

The Prospect

আমরা সম্ভাবনার খোঁজ দেই

Monthly Newsletter

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Autism Acceptance and Advocacy

Thoughtful Vocabulary

The language we use to describe ourselves and others can be extremely powerful. The words we use have the potential to shape how we think of others and how others think of us. While there is no single correct vocabulary surrounding autism, two common philosophies tend to be most prevalent:

- Person-first language. Person-first language stems from the idea that we are all people first and foremost, regardless of disability or other aspects of our identity. Common phrases that align with this philosophy include "I am a person with autism" or "I am a person who has autism." The key here is that autism is secondary to the person.



Top 3 News

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Person-first language



"I am a person with autism"

2

Understanding specific risks

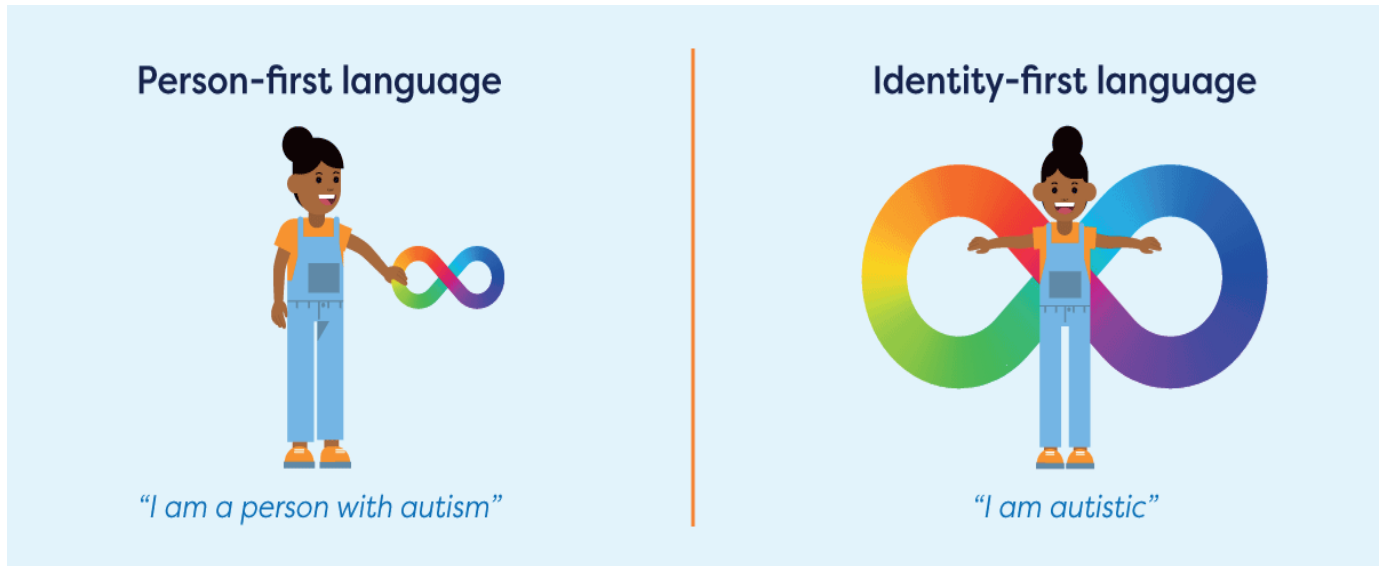


3

Process to Manage Certified Residential



- Identity-first language. Identity-first language embodies the idea that autism and disability are integral to a person's very identity; it suggests we cannot separate disability from self. Common phrases that align with this philosophy include "I am autistic" or "I am an autistic person."



It is important to respect and acknowledge a person's preferred vocabulary because no two people identify the exact same way. Consider these questions as you're practicing thoughtful approaches to individual interactions:

- How does this person identify? What language do they use to describe themselves?
- Have I asked what this person prefers? Do they have a preference?
- If I were in their shoes, what would I prefer? Does that align with their preferences?

Creating a safe and secure home for children with autism means adapting the safety strategies to fit their unique needs.

