to report on trans people's stories from the present day instead of narrating them from points in the past.[216] It is never appropriate to put quotation marks around a person's chosen name, their pronouns, or their gender identity. Use genderless language whenever possible to include people of all genders and to prevent sexist or heteronormative implications.[217] [218]

Use This, Not That
LANGUAGE ON GENDER

✔
the many genders

people of all genders

all children

students of all genders

✖
the two genders

men and women

boys and girls

male and female students

Resources

- GLAAD Media Reference Guide
- Human Rights Campaign's Brieg Guide to Reporting on Transgender Individuals
- Pronouns.org: Resources on Personal Pronouns
- Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide
- APA Inclusive Language Guide
- Healthy Teen Network: Young Parents Logic Model
- Human Rights Campaign: Glossary of Terms
- UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines
- American Academy of Pediatrics: Words Matter
- Moran, American Medical Writers Association Journal: Inclusive Language: Best Practices and Practical Applications for Medical Writers and Editors
- Hadland, et al., Pediatric Clinics of North America
- Allsop et al, RMLE Online

❌ The participants in this study were males under 20 years old.

✔ The participants in this study were men under 20 years old.

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ non-discrimination law/ordinance	▪ bathroom bill	
▪ humankind ▪ people/person ▪ staff hours ▪ chairperson ▪ one-to-one	▪ mankind ▪ men and women ▪ man hours ▪ chairman ▪ man-to-man	"Welcome, all!"
▪ colleagues ▪ friends ▪ staff and guests ▪ everyone ▪ (you) all	▪ ladies and gentlemen ▪ staff and wives ▪ you guys	"What are your pronouns?"
▪ another gender ▪ same gender	▪ opposite gender ▪ opposite sex ▪ same sex	
▪ all genders	▪ both genders	"There is an all-gender bathroom across the hall."
▪ sex assigned at birth ▪ person assigned female at birth	▪ birth sex ▪ natal sex	
▪ intersex	▪ hermaphrodite, hermaphroditic	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ people with uteruses ▪ people with penises ▪ pregnant people	▪ women* ▪ men* ▪ pregnant women	"Mx. Gonzalez is recovering from their gender-confirmation surgery and will return in a few weeks."
▪ woman* ▪ man*	▪ woman-identified* ▪ people who identify as women* ▪ man-identified* ▪ people who identify as men*	
▪ gender-affirming surgery ▪ gender-confirmation surgery	▪ sex change ▪ sex change operation	
▪ transition ▪ transitioning	▪ pre-operative* ▪ post-operative*	"You've expressed interest in transitioning. Would you like to talk more about that?"
▪ transgender people ▪ a trans woman ▪ a trans man	▪ transgendered (adj.) ▪ a transgender (n.) ▪ transsexual* ▪ transvestite*	
▪ transgender, nonbinary, gender-expansive (TNGE)	▪ non-cisgender	"Participants in this clinical study identified as male and female. No participants identified as nonbinary."
▪ pronouns	▪ preferred gender pronouns	
▪ a cisgender person ▪ cis man	▪ cisgendered (adj.) ▪ real man	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ Mx.	▪ Mr. or Ms. (for agender or nonbinary identities)	
▪ chosen name	▪ new name	
▪ dead name ▪ given name	▪ old name ▪ real name	
▪ the many genders (e.g., agender, genderfluid, nonbinary, kathoey, hen, two-spirit, and more) ▪ people of all genders	▪ the two genders ▪ boys and girls ▪ men and women	
▪ all students ▪ students of all genders	▪ male and female students	
▪ young men, men, or boys ▪ young women, women, or girls	▪ males ▪ females	
▪ parents	▪ mothers and fathers	

219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232

SEXUALITY

Our shared understanding of sexuality as it is recognized and celebrated by different cultures has evolved dramatically in the last century. Sexuality encompasses both behavior and identity; be clear in your language if you are discussing behavior or identity. We should recognize that sexuality is distinct from sex or gender (definitions for these terms are provided in the sex & gender section), and sexuality, sex, and gender all contain spectrums along which each person falls.

Language related to sexuality has also changed over time: Younger generations have embraced the term "queer," but older adults may be uncomfortable with this term because it was historically used as a slur. Make sure any stories you share about sexuality promote acceptance and understanding and avoid fear-based stories that feed a culture of stigma.[233]

You may see "emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction," "sexual orientation," "sexual identity," and/or "sexuality" used interchangeably. Some people prefer "attraction" over "orientation." And "sexuality" is a broader term that includes a person's experiences, behavior, identity, and feelings. That is, sexuality is more comprehensive than sexual orientation. Use these terms after careful consideration to determine which one is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

It's best practice to name all identities which are present, as specifically as possible. For example, if you're only referring to cisgender individuals who identify as bisexual or queer, you wouldn't use "LGBTQIA+" (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and more) to describe that group because it's inaccurate to imply that lesbian, gay, transgender, intersex, and asexual people are among the individuals you're discussing. If you are referring to a group of people with many different sexualities, and you know two-spirit and asexual people are included in the group you're discussing, recognize those individuals with "LGBTQQIA2S+." [234] If you aren't sure who may be included in the group, LGBTQ+ is an appropriate way to name some identities while not recognizing others in order to speak broadly about this community.

The first time you use an acronym like "LGBTQ+," name each term included to honor all identities represented. The plus sign (+) is intended to include all genders and sexualities not specifically named—this is a widely accepted practice used to represent many identities within the limits of language.

All acronyms that describe group identities should be used carefully, so as to not conflate distinct sexualities or identities. Specificity and accuracy should be prioritized whenever possible to respect unique sexualities. For example, if a study included exclusively lesbian identities, it would be less accurate to only describe the individuals as experiencing same-sex attraction.

Outside of acronyms, sexuality and gender-related terms should only be capitalized when used at the beginning of a sentence. [235] For example, identities such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer are lowercase, unless they are used within the acronym LGTBQ+.

Take steps to ensure your data collection processes include opportunities for individuals to self-identify for more accurate information and representation. For example, when collecting demographic information on forms or surveys, instead of an "Other" checkbox, provide a space for people to write in a response.

