

The Right Words

I'd like you to choose carefully, the words you might say
When you see my baby in the general day-to-day.

He is a darling baby boy who happens to have Down's syndrome
The result of a small chemical accident and an extra chromosome.

But don't call him 'Downs Baby', 'A Downs' or 'Downs Boy',
It makes him sound like a different breed, an animal or stuffed toy!

And please don't make judgements like a book by its cover,
Like all other children, he's very different from any other,
Don't offer some generalised statement that's outdated and might go...
'He'll be so loving and cuddly'.

How on earth do you know?!

It might not be easy to say words that don't offend,
So just be honest and considerate so together we can mend
Society's choice of words – because we need to emphasise that
Your words do make a difference to the way we feel inside.

So let's get it right.
He is a baby **WITH** Downs.
Not a 'Downs baby'.
Remember, other way round!!

He's a human, like you, with just a little bit more
And if we were all the same, wouldn't life be a bore?

Do please share this poem with others that you know
So down the road to 'thoughtful language', we all can humbly go.

And if you're a professional or involved in any way,
You're the forefront of our campaign.
Get it right.

WATCH WHAT YOU SAY!

Adele Rees 2006