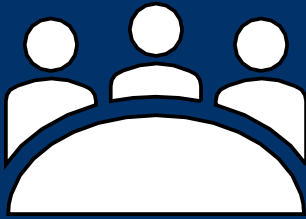


An Informal Guide to Inclusive Language



Overview



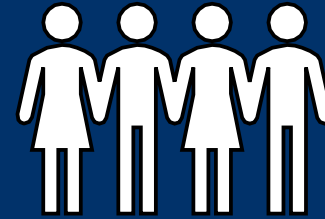
Introduction



Inclusive
Language
Principles



(Dis)Ability



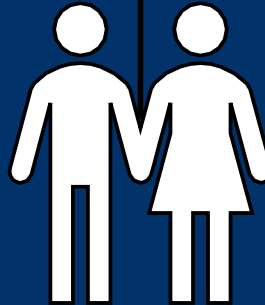
Gender
Reassignment



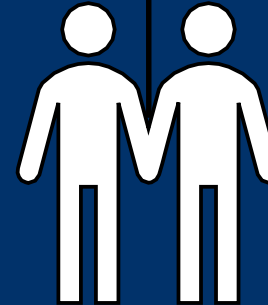
Race /
Ethnicity



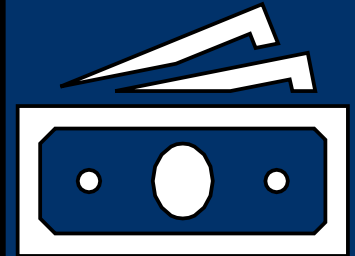
Religion



Sex



Sexual
Orientation



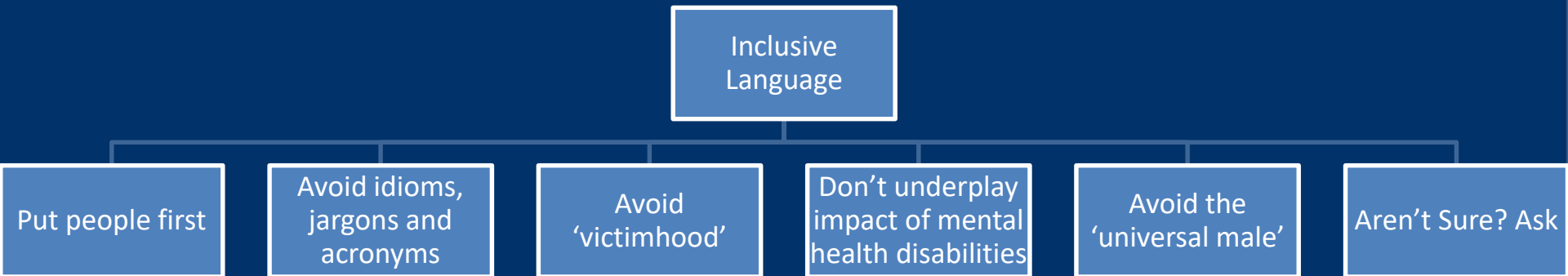
Social
Inclusion

Introduction



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Inclusive Language Principles



Disability

- Place **person before** disability
“a person with schizophrenia” instead of “a schizophrenic”
- **Avoid** language which frames adaptative equipment as **limitation**
“wheelchair victim” or “wheelchair-bound” instead use
“wheelchair user or person who uses a wheelchair”
- **Factual** language rather than imposing your own frame of reference
“Disabled person” rather than “suffering from a disability”.

Without meaning it.....

That's insane / crazy /
mad

That's wild / absurd /
amazing

I'm a bit OCD

I'm a bit
superstitious/organised/nea
t/clean/tidy /cautious

She's so bipolar

"She's so
indecisive/contrary/unp
redictable".

I'm so depressed

"I'm so upset/sad/low".

Gender Reassignment

Transgender: An umbrella term describing a diverse community of people whose gender identity differs from that which they were designated at birth.

Transsexual: A person whose gender identity is different from their designated sex at birth and has taken steps of physical transition so that their body is congruent to both their gender identity and the conventional concept of sexually male and female bodies.

Cross-dresser/transvestite: An individual who wears dresses up as someone from the opposite sex for enjoyment.

Gender Reassignment

- Always refer to a person by the titles and pronouns they feel most comfortable with, regardless of your own perception. Ask for people's preferred titles rather than presuming.
- Try to avoid using language that frames gender as a binary opposite e.g. "boys vs girls".
- When discussing a trans person's past, you should still refer to them with the name and pronouns they identify with in the present unless they have stated otherwise.
- The words 'transgender', 'transsexual', 'transvestite' and 'cross-dresser' have different definitions and implications and are not interchangeable. You should seek to use the appropriate term.

Without meaning it.....

People of both
genders

People of all genders

She [person
transitioning] thinks
she is a man

He is a man

Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

- There are a number of terms for different ethnicities and nationalities and different people will prefer and use different descriptors. It is best to take your lead from how a person describes themselves. For example 'black' vs 'Afro-Caribbean' or 'African Caribbean'.
- Avoid accidentally framing whiteness as a default and BME ethnicities as deviant from this – for example by using words like “exotic” or “non-white”.
- Try to be specific when referring to someone's nationality or race – terms like 'Asian' or 'African' cover a huge geographical area and therefore erase the diversity of different countries and ethnicities.
- Use the term 'immigrant' correctly and carefully. Often it is used to mark people of BME ethnicities who are British nationals out as different.