Resources
- GLAAD Media Reference Guide
- Human Rights Campaign: Glossary of Terms
- UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines
- Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide
- American Academy of Pediatrics: Words Matter
- APA Inclusive Language Guide
- Healthy Teen Network: Young Parents Logic Model
- Moran, American Medical Writers Association Journal: Inclusive Language: Best Practices and Practical Applications for Medical Writers and Editors
- Hadland, et al., Pediatric Clinics of North America
- Allsop et al, RMLE Online

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ LGBTQ+* ▪ LGBTQIA+ ▪ LGBTQQIA2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, two-spirit, and more)	▪ homosexual ▪ non-straight ▪ gay community ▪ LGBT*	"More younger adults in the U.S. openly identify as part of the LGBTQQIA2S+ community now than they did 10 years ago. 'LGBTQQIA2S+' refers to a group of sexualities, genders, and cultural identities including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, two-spirit, and more. Identities not represented in the acronym but present within this community include demisexual and pansexual."
▪ straight ▪ heterosexual	▪ normal ▪ typical	
▪ lesbian ▪ queer ▪ asexual ▪ demisexual ▪ pansexual	▪ one of the queer identities	
▪ emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction ▪ sexual orientation* ▪ sexual identity* ▪ sexuality*	▪ sexual preference	
▪ having sex or performing sexual acts without contraception	▪ unsafe sex ▪ unprotected sex	"They identify as asexual and experience romantic attraction toward men."
▪ same-sex relationship	▪ homosexual relationship	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ identity ▪ LGBTQ+ people and their lives	▪ choice ▪ (gay) lifestyle	"I hear that you feel it's important for you to have sex without contraception. How can I best support you with your sexual health?"

236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247

DO THIS, NOT THAT
sexual identity

✓ identity   ✗ lifestyle choice

✓ emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction   ✗ sexual preference

SOME PEOPLE USE "ORIENTATION," BUT OTHERS PREFER "ATTRACTION"

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Consider if a person or group's socioeconomic status is directly relevant to your message. Start with a strengths-based description for all people, and provide historical and environmental context when it's necessary to discuss indicators of socioeconomic status.[248]

Use parallel terminology when comparing groups. For example, "people with a high school diploma or equivalent" and "people without a high school diploma or equivalent."[249]

Practice accurate and unbiased language by naming individuals' experiences and honoring their choices without using charged words such as "risk" or "reliant."[250]

> Start with a strengths-based description for all people, and provide historical and environmental context when it's necessary to discuss indicators of socioeconomic status.

Identify and remove instances of implicit bias that reinforce status quo systems of power.[251] Avoid terms such as "marginalized" and "disenfranchised," which do not name the conditions or oppressive systems causing underrepresentation and exclusion. Name actors of oppression whenever possible, whether human, institutional, or cultural. For example, instead of "opportunity youth" or "disconnected youth," use "young people who face barriers to education and employment due to systemic inequalities, including limited access to resources and support."[252]

Resources

- [Children's Bureau: Language Bias in Child Welfare](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics: Words Matter](#)
- [Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide](#)
- [APA Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [Healthy Teen Network: Young Parents Logic Model](#)
- [Tran et al., BMC International Health Human Rights](#)
- [Addressing Linguistic Bias to Create a Culturally Responsive World Language Classroom, Boring, Carnegie Learning](#)

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ underrepresented ▪ underserved	▪ marginalized	
▪ underserved	▪ underprivileged	"This service is available for all people whose incomes are below the federal poverty threshold."
▪ young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not in school and are not in the labor force ▪ young people who face barriers to education and employment due to systemic inequalities, including limited access to resources and support	▪ disconnected youth ▪ opportunity youth	"We surveyed 20 individuals in district X who are unhoused or living in a place not meant for human habitation."
▪ people who have completed x^th grade ▪ people without a high school diploma	▪ high school dropouts	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ people whose incomes are below the federal poverty threshold ▪ households/families/people whose self-reported income were in the lowest income bracket ▪ person with low income	▪ the poor ▪ low-class people ▪ poor people	"People who work in service-based roles are skilled communicators and mediators, and often speak multiple languages."
▪ experiencing housing instability* ▪ people who are unhoused ▪ person experiencing homelessness ▪ people who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in transitional housing ▪ people without fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence ▪ person living in a vehicle	▪ at risk of homelessness ▪ the homeless	"The Latinx community in Los Angeles has provided the city with unique and valuable insights, cultural events, art, and more. Historically, this community and their contributions have been excluded and underrepresented in local institutions including museums and universities."

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ person accessing social services ▪ person who receives TANF benefits ▪ people who are unable to work because of a disability ▪ families whose main income is from TANF benefits	▪ recipient ▪ dependent ▪ people who are welfare-reliant	"We provide tutoring and GED programs for individuals who do not have a high school diploma."
▪ people with material wealth	▪ the rich	
▪ people in entry-level jobs ▪ people who work in service roles	▪ unskilled labor	
▪ people whose votes (or voices) have been silenced ▪ individuals whose rights have been suppressed ▪ communities who have been excluded from decision-making	▪ disenfranchised	

253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262

ENGAGEMENT WITH SYSTEMS OF CARE
(FOSTER CARE, IMMIGRATION, JUSTICE SYSTEM, INCARCERATION, TRANSITIONS, & RE-ENTRY)

People who have been impacted by systems of care have long advocated for inclusive practices, and many have made efforts in areas like research and education to protect the dignity and autonomy of individuals in these systems. Many systems—such as foster care, immigration, justice, incarceration, transitions, and re-entry—have historically been used to disproportionately oppress certain groups including people with disabilities, Black Americans, families whose income falls below the federal poverty threshold, and more. [263] [264] Note this context and be unbiased and as specific as possible when discussing or representing individuals who have been impacted by any of these systems.

> It's important to respect the position of caregivers and people involved in different levels of systems of care.

It's important to respect the position of caregivers and people involved in different levels of systems of care. For example, some people who have children involved in the foster care system prefer language that highlights their unique status and role as the child's parent, and they ask that people who foster their children be called "foster caregivers" rather than "foster parents." [265]

Resources

- UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines
- Children's Bureau: Language Bias in Child Welfare
- National Institutes of Health: Terms to Use and Avoid When Talking About Addiction
- American Academy of Pediatrics: Words Matter
- Sum of US: A Progressive's Style Guide
- Nebraska Children's Home Society: Words Matter
- Casey Family Programs: How Does the Language Used in Child Welfare Impact Families?
- Moran, American Medical Writers Association Journal: Inclusive Language: Best Practices and Practical Applications for Medical Writers and Editors
- Tran et al., BMC International Health Human Rights

We provide tutoring and support for ~~disconnected youth.~~

young people who face barriers to education and employment due to systemic inequalities

Recommendations and Examples

*Denotes a term that is used by some within a particular community, but not all. Use this term after careful consideration to determine if it is appropriate and representative of the community, group, or individuals you are referring to.

