DCFPI Style Guide for Inclusive Language

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Introduction
This style guide is intended to provide guidelines for ways that we can employ inclusive language and integrate a racial equity lens in our writing. However, this document is not intended to be an end-all-be-all; rather, it is a place to start thinking about the ways we write.

While this style guide has guidelines for inclusive writing, we should always use the terms preferred by affected populations, when we know them. If the guidelines provided here are contrary to what you, as an expert in your field, know to be the correct or appropriate terminology, you should continue to use the terms that are correct for your work.

Central Principles
1. People-First Language

The language we use can shape people’s perceptions of others and create ideological preconceptions. People-first language places personhood at the center and considers all other descriptive social identities that one holds as secondary and non-essential. Defining a group by its condition - 'disabled people' vs. 'people with disabilities' or 'the homeless' vs. 'people experiencing homelessness' - places an undue focus on the condition and can be stigmatizing. By focusing on the person rather than the condition, we can minimize generalizations and stereotypes.

2. Empowering Language

Our work and writing about poverty should always seek to frame issues with an agency lens, rather than depicting people living in poverty as helpless. We should always maintain affected people as the agents in their own story, and should not be positioning ourselves, as advocates and nonprofit employees, as saviors for people living in poverty.

3. Self-Identification

Given how labels are often used to marginalize minorities and others who deviate from the “mainstream,” self-identification can be seen as an act of resistance. Allowing people to self-identify can help validate experiences, cultures, and struggles. In fact, a person’s chosen labels can serve as a quick and easy way of explaining their lived experience within a community, and progressive writing should aim, whenever possible, to include language which respects and reflects how people choose to talk about themselves. For instance, referring to someone as “queer” instead of as “gay,” if that is how they identify.

4. Proper Nouns

Similar to the logic behind self-identification, using the names and proper nouns used for and by people, places, and organizations conveys respect, understanding, and acceptance. A conversational tone may sometimes create confusion, and the overuse of common nouns, pronouns, and words such as “it”, “this”, and “that” may leave readers unsure as to what is being talked about. Such as: “Black residents are being pushed out” instead of “they are being pushed out.”

5. Active Voice
An active voice puts the agent of the sentence in the role of performing an action and results in more dynamic writing. Passive sentences, on the other hand, tend to be more awkward, prolix, and vague. Moreover, an active voice allows us to directly name perpetrators of violence and harm, while also providing writers an opportunity to counter implicit biases towards status quo systems of power by explicitly identifying and calling out the actors of oppression and harm, whether they are people, cultures, or institutions. For example, “Donny Drumpf did not file his tax returns” (active voice) vs. “The tax returns were not filed by Donny Drumpf” (passive voice).

6. Poverty & Economic Justice
Focus on how barriers impede people’s efforts to thrive. Describe the economy as being out of balance, and something we can fix. Do not portray low-income people as powerless. See “Empowering Language” section.

7. Talking About Race and Ethnicity
When talking about specific issues and poverty more generally at the systemic level, it’s crucial that we explicitly incorporate a race lens. Examining the root causes and mechanisms of patterns that we still see today requires that we examine and name the role of race in our society. By intentionally incorporating and naming race in our work, we can understand the relationship between historical context and the way things are today, which better equips us to move towards addressing these deeply entrenched inequalities and biases. For instance: instead of “Incomes in the Fakeville fell by an average of 3 percent” try “Black incomes fell by an average of 12 percent, Latinx incomes by 4 percent, while white incomes rose by 13 percent. This reflects decades of racist hiring practices.”

8. Representation/Stock photos
Things to consider when using stock photos: Try to strike a balance between intentionally including people of color in images, and also being conscious of the context and not reinforcing stereotypes, or equating poverty with people of color. It’s also important to show people of color in leadership roles (ex: teachers), and not just reinforcing poverty imagery.

Guidelines for Talking About Race and Poverty
Talking About Poverty With Empowering Language
- Place the humanity and leadership of affected communities at the center
- Emphasize our shared humanity, and talk about the things that can impact all of us (ex: raising children, caring for sick relatives, paying bills, etc.)
- Use survivor rather than victim language
- Frame poverty as a collective/ community issue, rather than an individual issue
  - Ex: “our community is stronger when…”
  - Avoid game-based metaphors (“leveling the playing field”)—this suggests winners and losers
  - Instead, emphasize the common good, that we’re stronger together, and we should share the “ladder of opportunity,” rather than pulling it up behind us
Race

Specific Recommendations:

