How to use our Easy Read Guides

SOLD
Supporting Offenders with Learning Disabilities

**PEOPLE FIRST
(SCOTLAND)**

Guidance for Using SOLD Easy Read Guides

Introduction

The SOLD user group have produced this series of easy read guides aimed at people with learning disabilities. These guides cover different aspects of the criminal justice system in Scotland and draw on the members own experiences.

This guidance is for professionals who are working with people with learning disabilities and addresses how people with learning disabilities should be supported to make the best use of the guides.

We would recommend that supporters who are unfamiliar with the criminal justice system read the SOLD Practice Guide for Support Workers (https://soldnetwork.org.uk/practice-guide-for-support-workers-people-with-learning-disabilities-in-the-scottish-criminal-justice-system/) prior supporting people to go through these easy read guides. This will allow you to answer any questions and clarify the information as you go.

Easy Read is not the answer on its own

Easy Read is one way of making information more accessible to people with learning disabilities. But it is not the only way to communicate with people with learning disabilities.

Sometimes video, talks, presentations, drama, role-play or posters can be better ways of communicating complex or sensitive information.

Easy Read is a tool for increasing the number of people with learning disabilities who can access information. It should be remembered, however, that not every person with a learning disability is able to use Easy Read; most people with learning disabilities will require additional support to access information, via support workers or carers, and some may also require information in audio or video formats.

How the guides should be used

These guides were developed to provide practical information to people as they pass through the justice system. They may also be useful as a teaching or discussion aid to help people learn more about their rights and how the justice system operates in Scotland.

It is vital in in using these easy read guides that people with learning disabilities are supported to think about the information they contain; to discuss it and relate it to their own situation. In doing this, the supporter should check comprehension regularly and ask people to provide examples of how the information applies to them.

If someone with a learning disability is being supported to understand complex information or is in an unusually environment, as is often the case in the justice system, it is important to bear in mind that retaining key information will be difficult. The information included in the guides may need to be revisited a number of times along with prompting and reassurance.

Simply passing someone with a learning disability information set out in an easy read format does little on its own to guarantee understanding. When these guides are being used with someone passing through the justice system they should be used as a complement to 1-to1 personalised support.

Thank you

The Supporting Offenders with Learning Disabilities User Group