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
- person who is incarcerated - person in detention/jail/prison - person involved in or experiencing the criminal justice system - person with a felony conviction	- prisoner - inmate - felon - offender - convict	"Upon enactment of the Affordable Care Act, more individuals involved in the criminal justice system became eligible for the Medicaid health insurance program."
- sex work - sex trade - person involved in sex work/trade - trading sexual services - sex worker	- prostitution - prostitute - whore	
- person on parole - person on probation	- probationer - parolee	"Several government benefits and welfare programs are not available to undocumented communities, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)."
- person who lacks resident documentation - person in immigrant detainment - undocumented people - DACA students - people without lawful immigration status	- illegal immigrant - alien - unlawful non-citizen - visa overstayer - detainee - the undocumented	

USE	AVOID	EXAMPLES
▪ transmigrant ▪ asylum seeker	▪ migrant ▪ foreigner	
▪ health services in detention settings ▪ health care in prison	▪ penitentiary health services ▪ correctional health services	
▪ a child who has committed a crime and is in the juvenile justice system ▪ adolescents impacted by the justice system	▪ deviant ▪ juvenile delinquent ▪ youth offender	"I am this child's foster caregiver. Her parents live nearby and we meet together twice a month."
▪ parents ▪ address and refer to individuals by their names (if appropriate)	▪ biological parents ▪ birth parents*	
▪ (foster) caregiver	▪ foster parent*	
▪ child involved in the foster care system	▪ foster kid	
▪ child missing from care ▪ child who has left home	▪ runaway	"They work with students who have been impacted by the juvenile justice system."
▪ survivor* ▪ person with lived experience of abuse	▪ victim*	

266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278

CONCLUSION

When we use inclusive language and encourage our partners to join in practice, it is an act of love for our clients, colleagues, neighbors, and communities. Deciding to use inclusive language in your work goes beyond learning and using a static list of acceptable terms or avoiding certain phrases because they could offend a historically excluded population. An inclusive approach requires actively learning and engaging with communities to ensure your message is shaped and shared in a way that promotes understanding rather than exacerbating existing disparities. Furthermore, applying inclusive practices means working to foster a culture of respect, representation, and empowerment for all people in all spaces. Inclusivity goes beyond individual interactions. Inclusive communication addresses structural inequities and elevates insights from the real experts: People with lived experience and those who belong to the communities we're discussing. Inclusivity is about more than just avoiding offensive language; it's a deeper and ongoing commitment to equity and justice.

The benefits of inclusive language to foster belonging among different identities are well-documented and stretch across industries: Accessible design benefits everyone.[279] Diversity of identities, backgrounds, and lived experiences produces unique insights that make us stronger, smarter, and more connected to each other.[280] Organizations that minimize bias in their communications can reach and connect with a wider audience, for greater impact.[281] We invite you to commit to inclusive communication practices to improve the clarity and accuracy of more equitable treatment for everyone.

At Healthy Teen Network, we aim to foster and strengthen relationships within and across communities, and inclusive communication is one tool of many to support our connections with each other. Everyone has the right to determine how they are represented, and it is our responsibility to honor those choices. We are dedicated to practicing inclusive policies including using unbiased language, listening for opportunities to update or improve this resource, and continuing to co-learn with our partners, clients, and communities. Join us in these efforts by reviewing, using, and contributing to this resource (our feedback form is ready and waiting)!

GLOSSARY

Bias: tendency to favor or dislike a person or thing, especially as a result of a preconceived opinion; partiality.[282]

Bigotry: intolerance, prejudice; unreasonable attachment to a belief, practice faction, etc.[283]

Colonialism: the control or direct occupation of one territory and its peoples by another, and the ideologies of superiority and racism often associated with such domination.[284] Modern colonialism often doesn't involve direct political control or occupation; control is exercised through economic and cultural dominance via institutions and systems.

Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on various characteristics such as ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, socioeconomic status, disability, or other personal attributes.[285] Discrimination can occur both directly and indirectly, and can be based on actual or perceived traits.

Gender: the socially constructed characteristics of women, men, and many more gender-expansive identities. These characteristics include norms, behaviors, roles, and unequal power dynamics associated with being a certain gender that change over time and vary by community.[286]

Hate-bias incident: an act characterized by some expression of bias or hate against a particular group, or towards an individual because of their identification with that group.[287] Hate bias incidents may range from acts of ignorance to acts intended to inflict harm.

Inclusive communication: more than just written or verbal language, inclusive communication encompasses the methods, tools, and strategies used to share information to ensure the communication is inclusive, affirming, and accessible to everyone regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or characteristics. These methods, tools, and strategies may include visuals, storylines, non-verbal cues, captions, transcripts, and more.

Inclusive language: a way of speaking or writing, choosing words, tone, and style that is clear, specific, appropriate, and free from bias.

Intersectionality: the way individuals are shaped by and identify with a vast array of cultural, structural, sociobiological, economic, and social contexts. Intersectionality acknowledges that each person has a unique lived experience and identity. Intersectionality recognizes that oppressive systems can cause compounding discriminations for individuals, such as how both racial and gender discrimination affect Black women.[288]

Microaggression: a statement, action, or incident that subtly, indirectly, or unintentionally disrespects or discriminates against members of a historically underrepresented group such as a racial or ethnic minority.[289] These behaviors, though often minor, can reinforce stereotypes and contribute to a harmful or exclusionary environment for those affected.

Oppression: prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control.[290]

Parallelism: the quality or character of being parallel or analogous; correspondence or similarity between two or more things.[291]

Prejudice: to prejudge or make a decision about a person or group without sufficient knowledge; prejudicial thinking is often based on stereotypes.[292]

Sex: the biological characteristics that humans have defined as female or male (intersex individuals may have characteristics that are associated with both male and female identities, or neither). [293]

Sex positivity: the idea that all sex (as long as it's healthy and consensual) is a good and normal thing. Sex positivity promotes healthy and open attitudes towards sexuality, emphasizing consent, communication, and respect for diverse sexualities. Sex positivity is an understanding that sexuality is a natural and healthy aspect of being human—and it requires access to medically accurate and affirming education and services that allow people to make the choices that are right for them.[294]

Sexuality: a core and lifelong aspect of being human that encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, pleasure, intimacy, reproduction, and more.[295]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACS Inclusivity Style Guide: Body size. American Chemical Society. (n.d.).
https://www.acs.org/about/diversity/inclusivity-style-guide/body-size.html

The Adultification of Black Children. (2023, January 19). Center for Policing Equity.
https://policingequity.org/resources/blog/the-adultification-of-black-children

Allsop, Y., Black, A., Tilak, S., & Anderman, E. M. (2024). Saying gay: Young
adolescents' reported benefits of LGBTQ+ inclusive sexual health education.
RMLE Online, 47(5), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/19404476.2024.2340005

American Cancer Society. (2023, August). Inclusive Language and Writing
Guide (2nd ed.). Cancer Action Network.
https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/health_equity_inclusive_language_writing_guide.pdf

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2021, May 14). Words matter: AAP guidance on
inclusive, anti-biased language. American Academy of Pediatrics.
https://www.aap.org/en/about-the-aap/american-academy-of-pediatrics-equity-and-inclusion-efforts/words-matter-aap-guidance-on-inclusive-anti-biased-language/

American Psychological Association. (2022, July). General principles for reducing
bias. American Psychological Association. https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/general-principles

American Psychological Association. (2023). Inclusive language guide (2nd ed.).
https://www.apa.org/about/apa/ equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines.pdf

Aorinka. (2024, March 5). What is language bias and how to avoid it? Linguise.
https://www.linguise.com/blog/guide/what-is-language-bias-and-how-to-avoid-it/