Without meaning it.....

That's so 'ghetto' /
hood / street

“this is a run-down area”
or “that is a funny outfit”

Foreigners

People from another
country / people from
overseas

Skin colour

Race, ethnicity, national
identity as appropriate

Religious Belief

- Placing 'the' before a religious group e.g. "The Jews" generalises the people belonging to that group and defines people by their religion, often in a dismissive way. Instead try, for example, "people who are Jewish".
- Think about what is implied by particular word choices. For example "extremism" which is often used to unfairly perpetuate negative stereotypes about people who are Muslim when in fact there are many groups which could be described as extremist.
- 'Faith', 'religion' and 'belief' refer to different things and are generally not interchangeable. For example, somebody may hold the belief that no god exists and therefore they have no faith or religion. Others might have faith in a god but not identify with any religion.
- Aim to refer to religious customs, dress and celebrations by the correct names instead of using generalisations based on your own frame of reference. For example, "Passover" rather than "Jewish Christmas" and Mosque/Synagogue/Gurdwara etc rather than 'Church'.

Without meaning it.....

What is your Christian
name?

“What is your first
name?”

Cult / Sect / Tribe

Religion / religious group /
faith group / community

Sex

- Avoid referencing gender when it is not necessary to do so (and may be incorrect) e.g. “Engineering boys” / “Beauty girls” etc.
- Use gender-neutral alternatives to words which are implicitly biased e.g. “chairperson” or “firefighter” instead of “chairman” or “fireman”.
- Avoid slang which trivialises gendered violence e.g. “wife beater”.
- As a general guide, negative words which particularly relate to one gender and not others should be avoided, for example “slut” or “cow”.

Without meaning it.....

I got 'fraped' last
night

Someone hacked into my
facebook account last
night

I will ask the girls to
do it

I will ask the admin
assistants to do

Sexual Orientation

- Avoid defining people by their sexual orientation or depersonalising them by turning descriptors into nouns e.g. “the gays”.
- Try not to make assumptions about the gender of someone’s partner or erase LGB couples with your language e.g. “feel free to bring husbands and wives”.
- Avoid describing sexual orientation as a ‘choice’ or ‘preference’ when in reality people have no control over their sexual orientation.
- Use correct terms rather than euphemisms which suggest LGB sexualities should be kept secret or hidden, for example “bats for the other team”

Without meaning it.....

That's so gay

That is so silly / pathetic/
weird / ridiculous

They are going
through an
experimental phase

They are a gay man /
lesbian / bisexual person

Social Inclusion

- Avoid language which frames the person or family as a problem rather than the challenging situation they find themselves in. For example, “person with drug issues” is better than “druggy”, and “homeless person” is better than “bum”.
- Think about the connotations of words you are using. For example, a lot of negative language around people from lower income families has associations of uncleanness which serves to perpetuate negative stereotypes.
- Avoid rhetoric which plays people of different socio-economic status against each other. For example, “striver vs skiver”.

Without meaning it.....

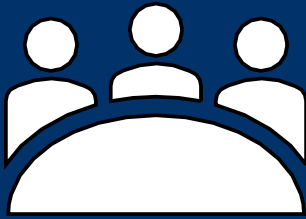
I look like a tramp

I look scruffy /untidy /
dishevelled

Living off / cheating /
scrounging off
benefits

A person / family entitled to
benefits

Summary



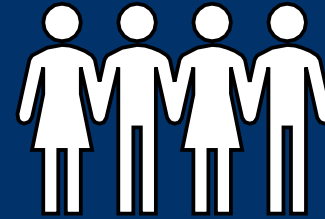
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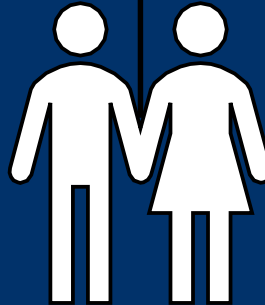
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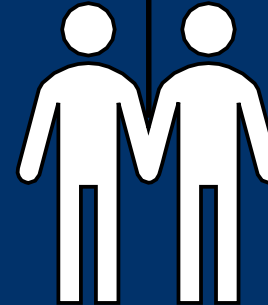
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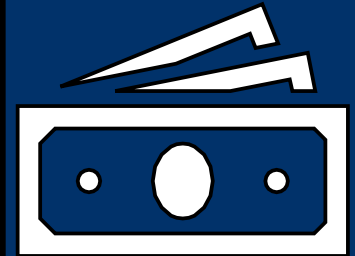
Religion



Sex



Sexual
Orientation



Social
Inclusion



Zhan McIntyre

Policy Lead

SFHA

zmcintyre@sfha.co.uk

@ZhanSFHA

**We are the national
representative body
for Scotland's housing
associations and
co-operatives.**