

Language Matters

Language is powerful – especially when talking about substance use
Stigmatizing Language perpetuates negative perceptions

“ Person first” language focuses on the person, not the disorder

When Discussing Addictions...

Avoid These Terms:

Addict, user, drug abuser,
junkie

Addicted baby

Opioid abuse or opioid
dependence

Problem

Habit

Clean or dirty urine test

Opioid substitution or
replacement therapy

Relapse

Treatment failure

Being clean

Use These Instead :

Person/Patient with
opioid use disorder or
opioid addiction

Baby born with neonatal
abstinence syndrome

Opioid use disorder

Disease

Drug addiction

Negative or positive urine drug
test

Opioid agonist treatment
Medication for Addiction
Treatment

Return to use/ Setback

Treatment attempt

Being in remission or recovery