Batra Kashyap, M. (2021). "Illegal" vs. "Undocumented": A NWIRP board member's perspective. Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. June 24, 2024, https://www.nwirp.org/illegal-vs-undocumented-a-nwirp-board-members-perspective/

Boring, J. (2023, May 26). Addressing linguistic bias to create a culturally responsive world language classroom. Carnegie Learning. https://www.carnegielearning.com/blog/addressing-linguistic-bias-language-classroom/

Bottema-Beutel, K., Kapp, S. K., Lester, J. N., Sasson, N. J., & Hand, B. N. (2021). Avoiding ableist language: Suggestions for autism researchers. Autism in Adulthood, 3(1), 18–29. https://doi.org/10.1089/aut.2020.0014

Bowman, C., & Lim, W. M. (2021). How to Avoid Ageist Language in Aging Research? An Overview and Guidelines. Activities, Adaptation & Aging, 45(4), 269–275. https://doi.org/10.1080/01924788.2021.1992712

Brown, L. (2011, August 4). Identity-first language. Autistic Self Advocacy Network. https://autisticadvocacy.org/about-asan/identity-first-language/

Bula, J. L., Campos, H. J., Marrero, P., Pelliccia, L., & Rice, S. (2016, July 21). Guide to trauma-informed sex education. Cardea Services. https://cardeaservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Guide_to_Trauma_Informed_Sex_Education_FINAL.pdf

Cadena, M., Rivera, R. Z., Esparza, T., & Cadena, D. (2016). Dismantling Teen Pregnancy Prevention. Young Women United. https://forwomen.org/resources/dismantling-teen-pregnancy-prevention/

Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. (2021, January 1). Guidelines for Inclusive Language. Toronto. https://www.cmcc.ca/about-cmcc/documents/public-policies/guidelines-for-inclusive-language.pdf

Carey, M. L., & Hewitt, A. A. (2022, April). Guide to inclusive language: Race and Ethnicity. Washington DC; Mayor's Office of Racial Equity. https://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/page_content/attachments/OHR_ORE_RacialEquity_ILG_April2023.pdf

Casey Family Programs. (2022, December 1). Language in child welfare. Casey
   Family Programs. https://www.casey.org/use-of-language/

Castree, N., Kitchen, R., & Rogers, A. (2013). A dictionary of human geography.
   Colonialism. Oxford University Press.

Changing the Narrative: Ending Ageism Together. (n.d.). Style guidelines for
   avoiding ageist language. Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder
   Abuse. https://cnpea.ca/images/guidelines-for-age-inclusive-
   communication.pdf

Chastain, R. (2021, November 3). Inclusive Language For Higher-Weight People.
   Weight and Healthcare. July 10, 2024,
   https://weightandhealthcare.substack.com/p/inclusive-language-for-
   higher-weight

Chilcoat, D. (2018). U Choose to Know: Send Shame Walking! Applying a Sex
   Positive Lens to Health Class Facilitation. Baltimore; U Choose.
   https://www.healthyteennetwork.org/resources/u-choose-sex-positive-lens-
   health-class/

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and
   violence against women of color. Stanford Law Review, 43(6), 1241-1299.
   https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

Crime and incarceration. (2022). Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly
   Communications. https://c4disc.pubpub.org/pub/qb4frlzp/release/1

Colorado State University. (2023, May 24). Inclusive language. Student Disability
   Center. https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/inclusive-language/

McIntosh, P. (1989). White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. Peace and
   Freedom.

Cooper, J. (2016, December 7). A Call for a Language Shift: From Covert
   Oppression to Overt Empowerment.
   https://education.uconn.edu/2016/12/07/a-call-for-a-language-shift-from-
   covert-oppression-to-overt-empowerment/

de la Fuente-Núñez, V., Cohn-Schwartz, E., Roy, S., & Ayalon, L. (2021). Scoping
   Review on Ageism against Younger Populations. International journal of

environmental research and public health, 18(8), 3988.
https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18083988

Desiderio, G., Garrido, M., Williams, M., Sufrinko, N. (2020). Young parents logic model. Healthy Teen Network.
www.healthyteennetwork.org/resources/young-parents-logic-model/.

Duckworth, S. (2022, June 29). The Wheel of Power/Privilege. Wheel of privilege and power. https://kb.wisc.edu/instructional-resources/page.php?id=119380

Freire, P. (2005). Pedagogy of the Oppressed (M. B. Ramos, Trans.; 30th Anniversary ed.). Continuum.

GLAAD. (2023, July 27). GLAAD Media Reference Guide. GLAAD.
https://glaad.org/reference/

Giefer, L. (2022, February 15). A guide to indigenous land acknowledgment. Native Governance Center. https://nativegov.org/news/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/

Giefer, L. (2023, March 31). Voluntary land taxes. Native Governance Center. https://nativegov.org/news/voluntary-land-taxes/

Goh, E. (2023, September 19). What is the Difference Between Plain Language and Inclusive Language? Content Science Review. https://review.content-science.com/what-is-the-difference-between-plain-language-and-inclusive-language/

Hadland, S. E., Yehia, B. R., & Makadon, H. J. (2016). Caring for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,
and questioning youth in inclusive and affirmative environments. Pediatric Clinics of North America, 63(6), 955–969.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pcl.2016.07.001

Harrison, D. (2018, September 27). The Daily Realities of Being Fat, Black, and Queer in Public Spaces. Them. https://www.them.us/story/fat-black-queer-public-spaces

Hill Collins, P. (2009). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment (1st ed.). Routledge.

History of Opportunity Youth. (n.d.). Opportunity Youth. https://action-lab.org/opportunity-youth/video-page/

Hobaica, S., & Kwon, P. (2017). "This Is How You Hetero:" Sexual Minorities in Heteronormative Sex Education. American Journal of Sexuality Education, 12(4), 423–450. https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2017.1399491

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). (2024, July 1). UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines. Geneva. https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/2024-terminology-guidelines_en.pdf

Kaba, M., Spade, D., & Dector, H. (2020, October 13). What is Accountability?. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZuJ55iGI14

Kamenetz, A. (2015, April 28). Delinquent. Dropout. At-Risk. When Words Become Labels. NPR.org. https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/04/28/399949478/delinquent-dropout-at-risk-whats-in-a-name

Kendall. (2022, April 1). STI vs STD - what's the difference? Planned Parenthood. https://www.plannedparenthood.org/blog/sti-vs-std-whats-the-difference

Language Matters: 5 Ways Your Words Impact Trafficking Survivors. (2023, January 1). Polaris Project. https://polarisproject.org/blog/2023/01/language-matters-5-ways-your-words-impact-trafficking-survivors/

Lavendier, D. M. (2020). Fat in the Academy: Reimagining the Experience of the Fat Academic (thesis). Doctoral Dissertations. University of New Hampshire. https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3540&context=dissertation

