

# Changing labels

Label	Dates in use (in England unless otherwise stated)	Origin
<i>Mongol (Mong)</i>	1862–1950s	Dr John Langdon Down identified Down's Syndrome, and classified people with DS as a 'Mongolian' type of 'idiot'
<i>Defective</i>	1880–1959	Cross Commission 1886 1913 Mental Deficiency Act (MD Act) repealed in 1959
<i>Idiot</i>	1880–1959	Idiots Act (1886) Mental Deficiency Act 1913
<i>Imbecile</i>	1913–1959	MD Act 1913 - 1959
<i>Feeble-minded</i>	1913–1959	MD Act 1913-1959
<i>Moral defective/ imbecile</i>	1913–1930s	MD Act 1913, dropped out of use in 1930s
<i>Dull</i>		First recorded c. 1886
<i>Moron</i>	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> century	A medical term denoting an adult with a mental age of about 8–12): from Greek mōron, neuter of mōros 'foolish'.
<i>Cretin</i>	18th century	Refers to medical condition (due to thyroid deficiency) common in parts of Switzerland
<i>Backward</i>	1940s - 1970	National Association for Parents of Backward Children (later Mencap)
<i>Ineducable</i>	1944–1971	1944 Education Act excluded children with IQ below 50 from school

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<i>Spastic</i>	In use since eighteenth century, became term of abuse in 1970s	Person with Cerebral Palsy, medical condition, which affects control of limbs
<i>Sub normal/severely SN</i>	1959–1971	Mental Health Act 1959
<i>Mentally handicapped</i>	1960s–1980s	Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped 1971
<i>People with Mental Handicap</i>	1980s	Gradually replaced ‘mentally handicapped’ in 1980s
<i>‘Joey’</i>	1977 onwards	Joey Deacon lived in a mental handicap hospital and wrote his life story with help from friends. After he appeared on Blue Peter in 1981, the word ‘joey’ was widely used as an insult
<i>Special Needs</i>	1978–today	Warnock Report 1978
<i>People with learning disabilities</i>	1990–today	Adopted by Government c. 1990, used in ‘Valuing People’ (2001), ‘Valuing People Now’ (2009)
<i>People with learning difficulties</i>	1980s–today	Self advocates’ preferred term
<i>Retarded/retards</i>	1940s to c.2000	Official term used in USA until replaced by intellectual disability in early C21
<i>People with intellectual disabilities</i>	2000 onwards	Australia, NZ, US, Canada, some UK