



LANGUAGE

MATTERS[®]

Medication for Addiction Treatment & Electronic Referrals



Stigmatizing language can isolate individuals with substance use disorder. Using person-first language helps avoid placing blame, shame, or stigma on the individual.

SAY THIS

NOT THAT

Person who uses drugs

Drug user

Person with substance use disorder

Addict

Abstinent

Clean

Person in recovery

Former addict

Person who injects drugs

Injecting drug user

Poisoned

Overdosed

Positive drug screen

Dirty drug screen

Substance use

Abuse

Baby born with an opioid dependency

Addicted baby