

Producing information for people with an intellectual disability

When you are producing information for people with an intellectual disability, the following steps may be useful

1. Decide on the target group and consider their level of support needs.

2. Decide on the purpose of producing the information, for example to:

- inform for future reference
- ask for a response
- remind people of an event

3. Choose the most appropriate medium; print, sound, visual or a combination, considering:

- the support needs of the target group
- the purpose of the material
- the length and complexity of the material
- how prepared / interested people are to engage in the information
- availability of appropriate support, if required and willingness of 'supporters' to use the chosen medium.

4. Consider the content:

- find out what the information needs are of the target group
- make the content concrete with experiences relevant to the target group, avoid abstract concepts.
- balance the length and depth of

information with what people are willing and able to engage in.

- Beware of people deciding it is too long, too boring or too hard to finish.
- Use dialogue / words that treat people with respect

5. Consultation is crucial

Consulting with people who are part of the target group is very important in producing materials for people with an intellectual disability, this could be individually or as a focus group

If possible consult throughout the process, but at the least consult people in the target group when the material is at a draft stage.

In your consultation - check that the main message you want to convey is what is received. Could the message be presented more simply or clearly, both in regards to presentation and content.



Some points to consider when producing information in different mediums.

Optimum information retention is achieved by using a range of media. The most effective way is always face to face communication, but when this is not possible thoughtfully produced materials are very useful.

Print – Brochures / Factsheets etc

- Size of print should be 14 or 16 point minimum.
- Font should be clear and easy to read.
- Spacing is important, do not make the wording dense
- Headings help focus and clarify the information.
- Short sentences are a must
- Writing in point form is clearer and easier to read.
- Pictures and illustrations must be relevant. They should match the words to assist with the content and can cue what the message is about. If money permits illustrations or photos which tell a story are preferred.
- When printing on colour paper remember that black writing on lighter colour paper is easier to read.



Resources

Posters

- A single message is all it needs.
- Bright and striking but not too busy.
- A clear picture with people images either photos or drawings.
- Picture must match and be clear to the words and message.
- Large print, easy to read and plain language.

Video/DVD

- Video is an excellent medium to use.
- The characters in the video should be people with whom the target group can identify.
- Ensure the stories are not too long and that there are easy places to pause for discussion.

Audio Cassettes

- Supported by written or visual material is best.
- Clear voices are a must.
- Speak at a pace that is not too fast and enables people to follow the written or visual material.
- Use dialogue between two or three people to tell a story
- Keep it simple 2 or 3 voices and 1 concept.

Further Information

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