

LPA Fights M-Word Usage

Little People of America (LPA) is aware of and is troubled by the statement made by Cincinnati Bengals Head Coach Marvin Lewis, referring to The Cleveland Browns Quarterback Johnny Manziel as a "midget" on Monday, December 9th, 2014. The word "midget" is considered by Little People of America to be an antiquated slang term and is most often used in a derogatory manner toward a shorter than average person, or specifically, a person with a diagnosable skeletal dysplasia or medical condition. The word 'midget' has sometimes been used to refer to people of short stature but is now considered to be a slur by the majority of the members of our community. Many feel that the term dehumanizes and objectifies those with dwarfism. LPA has been actively working to get the word taken out of society's vernacular, where it is often used carelessly and without regard to who else it may affect.

As an advocacy organization for people with dwarfism, LPA has made it one of its charges to educate people about respectful ways to refer to people of short stature, emphasizing that the word midget is not appropriate because of its insulting connotation. We are glad that Mr. Lewis publicly apologized for his "poor remark," and are pleased that he extended the apology to the dwarfism community. We believe that this acknowledgment supports us in raising awareness of how unfortunate word choice can so easily demean.

LPA would also like to recognize Michael David Smith of Pro Football Talk, who quickly responded to the comment and directed his audience to the stance taken by our organization about the use of this word. We thank Smith, and other allies who are raising awareness about dwarfism and language.