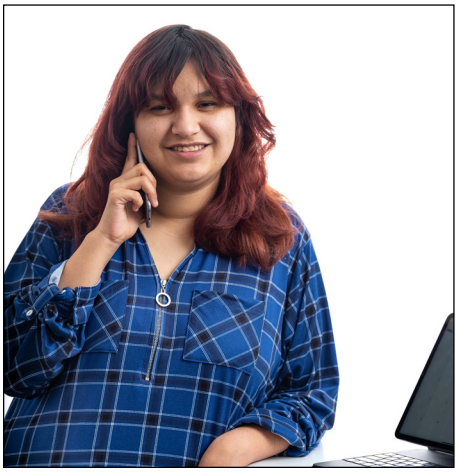
Inclusion Canada

Appendix E:
Best Practices for Using Images



Images

Images help us understand things better. They can be photos, drawings, or icons. Images can be used in Easy Read documents. They can be used in other written materials or in videos.

Most research shows mixed results when it comes to what kind of image is most useful. Our testing offered some guidelines to follow when using images. The audience has diverse needs and preferences. Using many different formats of images is often the most accessible way for the diverse audience.

Here are some key elements to think about when using images.

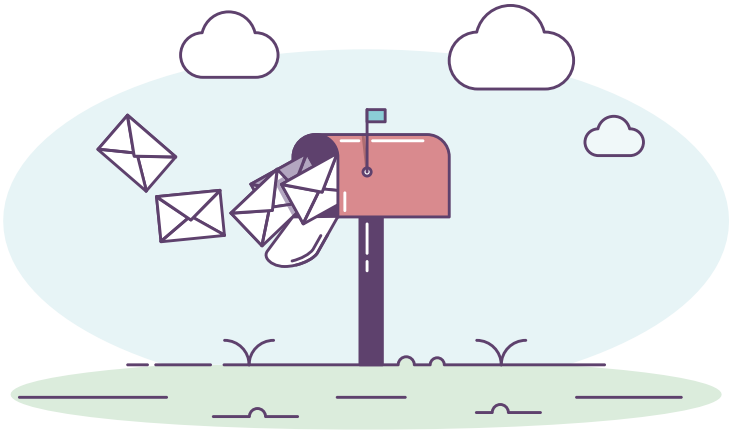
- Photos are often the best way to show real people. Photos and videos using real people are helpful to tell a story. These are also helpful when doing role play or getting ready for a scenario. The expressions on real people's faces help the audience understand. It helps the audience relate to the people and the information.

- Drawings can be helpful to show everyday things, like a mailbox. Drawings can also be helpful for showing things we can't see, like feelings or the flu virus. Some research shows that drawings might be better to use if the subject matter is hard to talk about, like death or abuse. These emotions might also be hard for real people to act out.

- People with intellectual disabilities want to see themselves in images. Photos and drawings should include them. Images should show diverse people. They should be interacting with each other in an inclusive community. People with intellectual disabilities should be shown as equals with other community members. All models used for images should be fairly paid for their work.

- Pictures should be chosen or made with help from the intended audience. We made Easy Read documents for testing. We took photos for the documents. We had models for the photos. The models were people with intellectual disabilities.

- Images should make sense to the people looking at them. Images should consider the lived experiences of the audience. For example, images of cars could be used to show transportation. But if the audience mostly uses public transport like buses, the image of cars will not mean the same to them.



IMPORTANT NOTES

Images should be tested in many ways. They need to be tested for accessibility. They need to be tested with screen readers. They need to be tested with other assistive technology. They also need to include alternative text or captions.

Images should show the same diversity as the audience who will use the material. This must include the many different identities that people in Canada may have.

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FUNDED BY Accessibility Standards Canada