- Use a multiracial lens, and consider all communities of color
- Avoid stereotypes, and be aware of how your own biases might impact how you see or portray a situation
- Capitalize Black, since this is how most Black people identify—when referring to cultures, ethnicities, and groups of people, names are often capitalized to reflect reality and respect.
- Do not capitalize white, as “white” and whiteness are not an identity, but rather a social construct that serves to reinforce power structures
- “People of color” can be used as a collective term for non-white people; this is preferable to saying “minorities” and is used as an inclusive and unifying frame across different non-white racial groups to address racial inequities. It is not always appropriate to use this catch-all (see “Crunching numbers with a racial equity lens” below).
- Generally use Black, rather than African American, unless this is the preferred language in a specific situation
- Use Latinx (pronounced "La-TEEN-ex"), rather than Latino, Latina, or Latin@. This is a gender-inclusive way to refer to people of Latin American descent.

Crunching Numbers With a Racial Equity Lens:

- Whenever possible, disaggregate by race and/or ethnicity. It’s important to illustrate how people of color are disproportionately affected by economic inequality (which of course is no accident). Depending on the source data, it may not be possible to disaggregate due to sample size. If this is the case, note in an endnote.
- One thing to be aware of is that many data sources group together populations that many consider to be distinct identities, and that there are substantial variations in economic well-being within groups.
- Remember that numbers on racial inequity always need context. Don’t display numbers on the racial achievement gap in schools, for instance, without talking about the opportunity gap too. Otherwise,
there is a risk that some would conclude that difference is “natural”, instead of a result of structural racism.

**Issue Areas**

**Neighborhoods & Communities**

1. **Gentrification**

   Gentrification has two components: investment and displacement. The former is overwhelmingly in service of attracting or serving new, wealthier, whiter residents. The latter is what happens when rising housing prices push out longtime, lower-income residents, who are often people of color. The investment component of gentrification is not guaranteed to create equitable development or community revitalization—in fact, very deliberate policies are required to ensure that investment benefits, rather than crowds out, native residents. At the same time, residents of some neighborhoods in Wards 7 and 8 hope that more income diversity will kick off better amenities, retail options, and schools.

   When writing about gentrification, avoid using it as a buzzword. Center displacement in the conversation, and the need for policies that promote equitable development and preserve affordable housing. Displacement is something with real stakes that can be prevented through policy and action, whereas gentrification can sound like a “natural” and unavoidable market process.

2. **East of the river**

   While there’s some agreement that “East of the River” has been used as a pejorative label, many residents want to build pride in the name, and see the name issue as less important than actually getting the investments and change residents seek. Most thought leaders and organizations continue to use “east of the river”. Additionally, there are fears that “rebranding” plays into the hands of real estate interests.

   DCFPI should use “east of the river,” not capitalized, with variations (such as “east of the Anacostia River” “east of the Anacostia” “the part of DC/the city east of the Anacostia river,”) along with “Wards 7 and 8”. However, when addressing audiences who prefer East End or another term, use the preferred term.

3. **Low-income neighborhoods**

   Specific recommendations:
   
   - Acknowledge the historical roots, including public and private disinvestment, racist urban planning and housing policies, and racial inequity and income inequality more generally.
   - Acknowledge the many neighborhood resources, such as culture, arts, history, and social ties, that aren’t always reflected in data but are incredibly important to communities, and are a result of residents’ leadership and agency.
Disability
Use person-first language: people with disabilities. Note that the Deaf community typically prefers identity-first language, and a growing number people on the autism spectrum do as well. As always, use whichever term is preferred by the audience you’re speaking with.

Education
1. “At-Risk”
   a. Using "at-risk" to describe students who are considered more likely to fail academically can be highly stigmatizing for students and parents, and make them feel marginalized. It's an overly broad term that doesn't account for the complexity in students' situations. Additionally, labeling can serve to perpetuate stereotypes and reinforce negative treatment. However, for the time being, this is the technical term being used in the policy world to talk about funding for certain student populations. It's important that, when talking about "at-risk" funding, we acknowledge its problematic implications, and work to re-frame it with an equity lens.
   b. Specific Recommendations:
      • Put "at-risk" in quotations
      • Acknowledge that "at-risk" is a poorly named term (especially when talking to parents), and share the technical definition (students who receive "at-risk" funds are in a family participating in SNAP or TANF; involved in the foster care system, or over-age and under-credited)
      • Be specific about what the students are at-risk for (ex: at risk of academic failure)
      • Re-frame "at-risk" in terms of the school's risk of failing the students
      • Emphasize the importance of creating more equity of opportunity for students

