Golden Rules

As a general rule language, particularly in this field, changes frequently. It can be difficult to remember all of the dos and don'ts.

To make it easier we've pulled together our 'Golden Rules'.

DO... SAY AUTISTIC

Use 'autistic' not 'has autism'. Also avoid using ASC/ASD and Asperger's Syndrome.

"Autism is not a removable condition, it is central to your being. It's an important aspect of your identity, as much your race gender, job etc."

DON'T... USE FUNCTIONING LABELS

Functioning labels are stigmatising and create assumptions. 'High' functioning implies less need and 'low' functioning presumes a lack of competency.

DO... ADVOCATE ONE VOICE

Avoid anything that conveys a sense of 'us' and 'them'

When we speak about autistic people we say 'those of us who are autistic'

DON'T... SAY LIVING WITH AUTISM

Or People with autism / born with autism.

"Autism isn't a dog that lives with me, or a twin who was born alongside me... it's who I am"



DO... TALK ABOUT HAVING NEURODIVERSITY



Neurodiversity isn't another word for autism. We all fall under a banner of neurodiversity. It's about individuals having different brains. Within that though, some of us have typical neurology and others are Neurodivergent in different ways.

DON'T... CONVEY PITY

Or suggest that autism is inherently negative.

No using terms like 'suffers from', and avoid talk of deficits.

Never say definitives – ie. Autistic people can't.