Easy to Understand Communication

Presented by CHAICA SULTAN
About me

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What I will talk about...

• What is Easy to Understand Communication
• What are the Listen Include Respect guidelines
• Good Examples of Easy to Understand communication
• Conclusion
What is Easy to Understand communication?
Easy to understand communication is...

Using easy, clear ways of communicating so that everyone can take part and understand.
Easy to understand communication is...

- Not the same as Easy Read
- Not just about documents
- About removing barriers and building awareness
- Including people with intellectual disabilities from the start
- Different for different people
- Getting the support we need to access and understand
Easy-to-understand communication could be used in...

- Documents
- Websites
- Emails
- Video & Audio
- Meetings
- Webinars
- Everyday Conversations
How do I feel when communication is not easy to understand?

- I feel confused
- I feel like I am not able to understand or follow along
- I feel like I am not important
- I feel like I am not taken seriously
- I feel like I am not able to participate
- I feel excluded
Why is easy-to-understand communication important?

It is our right!
Why is easy-to-understand communication important?

- It helps us understand information
- It helps us feel heard and that our input is valued
- It allows us to feel like we are part of the team
- It makes us feel good and confident to be ourselves
- It helps us feel guided and supported
- It helps us feel included
What are the Listen Include Respect guidelines
• Downs Syndrome International and Inclusion International worked together on Listen Include Respect guidelines.

• The guidelines have been created by organisations of people with intellectual disabilities all around the world.

• The guidelines are for all types of organisations.

• They explain what people with intellectual disabilities want and need to take part and be included in an organisation’s activities and decision-making.
Who contributed to making Listen Include Respect?

- 350 Organisations
- 100 Countries
- More than 1500 People
- 60 Inclusive Consultations
Countries that took part in consultations to help create the guidelines
We heard that the main barriers to participation are:

- A lack of understanding about intellectual disability. This leads to discrimination and exclusion.
- No reasonable accommodations. Our different needs are not recognised.
- No support or Poor support
- Time and money are not dedicated to our participation
- Inaccessible communication
Listen Include Respect addresses these barriers.

- The members of Inclusion International and Down Syndrome International told us about what worked to help people with intellectual disabilities overcome the barriers.

- The guidelines include,
  - the principles of inclusive organisations
  - And how-to checklists that explain the different ways organisations can make their ways of working more accessible and inclusive
For example, members told us to make easy to understand communication organisations must...

• **Talk to people with intellectual disabilities from the start.** We are the experts, we can tell you what will work best for us. Listen to us and do not assume what we need.

• **Pay people with intellectual disabilities for our expertise.**

• **Plan for one version.** We usually get easy info much later after a ‘full’ version is translated which is not fair, we are left behind.

• **Talk to people with intellectual disabilities about how to share your information.** It is not useful unless we know about it and can use it.
You can find out more about our networks’ Listen Include Respect guidelines here:

https://www.listenincluderespect.com
Examples of easy to understand communication
Examples of Easy to understand communication

**Easy Read** is a written format with easy text and pictures that help explain the text. Easy Read and Easy to Read are popular formats.

**Videos** are easy to understand because you can listen and watch. Watching a video is quicker than reading and is useful for people who do not read. Videos can also be shared easily.
Examples of Easy to understand communication

**Plain language** is easy-to-understand text that is short, clear and uses everyday language. Plain language is very useful in emails and on websites.

**Meetings** are an important way of communicating. Lots of work and decisions are made in meetings, so they must be accessible to us. Small changes can make meetings easier for us to take part in. Meetings are helpful for people who may want to ask questions.
Example of easy to understand communication

Videos
Example of an easy to understand video

- An group of people with intellectual disabilities, including survivors of institutions, came together to make an accessible version of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Deinstitutionalisation Guidelines.

- The group were from Hong Kong, Romania, Kenya, Egypt and Canada.

- The group met 4 times and were paid for their work.

- The group decided a series of videos was the best way to share the guidelines.
The group decided together:

- The format of the videos animation and personal stories
- The animation style
- An easy-to-understand script
- The personal story interviews
- Feedback and edits for the animators
- How the videos will be shared with others
Why is it easy to understand?

- Script checked by people with intellectual disabilities
- Simple clear animation
- Short on each topic
- Language is clear
- Easy to share
- On Youtube, which is a platform people use and are familiar with
- Personal stories help to explain the subject
Example of easy to understand communication

Meetings
My experience with meetings

For me, meetings are the best way to communicate. Work gets done quickly, and I can ask questions and understand more clearly.

My supporter is with me and can support me to follow up on decisions.
My negative experience

- I was not given the information in advance to prepare for the meeting
- The materials were difficult to understand
- During the meeting, people were speaking too quickly and not using accessible language
- There was a lack of time for translations
- The meeting was too overwhelming for me to speak or share my ideas
- I did not feel involved in the conversation
These meetings were for a group that meet regularly.

I offered to use *Listen Include Respect* training.

I wanted to help the group organisers understand the barriers I faced in the meetings.

I led the training and gave recommendations on changes they could make so I was included and could understand.
My positive experience

- Information about the meeting was send in advance
- There was a pre-meeting that gave me a chance to ask questions
- Communication, materials, and presentation were clear, short and accessible
- Everyone had the support that they needed
- We had extra time to think and ask questions
- The meeting environment was a warm and friendly
- I felt like I belonged in the meeting
Example of easy to understand communication

Creating national standards
• People First of Canada is a national self-advocacy organisation.
• They are working to make national guidelines on inclusive participation.
• The guidelines are for the Disability Coalition which is a group of disability organisations in Canada who give advice to their government.
• The guidelines will be used as the standard for meetings and events at the national level.
• The goal is these guidelines will become the standard in Canada and will be used at all levels of work in the country.
• **They are using the global guidelines** *Listen, Include, Respect* **to guide this work.**
Dewlyn Lobo, President of People First Canada says...

“I feel more included when information is easy to understand. I feel more independent. I can follow along without help. It also helps me do more than just understand. It also helps me to be able to give information to other people. It helps me to be more involved and included in many ways.”
Conclusion
Communication is everywhere, from information, to meetings, to everyday communication.

When communication is not easy to understand, we are excluded.

By applying easy-to-understand communication everywhere, people with disabilities can take part in society and be included.

People with intellectual disabilities must be part of planning and creating easy-to-understand communication.
Thank You