2. Special education
   • When discussing special education, generally use person-first language. Preferred terminology of people involved sometimes differs, and it's always most important to defer to the preferred terminology, if you know what it is. For some people, the phrase “special needs” carries a negative connotation, that often conjures pity and marginalizes people; for others this is the preferred term. As always, use the terms preferred by the population, if possible.
   • Specific Recommendations:
Food
Employing a food sovereignty and access framework – realizing that food systems are fraught with inequalities and changing the way we view them. "Language that makes ownership and consumption tangible, that foregrounds the basic right to quality food, and that clearly connects food injustice to other confounding issues, such as race and class, are necessary to positively change today’s food systems." (PSG)

Specific recommendations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid</th>
<th>Instead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>Person with a disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicapped</td>
<td>Person who uses a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Needs</td>
<td>Students who receive special ed services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confined to a wheelchair</td>
<td>Children with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair bound</td>
<td>A child with [medical diagnosis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically/ intellectually challenged</td>
<td>Non-visible disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differently abled</td>
<td>Nondisabled/ neurotypical (to refer to people without a disability)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health
It's crucial that our discussions of health care use person-first language that supports dignity and autonomy, and not reinforce notions of stigma and pity that often surround discussions of health care. Avoid using words that reinforce stigma, and frame health in terms of interdependence (everyone has a stake) and ingenuity (innovative solutions) rather than individual problems. Be mindful that developmental, intellectual, and mental disabilities are distinct from each other, and from mental illness/ mental health disorders.
Specific Recommendations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid</th>
<th>Instead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare (no space)</td>
<td>Health care (with a space)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparities (can be framed as \text{“natural”})</td>
<td>Inequities (\text{systemic frame})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>Survivors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffering from</td>
<td>People with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse disorder</td>
<td>People living with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally ill</td>
<td>Has a history of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obamacare (\text{except when making intentional point})</td>
<td>Is being treated for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substance use disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has a mental illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person with a mental health illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mental health disorder (\text{preferred term in homeless services world})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Homelessness
Specific recommendations:
- Use person-first language: people experiencing homelessness, never homeless people or the homeless
- Clients, not recipients, when speaking about programs or agencies that provide services such as TANF, DHS, PSH, and DBH.

Jobs & Training
DC is still facing persistent racial disparities in unemployment rates and wage gaps. With this in mind, it’s crucial that we incorporate a racial equity lens into our work on Jobs & Training, and advocate for policies that will help to close these gaps. When writing about jobs and training, we should personalize workers by referring to them as people, parents, cooks, nurses, etc. and talk about the real-life implications of policies for workers and their families (ex: without paid family leave, people like…wouldn’t be able to…). This can often mean discussing how such policies intersect with other areas, like health, housing, etc.

Specific Recommendations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid</th>
<th>Instead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working poor</td>
<td>Hardworking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working hard to make ends meet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criminal Justice
Given that people of color are more likely to have police interaction, get arrested, convicted, etc., it’s important that we’re intentional about how we talk about criminal justice and system involvement, and that we not equate involvement with the criminal justice system with being a criminal. We can also take a restorative justice, rather than a retributive justice, lens when talking about criminal justice: this lens asserts
that “oppression underpins all other forms of harm, abuse, and assault. It acknowledges individual experiences and identities, and offers a process and language for resisting institutional and political systems of criminal justice.” (For more, see Progressive Style Guide).

Specific Recommendations:
- Use decriminalizing language
- Use language that supports accountability and healing, and promotes agency
- Avoid language and framing that echoes “war on crime” ideologies and practices, such as hyper policing and criminalization
- Separate the act or crime from the person; do not define a person based on their [accused] criminal act
- Jails vs. Prisons: Jails are where people are held waiting trial, and are often locally-run. Prisons are state or federal and are for people serving sentences, after they’ve been convicted

**Gender/Sex**
Progressive writing employs a feminist framework when talking about gender and sex. Feminism has contributed to new understandings of human experience — including a wide range of gender identities and a variety of forms of attraction and sexual orientation. When writing about such experiences, self identification is critical. Whenever possible, the author should try using the language that people choose to describe themselves. Moreover, the author should avoid reducing people to one aspect of who they are (a practice that is often caused by stigma or shame) and instead try to represent people’s complete lives as accurately as possible. Finally, the author should avoid using words that reinforce gender stereotypes and the gender binary.