Mass Alliance on Teen Pregnancy. (2017, June 13). Breaking down the stigma surrounding teen pregnancy. Medium. https://medium.com/@mateenpregnancy/breaking-down-the-stigma-surrounding-teen-pregnancy-7b582234679f

Messner, L. (2021, August 18). Why and How to Communicate with Bias-Free, Inclusive Language. Harris & Associates.

https://www.weareharris.com/resources/blog/why-and-how-to-communicate-with-bias-free-inclusive-language/

Moran, R. (2023). Inclusive language: Best practices and practical applications for medical writers and editors. American Medical Writers Association Journal, 38(1). https://doi.org/10.55752/amwa.2023.240

Mingus, M. (2019, December 18). The four parts of Accountability & How to give a genuine apology. Leaving Evidence. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2019/12/18/how-to-give-a-good-apology-part-1-the-four-parts-of-accountability/

Morgan-Daniel, J., Norton, H. F., Edwards, M. E., & Daley, M. (2024). Developing and conducting a language inclusivity assessment on a Health Science Library's website, Libguides, and signage. Journal of the Medical Library Association, 112(1), 48–54. https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2024.1691

Morrison, S. (2023, December 27). Don't call me "old": Avoiding ageism when writing about aging. National Institute on Aging. June 14, 2024, https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/blog/2023/12/dont-call-me-old-avoiding-ageism-when-writing-about-aging

Mullaly, R. P., & West, J. (2018). Challenging oppression and confronting privilege: A critical approach to anti-oppressive and anti-privilege theory and practice (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

National Center on Disability and Journalism. (2021, August). Disability Language Style Guide. NCDJ. https://ncdj.org/style-guide/

NCHS Team. (2023, August 17). Creating a positive narrative around foster care. NCHS. https://blog.nchs.org/foster-care-language-words-matter

NoTeenShame. (n.d.). About. NoTeenShame.org. https://www.noteenshame.com/about

Oxford Languages. (n.d.). Bias; Bigotry; Discrimination; Microaggression; Oppression; Parallelism; Prejudice. In Oxford English dictionary. Retrieved August 9, 2024. https://www.oed.com/

Phillips, K. W. (2014). How Diversity Works. Scientific American, 311(4), 42–47. https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican1014-42

Pratt Institute Libraries. (2023, October 27). Inclusive language: Religion. Inclusive Language – Religion. https://libguides.pratt.edu/inclusive-language

Pronouns.org. (n.d.). How do I use your pronouns correctly? Resources on Personal Pronouns. https://pronouns.org/how

Race and National Origin. (2022, August 11). National Institutes of Health (NIH). https://www.nih.gov/nih-style-guide/race-national-origin

Rahim, M., & Patton, R. (2015). The association between shame and substance use in young people: a systematic review. PeerJ, 3, e737. https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.737

Richards, T., Dang-Mertz, T., & Graham, E. (2022). Language bias in child welfare: Approaches to identifying and studying biased language to advance equitable child welfare practice. Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/language-bias.pdf

Rotman, I. (2020). A Quick & Easy Guide to Consent. Limerence Press, an imprint of Oni-Lion Forge Publishing Group, LLC.

Ruben, H. (2023, May 15). Nonplussed: Fashion's surprisingly big problem with gender and size. Fashion Dive. https://www.fashiondive.com/news/inclusive-sizing-gender-problem/650271/

Solid Ground. (2024, March 20). Labor acknowledgement. Solid Ground. https://www.solid-ground.org/our-impact/labor-acknowledgement/

Stern, S. W. (2019, July 21). America's forgotten mass imprisonment of women believed to be sexually immoral. History.com. https://www.history.com/news/chamberlain-kahn-act-std-venereal-disease-imprisonment-women

Stewart, T. "TJ." (2021, March 1). On labor acknowledgements and honoring the sacrifice of Black Americans. Diverse: Issues in Higher Education.

https://www.diverseeducation.com/demographics/african-american/article/15108677/on-labor-acknowledgements-and-honoring-the-sacrifice-of-black-americans

Thomas, H., & Hirsch, A. (2016). A Progressive's Style Guide. Sum of Us. https://interactioninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Sum-Of-Us-Progressive-Style-Guide.pdf

Tran, N.T., Baggio, S., Dawson, A. et al. Words matter: a call for humanizing and respectful language to describe people who experience incarceration. BMC Int Health Hum Rights 18, 41 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-018-0180-4

UN Geneva. (2021, January). Disability-inclusive language guidelines. The United Nations Office at Geneva. https://www.ungeneva.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/Disability-Inclusive-Language-Guidelines.pdf

University of Bristol. (2022, November 28). Inclusive writing: Religion, faith and belief. Style guides. https://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/writing/inclusive/religion-faith-belief/

University of Maryland. (2022, May 5). Guide: Key terms & definitions. Office of Diversity and Inclusion. https://diversity.umd.edu/resources/key-terms-definitions

University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. (2019, August 12). Why identity matters. Critical Media Project. https://criticalmediaproject.org/why-identity-matters/

University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2024). Inclusive Communications Guide. University Communications. https://uc.wisc.edu/inclusive-communications-guide/

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). Plain language. National Institutes of Health. https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/plain-language/

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, December 20). Words matter - terms to use and avoid when talking about addiction. National Institutes of Health. https://nida.nih.gov/nidamed-medical-health-

professionals/health-professions-education/words-matter-terms-to-use-avoid-when-talking-about-addiction

Van Vleck, M. (2024). "Kids these days:" Why youth-directed ageism is an issue for everyone. Washington University in St. Louis Institute for Public Health. June 20, 2024, https://publichealth.wustl.edu/kids-these-days-why-youth-directed-ageism-is-an-issue-for-everyone/

Weiss, K. G. (2010). Too ashamed to report: Deconstructing the shame of sexual victimization. Feminist Criminology, 5(3), 286–310. https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085110376343

Words Matter: Using Humanizing Language. (n.d.). The Fortune Society. https://fortunesociety.org/wordsmatter/

World Health Organization. (2024). Gender and Health. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender

World Health Organization. (2006). Sexual health. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/sexual-health

REFERENCES

[1] Thomas, H., & Hirsch, A. (2016). A Progressive's Style Guide. Sum of Us. https://interactioninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Sum-Of-Us-Progressive-Style-Guide.pdf

[2] American Psychological Association. (2022, July). General principles for reducing bias. American Psychological Association. https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/general-principles

[3] Tran, N.T., Baggio, S., Dawson, A. et al. Words matter: a call for humanizing and respectful language to describe people who experience incarceration. BMC Int Health Hum Rights 18, 41 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-018-0180-4

[4] Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. Stanford Law Review, 43(6), 1241-1299. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

[5] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[6] (Crenshaw. 1991.)

