

Vocabulary Cheat Sheet

Identity-First Language (IFL): Identity-first language is language that leads with a person's identity or diagnosis (i.e. disabled person, Autistic teen). Generally preferred by Autistic, Deaf and Blind communities, and much of the disability community.

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP): A plan or program that is put in place to ensure that a student with disabilities receives specialized instruction and related services provided by the school district.

Masking: Autistic masking is a conscious or unconscious changing of natural Autistic behaviors that may be viewed as socially unacceptable or awkward. Autistic people may feel the need to appear more neurotypical in order to fit in.

Neurodivergent: Describes an individual who thinks, behaves, and learns differently to what is typical in society. Includes diagnoses/identities such as Autism, ADHD, depression, anxiety, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, epilepsy, PTSD, Down Syndrome, among MANY others.

Neurodiverse: Describes a group of people that includes a variety of different neurotypes (i.e. a neurodiverse group of individuals may include some who are Autistic, some who are bipolar and some who are neurotypical).

Neurodiversity Movement: The neurodiversity movement/framework/paradigm emphasizes a non-pathologizing way to think about and talk about disability. It moves away from the medical model of disability (which states that disability is caused by an impairment or deficiency in an individual) and toward a social model of disability (in which disability occurs because of societal barriers).

Person-First Language (PFL): Language that puts a person before their diagnosis (i.e. person with a disability). Generally preferred by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.