Specific recommendations:
- Use "they" (rather than “his or her”) when unsure of someone's pronouns
- Be wary of language that suggests an innateness of characteristics
- Family/marital details are only relevant when talking about family or marriage. Don't describe women as "mother of three", etc.
- Consider using gender neutral terms when they are available and when their use does not alter the meaning of the sentence. ("Employees should read their documents carefully" vs. "the employee should read his documents carefully")
- When reporting on people working in the sex industry, identify them as individuals first, not by their occupation.
- Use parallel terms or terms of equal status and avoid terms that denote gender inferiority: “husband and wife, staff in the office,” not “man and wife, girls in the office.
- Use "same sex couple's marriage rights" or something similar instead of just "same sex marriage" (shorthand and not as accurate)
- Be respectful of in-group vs. out-group naming. Queer may be acceptable in-group terminology but it is not advisable to refer to someone as queer unless they have specifically told you that is how they identify
### Important Definitions/ Glossary
There are a lot of terms that are important to keep in mind for incorporating race, equity, and inclusion into our work. Here are just some of the ideas and principles that we should be thinking about; these terms are not necessarily to be used in DCFPI’s race, equity, and inclusion work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Color Blindness</strong></td>
<td>The racial ideology that posits the best way to end discrimination is by treating individuals as equally as possible, without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity. It focuses on commonalities between people, such as their shared humanity. This is <strong>not</strong> a term to be used in DCFPI work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtle/ unintentional racism</strong></td>
<td>Expressing racist ideas, attitudes or beliefs in subtle, hidden, or secret forms. Often unchallenged, this type of racism doesn't appear to be racist because it is indirect behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dog-whistle politics/messaging</strong></td>
<td>Coded terms like “inner-city crime” and “silent majority” that on the surface do not mention race, but that just underneath are course with racial power, telling the story of decent white under threat from dangerous minorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equality</strong></td>
<td>Access or provision of equal opportunities, where individuals are protected from being discriminated against.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td>A state in which all people in a given society share equal rights and opportunities. It addresses history and culture that shape systemic inequities in an effort to best correct inequalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implicit Bias</strong></td>
<td>Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that many people unknowingly hold. They are expressed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Avoid
---
Sexual preference  
Bathroom bill  
Gender Identity Disorder  
Tranny  
Hermaphrodite Lifestyle choice  
Transgendered  
Homosexual  
Mankind  
Non-straight  
Pre-operative, post-operative  
Prostitute  
Sex change  
Sex change operation  
She-male  
Shim  
Transsexual (unless that is how the person identifies)  
Transvestite (unless that is how the person identifies)

Instead
---
Sexual orientation  
Non-discrimination law, ordinance  
Gender Affirmation Sex  
Reassignment Surgery, gender confirmation surgery  
Genderqueer, -less, -fluid  
Humankind, humanity  
Intersex  
Sex worker  
They, them, their  
Transition, transitioning  
Trans woman, trans man  
Agender  
Bigender  
Non-binary  
Non-gender  
Sex work  
Transgender people
without conscious awareness. Implicit bias impacts our attitudes and actions, and creates real-world implications, even if we are not aware that these biases exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Institutional Racism</strong></th>
<th>The ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The policies may not actually mention any group, but their effect is to create advantages for white people and oppress people of color.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intersectionality</strong></td>
<td>A lens largely advanced by women of color, which argues that identities such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals’ lives, in society, and in social systems. This lens also can help clarify the ways a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oppression</strong></td>
<td>Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>The ability to control others, events, or resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prejudice</strong></td>
<td>A pre-judgement or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations or stereotypes that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privilege</strong></td>
<td>Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to all members of a dominant group (ex: white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we’re taught not to see it, but it nonetheless gives them an advantage over people who do not have it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td>A social and political construction created to concentrate power with white people and legitimize dominance over non-white people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Disparity</strong></td>
<td>Policies, practices and procedures across institutions (ex- housing, education, transportation, etc.) have discriminated based on race; therefore, race is still a key determinant of one’s life outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Equity</strong></td>
<td>The condition that would be achieved if one’s racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. Racial equity is one part of racial justice, and it includes work to address root causes or inequities—not just their manifestation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Justice</strong></td>
<td>A proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racism</strong></td>
<td>A complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious, personal and institutional, and result in the oppression or people of color and benefit the dominant group, white people. A simple definition is: Racism= racial prejudice + power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Determination</strong></td>
<td>A characteristic of a person that leads them to make choices and decisions based on their own preferences and interests to monitor and regulate their own actions and to be goal-oriented and self-directing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structural racism encompasses the entire system of white domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society, including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism.