[7] American Cancer Society. (2023, August). Inclusive Language and Writing Guide (2nd ed.). Cancer Action Network.https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/health_equity_inclusive_language_writing_guide.pdf

[8] University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. (2019, August 12). Why identity matters. Critical Media Project. https://criticalmediaproject.org/why-identity-matters/

[9] Moran, R. (2023). Inclusive language: Best practices and practical applications for medical writers and editors. American Medical Writers Association Journal, 38(1). https://doi.org/10.55752/amwa.2023.240

[10] American Academy of Pediatrics. (2021, May 14). Words matter: AAP guidance on inclusive, anti-biased language. American Academy of Pediatrics. https://www.aap.org/en/about-the-aap/american-academy-of-pediatrics-equity-and-inclusion-efforts/words-matter-aap-guidance-on-inclusive-anti-biased-language/

[11] (Crenshaw. 1991.)

[12] (Tran, et al. 2018)

[13] Duckworth, S. (2022, June 29). The Wheel of Power/Privilege. Wheel of privilege and power. https://kb.wisc.edu/instructional-resources/page.php?id=119380

[14] Hill Collins, P. (2009). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment (1st ed.). Routledge.

[15] McIntosh, P. (1989). White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. Peace and Freedom.

[16] Freire, P. (2005). Pedagogy of the Oppressed (M. B. Ramos, Trans.; 30th Anniversary ed.). Continuum.

[17] Mullaly, R. P., & West, J. (2018). Challenging oppression and confronting privilege: A critical approach to anti-oppressive and anti-privilege theory and practice (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

[18] (Moran. 2023.)

[19] (Tran, et al. 2018)

[20] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, December 20). Words matter - terms to use and avoid when talking about addiction. National Institutes of Health. https://nida.nih.gov/nidamed-medical-health-professionals/health-professions-education/words-matter-terms-to-use-avoid-when-talking-about-addiction

[21] Cooper, J. (2016, December 7). A Call for a Language Shift: From Covert Oppression to Overt Empowerment. https://education.uconn.edu/2016/12/07/a-call-for-a-language-shift-from-covert-oppression-to-overt-empowerment/

[22] Language Matters: 5 Ways Your Words Impact Trafficking Survivors. (2023, January 1). Polaris Project. https://polarisproject.org/blog/2023/01/language-matters-5-ways-your-words-impact-trafficking-survivors/

[23] Words Matter: Using Humanizing Language. (n.d.). The Fortune Society. https://fortunesociety.org/wordsmatter/

[24] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[25] Morgan-Daniel, J., Norton, H. F., Edwards, M. E., & Daley, M. (2024). Developing and conducting a language inclusivity assessment on a Health Science Library's website, Libguides, and signage. Journal of the Medical Library Association, 112(1), 48–54. https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2024.169

[26] Hobaica, S., & Kwon, P. (2017). "This Is How You Hetero:" Sexual Minorities in Heteronormative Sex Education. American Journal of Sexuality Education, 12(4), 423–450. https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2017.1399491

[27] Allsop, Y., Black, A., Tilak, S., & Anderman, E. M. (2024). Saying gay: Young adolescents' reported benefits of LGBTQ+ inclusive sexual health education. RMLE Online, 47(5), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/19404476.2024.2340005

[28] Messner, L. (2021, August 18). Why and How to Communicate with Bias-Free, Inclusive Language. Harris & Associates. https://www.weareharris.com/resources/blog/why-and-how-to-communicate-with-bias-free-inclusive-language/

[29] (Allsop, et al. 2024.)

[30] (Tran, et al. 2018.)

[31] (Messner. 2021.)

[32] (Moran. 2023.)

[33] (Morgan-Daniel, et al. 2024.)

[34] (Morgan-Daniel, et al. 2024.)

[35] Carey, M. L., & Hewitt, A. A. (2022, April). Guide to inclusive language: Race and Ethnicity. Washington DC; Mayor's Office of Racial Equity. https://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/page_content/attachments/OHR_ORE_RacialEquity_ILG_April2023.pdf

[36] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[37] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[38] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[39] American Psychological Association. (2023). Inclusive language guide (2nd ed.). https://www.apa.org/about/apa/ equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines.pdf

[40] (Messner. 2021.)

[41] Aorinka. (2024, March 5). What is language bias and how to avoid it?. Linguise. https://www.linguise.com/blog/guide/what-is-language-bias-and-how-to-avoid-it/

[42] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[43] Brown, L. (2011, August 4). Identity-first language. Autistic Self Advocacy Network. https://autisticadvocacy.org/about-asan/identity-first-language/

[44] (Brown, L. 2011.)

[45] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[46] UN Geneva. (2021, January). Disability-inclusive language guidelines. The United Nations Office at Geneva. https://www.ungeneva.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/Disability-Inclusive-Language-Guidelines.pdf

[47] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[48] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[49] Kaba, M., Spade, D., & Dector, H. (2020, October 13). What is Accountability?. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZuJ55iGI14

[50] University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2024). Inclusive Communications Guide. University Communications. https://uc.wisc.edu/inclusive-communications-guide/

[51] Mingus, M. (2019, December 18). The four parts of Accountability & How to give a genuine apology. Leaving Evidence. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2019/12/18/how-to-give-a-good-apology-part-1-the-four-parts-of-accountability/

[52] (Kaba, et al. 2020.)

[53] (Mingus. 2019.)

[54] (Hobaica, et al. 2017.)

[55] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[56] The Adultification of Black Children. (2023, January 19). Center for Policing Equity. https://policingequity.org/resources/blog/the-adultification-of-black-children

[57] ACS Inclusivity Style Guide: Body size. American Chemical Society. (n.d.). https://www.acs.org/about/diversity/inclusivity-style-guide/body-size.html

[58] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[59] Phillips, K. W. (2014). How Diversity Works. Scientific American, 311(4), 42–47. https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican1014-42

[60] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[61] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[62] Oxford Languages. (n.d.). Parallelism. In Oxford English Dictionary. Retrieved August 9, 2024. https://www.oed.com/

[63] University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2024). Inclusive Communications Guide. University Communications. https://uc.wisc.edu/inclusive-communications-guide/

[64] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[65] Rotman, I. (2020). A Quick & Easy Guide to Consent. Limerence Press, an imprint of Oni-Lion Forge Publishing Group, LLC.

[66] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). Plain language. National Institutes of Health. https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/plain-language/

[67] (Rotman. 2020.)

[68] (Moran. 2023.)

[69] (University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2024.)

[70] (Moran. 2023.)

[71] (American Chemical Society. n.d.)

[72] Harrison, D. (2018, September 27). The Daily Realities of Being Fat, Black, and Queer in Public Spaces. Them. https://www.them.us/story/fat-black-queer-public-spaces

[73] (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. n.d.)

[74] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[75] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[76] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[77] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[78] (Brown. 2011.)

