

WORDS MATTER

How we talk about drug and alcohol use impacts the way people are treated in our society. The words we use can impact the quality of health care people receive and can even increase risk of death.

SAY THIS...

...INSTEAD OF THIS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person with a substance use disorder • Person with addiction • Person who uses drugs • Person who misuses alcohol/engages in unhealthy/hazardous alcohol use • Person's name 	Addict, user, drug abuser, junkie, crackhead, tweaker, pill-popper, alcoholic, drunk
For alcohol: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risky or unhealthy alcohol use For prescription medications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misuse, used other than prescribed For illicit drugs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 	Abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication for addiction treatment (MAT) • Treatment • Medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) • Opioid agonist therapy (OAT) • Medication for a substance use disorder 	Medication-assisted treatment (MAT), replacement or substitution therapy
For toxicology results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive test • Unexpected result Non-test related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person who uses drugs 	Dirty
For toxicology results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative test • Expected result Non-test related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person in remission or recovery • Person abstinent from alcohol or drugs • Person not drinking or taking drugs • Person not currently or actively using drugs or alcohol 	Clean
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby born with Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal or Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome • Newborn exposed to substances 	Addicted baby, Crack baby