General Rules:

Jurisdictions
- DC, the city, or the District. Using a mix of the three within a publication is preferred. Not D.C., Washington, or Washington, DC.
- DC region or surrounding counties/jurisdictions/area, not the suburbs
- United States or U.S., not America

Government & Budget
- DC Council or the Council, never City Council. Council is always capitalized.
- Councilmember(s) or Chairperson is always capitalized. Use gender neutral honorifics unless the Councilmember prefers a gendered honorific (ex. Chairman Mendelson)
- Fiscal year (FY) 2018, the first time used, then after that, FY 2018. Not FY2018 or FY18
- Proposed budget, approved budget, supplemental budget, revised budget. Not final budget. Order within a sentence: approved FY 2018 budget not FY 2018 approved budget. In a table or graphic use whichever order makes the most sense
- Mayor is always capitalized unless it is plural and not used before a name
  o The Mayor has prioritized closing DC General
  o Mayor Bowser has prioritized closing DC General
  o Historically, the District’s mayors have protested taxation without representation
- Administration is only capitalized when referring to a specific administration.
  o the Bowser Administration has prioritized closing DC General
  o the current administration has prioritized closing DC General
  o past administrations have also given incentives to businesses
- Federal is only capitalized when within a proper noun, such as an agency name.
  o the Federal Housing Finance Administration promotes homeownership
  o federal housing policy promotes homeownership
- Agency is only capitalized within a property noun.
  o the DC Health Care Finance Agency
  o the agency’s oversight responses indicate serious concerns about ACA repeal

Punctuation
- Use the Oxford comma. Use commas to separate elements in a series, including the last element before the conjunction and.
  o Poverty, health coverage, and income disparities all improved last year.
• Use the em dash (not the en dash, which is shorter), with no space before or after the dash. Word should automatically turn word–word into an em dash. If not, press [Alt]+0151 to insert an em dash.
  o The Bowser Administration offered the plan—unprecedented in recent history—to raise taxes.

Hyphenation
• Don’t hyphenate words used to form a single idea when they follow the noun they modify or are not used as adjectives
  o increase across the board
  o working full time
  o families with low incomes
  o proposal that is revenue neutral
  o cost of living
• Don’t hyphenate most compound adjectives used as verbs
  o to phase out the program
  o to mark up the bill
  o to set aside funds
• …even if the words are hyphenated or combined when they form an adjective or noun
  o the start of the phase-out range
  o the markup of the bill
  o a $1 billion set-aside
  o cost-of-living adjustment
• Don’t hyphenate adverbs ending in -ly that are combined with adjectives or participles, even if they come right before the nouns they modify:
  o widely discussed alternatives
  o publicly held debt
  o extremely low-income families
• Miscellaneous
  o down payment
  o full time employee
  o “at-risk” funding
  o low-income residents

Acronyms
• Spell out acronyms and agency names the first time they appear in the publication. In a long report, it may make sense to spell out acronyms the first time they appear in each section.
  o Nearly half of at-risk funds were diverted to other uses, according to the Office of State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). A contributing factor is that increases to per-pupil funding has fallen short of OSSE’s recommended 3.5 percent.

Numbers
• Always use numerals for monetary amounts: $1, $8.50, $1,000, $1 million, $36 billion.
• Do not drop the million or billion in the first figure of a range: $2 billion to $4 billion, not $2 to $4 billion. (unless you really mean $2.00).
• Spell out numbers at the start of a sentence, or better, rewrite the sentence.
  o Twenty-three percent were below the poverty line last year
Some 23 percent were below the poverty line last year.

- Spell out percent: 56 percent not 56%
- When possible, use fractions instead of decimals, and spell them out.
  - One-fifth of DC children don’t have an affordable home
  - One in five DC children don’t have an affordable home
- Use million and billion for readability: $3 million or $3.4 million, not $3,400,000
- Round one digit after the decimal point, unless the hundredths place is significant to the point you’re making
  - $3.4 million, not $3.42 million
- Round based on significant digits. For example, 3,530 ± 150 should be rounded to 3,500, because the 30 is not significant, and including it may give the impression the number is more precise than it is.
**Style Guide Sources**

**Central Principles**
Sum of Us, [A Progressive Style Guide](http://www.sumofus.org/glossary/)

**Overarching Guidelines for Talking About Race and Poverty**
Race Forward, [Race Reporting Guide](http://www.raceforward.org/race_reporting_guide)
Center for Community Change, [Messaging for Economic Justice Research Brief](http://communitychange.org/messaging-for-economic-justice)

**Education**
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