[79] Bottema-Beutel, K., Kapp, S. K., Lester, J. N., Sasson, N. J., & Hand, B. N. (2021). Avoiding ableist language: Suggestions for autism researchers. Autism in Adulthood, 3(1), 18–29. https://doi.org/10.1089/aut.2020.0014

[80] American Psychological Association. (2015). Choosing words for talking about disability. American Psychological Association. https://www.apa.org/pi/disability/resources/choosing-words

[81] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[82] University of Maryland, Baltimore County. (n.d.). Inclusive and affirming language. UMBC. https://styleguide.umbc.edu/inclusive-language/

[83] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[84] (UN Geneva. 2021.)

[85] (Morgan-Daniel. 2024.)

[86] (Moran. 2023.)

[87] (Morgan-Daniel. 2024.)

[88] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[89] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[90] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[91] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[92] (Aorinka. 2024.)

[93] (UN Geneva. 2021.)

[94] (American Chemical Society. n.d.)

[95] (Bottema-Beutel. 2021.)

[96] (American Psychological Association. 2015.)

[97] (University of Maryland, Baltimore County. n.d.)

[98] Morrison, S. (2023, December 27). Don't call me "old": Avoiding ageism when writing about aging. National Institute on Aging. June 14, 2024, https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/blog/2023/12/dont-call-me-old-avoiding-ageism-when-writing-about-aging

[99] Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. (2021, January 1). Guidelines for Inclusive Language. Toronto. https://www.cmcc.ca/about-cmcc/documents/public-policies/guidelines-for-inclusive-language.pdf

[100] Colorado State University. (2023, May 24). Inclusive language. Student Disability Center. https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/inclusive-language/

[101] National Center on Disability and Journalism. (2021, August). Disability Language Style Guide. NCDJ. https://ncdj.org/style-guide/

[102] Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). (2024, July 1). UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines. Geneva. https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/2024-terminology-guidelines_en.pdf

[103] Van Vleck, M. (2024). "Kids these days:" Why youth-directed ageism is an issue for everyone. Washington University in St. Louis Institute for Public Health. June 20, 2024, https://publichealth.wustl.edu/kids-these-days-why-youth-directed-ageism-is-an-issue-for-everyone/

[104] de la Fuente-Núñez, V., Cohn-Schwartz, E., Roy, S., & Ayalon, L. (2021). Scoping Review on Ageism against Younger Populations. International journal of environmental research and public health, 18(8), 3988. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18083988

[105] (Morrison. 2023.)

[106] (Van Vleck. 2024.)

[107] (Morgan-Daniel. 2024.)

[108] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[109] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[110] (Morrison. 2023.)

[111] (Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. 2021.)

[112] (Van Vleck. 2024.)

[113] (de la Fuente-Núñez, et al. 2021)

[114] Desiderio, G., Garrido, M., Williams, M., Sufrinko, N. (2020). Young parents logic model. Baltimore: Healthy Teen Network. www.healthyteennetwork.org/resources/young-parents-logic-model/

[115] Changing the Narrative: Ending Ageism Together. (n.d.). Style guidelines for avoiding ageist language. Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. https://cnpea.ca/images/guidelines-for-age-inclusive-communication.pdf

[116] Bowman, C., & Lim, W. M. (2021). How to Avoid Ageist Language in Aging Research? An Overview and Guidelines. Activities, Adaptation & Aging, 45(4), 269–275. https://doi.org/10.1080/01924788.2021.1992712

[117] Chastain, R. (2021, November 3). Inclusive Language For Higher-Weight People. Weight and Healthcare. July 10, 2024, https://weightandhealthcare.substack.com/p/inclusive-language-for-higher-weight

[118] (Harrison. 2018.)

[119] Lavendier, D. M. (2020). Fat in the Academy: Reimagining the Experience of the Fat Academic (thesis). Doctoral Dissertations. University of New Hampshire. https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3540&context=dissertation

[120] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[121] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[122] (Lavendier. 2020.)

[123] University of Bristol. (2022, November 28). Inclusive writing: Religion, faith and belief. Style guides. https://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/writing/inclusive/religion-faith-belief/

[124] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[125] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[126] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[127] (American Chemical Society. n.d.)

[128] (Harrison. 2018.)

[129] (Chastain. 2021.)

[130] (Lavendier. 2020.)

[131] (University of Bristol. 2022.)

[132] Pratt Institute Libraries. (2023, October 27). Inclusive language: Religion. Religion - Inclusive Language. https://libguides.pratt.edu/inclusive-language

[133] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[134] (University of Maryland, Baltimore County. n.d.)

[135] (UNAIDS. 2024.)

[136] Boring, J. (2023, May 26). Addressing linguistic bias to create a culturally responsive world language classroom. Carnegie Learning. https://www.carnegielearning.com/blog/addressing-linguistic-bias-language-classroom/

[137] (University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2024.)

[138] (University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2024.)

[139] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[140] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[141] (Aorinka. 2024.)

[142] (Pratt Institute Libraries. 2023.)

[143] (Boring. 2023.)

[144] GLAAD. (2023, July 27). GLAAD Media Reference Guide. GLAAD. https://glaad.org/reference/

[145] Goh, E. (2023, September 19). What is the Difference Between Plain Language and Inclusive Language? Content Science Review. https://review.content-science.com/what-is-the-difference-between-plain-language-and-inclusive-language/

[146] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[147] (Moran. 2023.)

[148] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[149] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[150] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[151] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[152] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[153] (Aorinka. 2024.)

[154] (Goh. 2023.)

[155] Race and National Origin. (2022, August 11). National Institutes of Health (NIH). https://www.nih.gov/nih-style-guide/race-national-origin

[156] (Moran. 2023.)

[157] (Moran. 2023.)

[158] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[159] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[160] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[161] (University of Maryland, Baltimore County. n.d.)

[162] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[163] Giefer, L. (2022, February 15). A guide to indigenous land acknowledgment. Native Governance Center. https://nativegov.org/news/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/

[164] Giefer, L. (2023, March 31). Voluntary land taxes. Native Governance Center. https://nativegov.org/news/voluntary-land-taxes/

[165] Solid Ground. (2024, March 20). Labor acknowledgement. Solid Ground. https://www.solid-ground.org/our-impact/labor-acknowledgement/

[166] Stewart, T. "TJ." (2021, March 1). On labor acknowledgements and honoring the sacrifice of Black Americans. Diverse: Issues in Higher Education. https://www.diverseeducation.com/demographics/african-american/article/15108677/on-labor-acknowledgements-and-honoring-the-sacrifice-of-black-americans

[167] Batra Kashyap, M. (2021). "Illegal" vs. "Undocumented": A NWIRP Board Member's Perspective. Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. June 24, 2024, https://www.nwirp.org/illegal-vs-undocumented-a-nwirp-board-members-perspective/

[168] (Cooper. 2016.)

[169] (Carey. 2022.)

[170] (Moran. 2023.)

[171] (Morgan-Daniel. 2024.)

[172] (Tran, et al. 2018.)

[173] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[174] (University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2024.)

[175] (American Psychological Association. 2022.)

