



**Inclusion Ireland**

The National Association for People  
with an Intellectual Disability.

# **Inclusion Ireland Media and Rights Working Group**

## **Easy to Read Code of Practice for Self- Advocates and People with Intellectual Disabilities**





# Introduction to our Media and Human Rights Project



In 2022 Inclusion Ireland got funding from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to do a project about media and human rights.



The media includes the ways in which we communicate information in a public way like

Newspapers

Radio

Television

Video

Websites



Social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok LinkedIn and other social media applications



When we talk about human rights for this project, we mean all the rights and things people are entitled to under the United Nations Convention on the Rights Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Ireland signed up to UNCRPD in 2018.

**For this project we have a working group including:**



**Tamara Byrne**



**Paddy Clancy**



**Emma Costello**



**Josephine Mc Mahon**



**Margaret Turley**

# **Code of Practice for Self-advocates and people with an intellectual disability who are being interviewed by the media**

This Code of Practice is for self-advocates and people with intellectual disabilities to use when they are going to be interviewed.

This will help you know what to expect and how to prepare for an interview.

## **General tips for becoming a spokesperson**



- Remember that you are good enough. Your voice is important and you should be heard.



- You can help to raise awareness yourself instead of waiting for someone else to do it for you.



- Try to get out into your local community and get to know more people.



- It is important to have family, friends, or people you know in your community who can get behind you and support your message.



- If you have a message you want to spread, there are different ways to be heard.

You could go to advocacy meetings and events, publish a book or article, or post about it on social media.



- Not everyone can speak up for themselves, so you need to speak up for everyone in your community.

Nobody is left behind.



**Confident**

- Always believe in yourself and be confident. Nobody can tell you what you can and cannot do.



**Decision**

- Telling human stories can be powerful. This means talking about your own life experience.
- You need to tell positive stories that show how people can make their own decisions.

## Preparing for an interview



- When you are contacted by a journalist, here are some useful questions you might ask:
  - Who is calling?
  - Where they are calling from? (For example, RTE News)
  - What do they want to talk about? and why they are calling you?
  - Is the interview is live or pre-recorded?
  - Is the Interview in a studio or somewhere else?
  - Who will do the interview?
  - Is anyone being interviewed with you?
  - What is accessibility like at the venue for interview?
  
- If a journalist contacts you to do an interview, you do not have to do it right then.
 

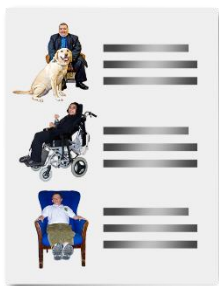
Ask for their contact details and say you'll come back to them.
  
- If you will need any kind of support during the interview, make sure to let the journalists know.



- If you need support, you should get it. But it should be your decision and not forced on you.



- Ask the journalist if you can meet them before the interview so you can get to know each other.



- Ask the journalist if they can tell you what questions they will ask or what topics they will talk about before the interview.  
This will give you a chance to prepare and get ready for the interview.



- Make sure to tell the journalist if you don't understand something.  
You have the right to ask for Easy-to-Read and Plain English materials. You can ask the journalist to talk you through or explain any information you need.



- Think about your key messages you want to tell the journalist about.  
Try to pick 3 main points that you definitely want to say in the interview.



- You could ask someone like a friend or support worker to help you practise before the interview.  
They could pretend to be the interviewer and ask you questions.





- If you like, you can ask for a quiet space to go to for a few minutes before the interview begins.



- If you think a remote interview would be easier for you, you can ask to do the interview over the phone or on Zoom.



- Remember that most people are nervous about doing interviews and being recorded.  
You could talk to someone you know about this to help calm your nerves.



- If you are going to be on camera, what you wear is important.  
Make sure you wear something appropriate and comfortable.



- A lot of interviews happen every day and your interview might not happen if the journalist has to a different story that comes up in a hurry.  
Don't be disappointed if this happens.  
Offer to do the interview another time.

## During the interview



- Make sure to introduce yourself and tell a bit about yourself.

- Remember not to speak too fast and take your time. You don't have to rush.



- Remember to breathe!  
The key to being confident is being relaxed.



- If you don't understand the question or don't hear what the journalist says, you can ask them to repeat the question.



- Try to sit or stand up straight.  
This will help you look more confident, and will make your voice sound better.



- If the interview is in person, try to have eye-contact with the journalist when you are speaking.



- If the interview is on zoom, try to look at the person on the screen when you are speaking.



- Listen carefully to what the journalist is saying before giving an answer.



- Wait for the journalist to stop speaking before you start speaking.



- Remember that you can say whatever you want.

Don't say what you think someone else wants to hear.



- You can give your own opinion and say how you feel about something.



- Try not to say the word 'Sorry' during an interview.

You don't have anything to apologise for.



- If you make a mistake when speaking, that's okay. Try to move on and don't worry about it.



- Remember that journalists are not out to catch you out. They know you are not a politician or celebrity and are just giving your opinion.



- When you are talking about rights, try to use examples about your life or someone you know with their permission.



- Remember that it is okay to take a few seconds before you answer.



## After the interview

- Make sure to thank the journalist for their time and for the opportunity.



- Ask them when you will be able to see or hear the interview.



- If you made a mistake during the interview, try not to think about it. As long as you got your key messages across then you did a great job.



- Listen, watch, or read the interview after it comes out. That way you can see what you can improve on for the next one.



- When the interview comes out, you can contact the journalist to tell them what you thought about it.



- Be proud of yourself!



Inclusion Ireland would like to thank some people for their support with this project.

We would like to thank:

The members of the Media and Human Rights Working Group



**Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta  
an Duine agus Comhionannas**

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

**IHREC**



**MediaTrust UK**

We have used their resource "Media Interview for Disabled Interviewees" to support our work. You can find their resource on the MediaTrust website at the link below.

<https://mediatrust.org/resource-hub/media-interview-for-disabled-interviewees/>

The self-advocates and people with intellectual disabilities who attended events and gave us really important feedback.

The journalists and people who work in the media who already include people with an intellectual disability and the issues that are important to them in their work.





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