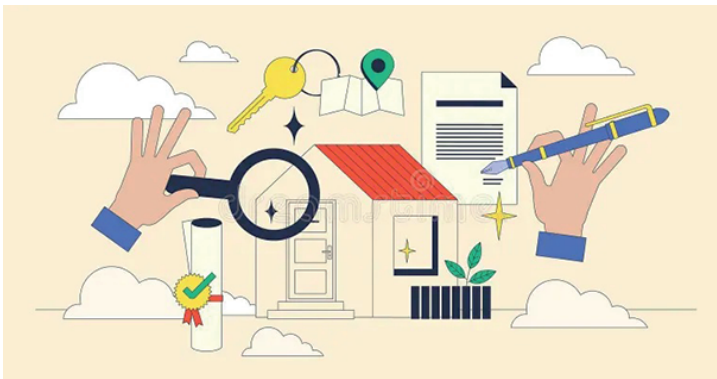
It's key to figure out what specific things to watch out for with your child. Do they tend to sneak off or run away? Are they fascinated by fire? Do they often try to eat things that aren't food? By understanding your child's specific safety challenges, you can reduce the risks and teach them about safety in a way that will help them learn.

Understanding specific risks

Autistic children might not always perceive danger in the same way other children do, especially if they are deeply engrossed in their activities or have sensory-seeking tendencies. This can lead them to interact unsafely with objects in their environment. Here are some common risks that need addressing:



- Access to hazardous items: Medications, chemicals, and sharp objects like scissors and knives should be stored securely and out of reach.
- Fire safety: It's important to teach what fire hazards are (like matches, lighters, and stoves) and what to do in case of a fire. This includes understanding the sound of smoke alarms and knowing evacuation routes.



- Furniture-related injuries: Children might climb furniture to reach something, resulting in falls or the furniture tipping over. Secure furniture to the wall and store appealing items out of sight.
- Wandering/Absconding: Some children with autism may wander or abscond from safety without realizing the dangers. Secure exits and possibly set alarms to alert you if doors or windows are opened.

Updated Process to Manage Certified Residential Opportunities (CRO)



OPWDD is committed to supporting people to live in a home of their choice where they can be part of their community. Part of upholding that commitment is identifying residential opportunities as soon as they become available and matching those opportunities with people who need the support of certified residential services, particularly those with the most immediate needs.

To provide consistency and to enhance efficiency in this process, OPWDD is launching a multiple stage initiative to amend the process. As part of the first stage of this work, we are proud to release an Administrative Directive Memorandum (ADM) describing how the agency will manage Certified Residential Opportunities going forward. This ADM supports the New York State regulation of OPWDD Certified Residential Opportunities which became effective in June 2023 and is focused on reducing the administrative burden historically associated with this process, resulting in a more person-centered experience for people and for providers.

This new ADM is one part of OPWDD's short-term housing strategy outlined in the 2024 Strategic Plan Annual Report. It describes how OPWDD makes certified housing opportunities available to those who qualify for them by working in partnership with service providers and Care Coordination Organizations to connect people with the least restrictive certified housing appropriate to meet their needs.



The ADM will support the Certified Residential Opportunities process and clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of OPWDD staff, the residential provider agencies and Care Managers and specifically indicates how:

- Care Managers must fully explore the least restrictive housing that might be right for each person;
- OPWDD determines if the person requesting housing needs the support of a certified home;
- Opportunities for certified housing are made available first for those in greatest need;
- The person requesting certified housing (and their family or representatives) must be supported to make informed choices and have their personal and cultural needs reflected in their person-centered planning; and
- OPWDD assigns a priority level for each person based on things like the care a person needs because of their developmental disability, the availability of support from their family and friends and the risk of harm in their current home.

We recognize the importance of hearing from the public when creating guidance that will impact their lives, which is why this ADM was developed through a public comment process and with the input of a workgroup representing many perspectives. This final version represents changes made in response to that collaborative process.



Meet our Sponsors



Autism Society Habilitation Organization (ASHO) was established to assist South Asian communities – especially children and youth – with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

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খবর বলে যাই



You are still in control of your life and there are many ways to improve your independence, sense of empowerment, and outlook. No matter your disability, it's entirely possible to overcome the challenges you face and enjoy a full and fulfilling life.



Rubaiya Rahman, Editor

Editorial Note

ASHO regularly works with other organizations with a focus on improving quality of life and ensuring full access in society for the population with autism. We recognize and strongly believe that disability need not be a tragedy or a misfortune and that it should create a barrier to full participation in society.

It is time to increase our activism. We need more representation. It is a civil rights issue. It is a human rights issue. And we will fight for our children's rights.



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