[176] (Crenshaw. 1991.)

[177] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[178] (Phillips. 2014.)

[179] (Harrison. 2018.)

[180] (Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. 2021.)

[181] (Batra Kashyap. 2021.)

[182] Bula, J. L., Campos, H. J., Marrero, P., Pelliccia, L., & Rice, S. (2016, July 21). Guide to trauma-informed sex education. Cardea Services. https://cardeaservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Guide_to_Trauma_Informed_Sex_Education_FINAL.pdf

[183] (Polaris Project. 2023.)

[184] (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2023.)

[185] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[186] Kendall. (2022, April 1). STI vs STD - what's the difference? Planned Parenthood. https://www.plannedparenthood.org/blog/sti-vs-std-whats-the-difference

[187] Stern, S. W. (2019, July 21). America's forgotten mass imprisonment of women believed to be sexually immoral. History.com. https://www.history.com/news/chamberlain-kahn-act-std-venereal-disease-imprisonment-women

[188] Cadena, M., Rivera, R. Z., Esparza, T., & Cadena, D. (2016). Dismantling teen pregnancy prevention. Young Women United. https://forwomen.org/resources/dismantling-teen-pregnancy-prevention/

[189] (Cadena, et al. 2016.)

[190] Mass Alliance on Teen Pregnancy. (2017, June 13). Breaking down the stigma surrounding teen pregnancy. Medium. https://medium.com/@mateenpregnancy/breaking-down-the-stigma-surrounding-teen-pregnancy-7b582234679f

[191] NoTeenShame. (n.d.). About. NoTeenShame. https://www.noteenshame.com/about

[192] (Mass Alliance on Teen Pregnancy. 2017.)

[193] (NoTeenShame. n.d.)

[194] (Mass Alliance on Teen Pregnancy. 2017.)

[195] (NoTeenShame. n.d.)
 Send Shame Walking! Applying a Sex Positive Lens to Health Class Facilitation. Baltimore; U Choose. https://www.healthyteennetwork.org/resources/u-choose-sex-positive-lens-health-class/

[196] Rahim, M., & Patton, R. (2015). The association between shame and substance use in young people: a systematic review. PeerJ, 3, e737. https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.737

[197] Weiss, K. G. (2010). Too ashamed to report: Deconstructing the shame of sexual victimization. Feminist Criminology, 5(3), 286–310. https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085110376343

[198] (Messner. 2021.)

[199] (Tran, et al. 2018.)

[200] (Polaris Project. 2023.)

[201] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[202] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[203] (Bottema-Beutel. 2021.)

[204] (UNAIDS. 2024.)

[205] (Desiderio, et al. 2020.)

[206] Richards, T., Dang-Mertz, T., & Graham, E. (2022). Language bias in child welfare: Approaches to identifying and studying biased language to advance equitable child welfare practice. Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/language-bias.pdf

[207] World Health Organization. (2024). Gender and Health. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender

[208] National Center on Disability and Journalism. (2021, August). Disability Language Style Guide. NCDJ. https://ncdj.org/style-guide/

[209] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[210] World Health Organization. (2006). Sexual health. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/sexual-health

[211] (World Health Organization. 2024.)

[212] (World Health Organization. 2006.)

[213] (GLAAD. 2023.)

[214] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[215] Pronouns.org. (n.d.). How do I use your pronouns correctly?. Resources on Personal Pronouns. https://pronouns.org/how

[216] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[217] (University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2024.)

[218] (University of Maryland, Baltimore County. n.d.)

[219] (Moran. 2023.)

[220] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[221] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[222] (Allsop, et al. 2024.)

[223] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[224] (Rotman. 2020.)

[225] (University of Maryland, Baltimore County. n.d.)

[226] (UNAIDS. 2024.)

[227] (Desiderio, et al. 2020.)

[228] (GLAAD. 2023.)

[229] (Richards, et al. 2022.)

[230] (World Health Organization. 2024.)

[231] (Pronouns.org. n.d.)

[232] Hadland, S. E., Yehia, B. R., & Makadon, H. J. (2016). Caring for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth in inclusive and affirmative environments. Pediatric Clinics of North America, 63(6), 955–969. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pcl.2016.07.001

[233] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[234] (Hobaica, et al. 2017.)

[235] (GLAAD. 2023.)

[236] (Moran. 2023.)

[237] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[238] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[239] (Allsop, et al. 2024.)

[240] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[241] (Rotman. 2020.)

[242] (UNAIDS. 2024.)

[243] (Desiderio, et al. 2020.)

[244] (GLAAD. 2023.) (GLAAD. 2023.)

[245] (Richards, et al. 2022.)

[246] (World Health Organization. 2006.)

[247] (Hadland, et al. 2016.)

[248] (World Health Organization. 2024.)

[249] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[250] (Desiderio, et al. 2020.)

[251] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[252] History of Opportunity Youth. (n.d.). Opportunity Youth. https://action-lab.org/opportunity-youth/video-page/

[253] (Tran, et al. 2018.)

[254] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[255] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[256] (American Psychological Association. 2023.)

[257] (Phillips. 2014.)

[258] (Desiderio, et al. 2020.)

[259] (Goh. 2023.)

[260] (World Health Organization. 2024.)

[261] Kamenetz, A. (2015, April 28). Delinquent. Dropout. At-Risk. When Words Become Labels. NPR.org. https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/04/28/399949478/delinquent-dropout-at-risk-whats-in-a-name

[262] Casey Family Programs. (2022, December 1). Language in child welfare. Casey Family Programs. https://www.casey.org/use-of-language/

[263] (Tran, et al. 2018.)

[264] (Crenshaw. 1991.)

[265] Crime and incarceration. (2022). Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Communications. https://c4disc.pubpub.org/pub/qb4frlzp/release/1

[266] (Moran. 2023.)

[267] (Tran, et al. 2018.)

[268] (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2023.)

[269] (Polaris Project. 2023.)

[270] (The Fortune Society. n.d.)

[271] (American Academy of Pediatrics. 2021.)

[272] (Thomas, et al. 2016.)

[273] (UNAIDS. 2024.)
[274] (Bula, et al. 2016.)
[275] (World Health Organization. 2024.)
[276] (Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Communications. 2022.)
[277] NCHS Team. (2023, August 17). Creating a positive narrative around foster care. NCHS. https://blog.nchs.org/foster-care-language-words-matter
[278] (Opportunity Youth. n.d.)
[279] (Morgan-Daniel. 2024.)
[280] (Phillips. 2014.)
[281] (Messner. 2021.)
[282] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[283] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[284] (Castree, et al. 2013.)
[285] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[286] (World Health Organization. 2024.)
[287] (University of Maryland. 2022.)
[288] (Crenshaw. 1991.)
[289] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[290] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[291] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[292] (Oxford Languages. n.d.)
[293] (World Health Organization. 2006.)
[294] (Chilcoat. 2018.)
[295] (World Health Organization. 2006.)