

# How to make easy news for people with a learning disability



## Report

By William Kremer

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# About this report



My name is William Kremer.  
I am a BBC **journalist**.

A **journalist** is someone who makes the news.



There are more than 1 million adults with learning disabilities in the UK.

I wanted to find out how they get news.



So I looked at reports from the BBC and universities.

And I asked people with learning disabilities about news.



This report tells you what I found out.

# The problem with the news



Many people with a learning disability are interested in the news.



But the news is often hard to understand.



They said:

- The news is too fast.
- Some words are too hard.
- The news does not explain things enough.
- The news can be upsetting.



**Lucy said**

I do like watching the news. I find it quite interesting – the whole of the world and the country, Donald Trump and the Prime Minister.

**Harry said**

It was too quick to understand. Sometimes I wish the reporters could speak slowly, so there is time to understand what is happening.

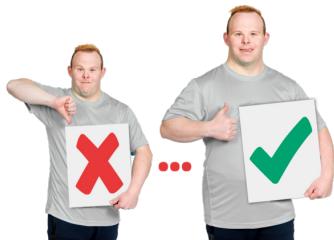
**Andrew said**

Some parts I did not understand what they were talking about. They used some words that I did not understand.

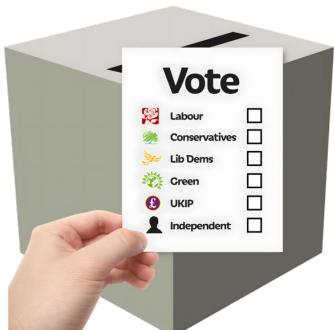
**Mo said**

A lot of news seems like it is made to make people scared. It is not fair for some people. Especially for people with a learning disability.

# Why this matters



The news is important because it gives people information that can help their lives.



For example:

- It helps people decide who to vote for in elections.



- It helps people work together to make things better.



- It stops people getting wrong ideas, like from social media.

This is sometimes called fake news.

# The BBC



The BBC makes TV, radio, and online news.



The BBC's job is to make news for everyone.



In the UK, people with a learning disability help pay for the BBC.

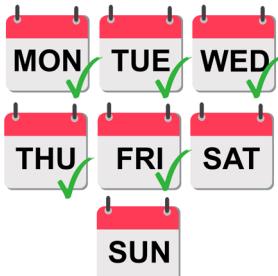


But people with a learning disability cannot always understand BBC News.

This is not fair.

# Easier news around the world

## In Germany and Austria



- In Germany and Austria, easier news is on TV on Monday to Friday.



- The easier news looks like normal news but it is slower and uses easy words.



- Disabled people in Austria get training to help make the news.



**Thomas is a trainee. He said**

I just think it is very important and fair that we work here.

We make the message more inclusive.

# In Norway



- A TV channel in Norway called TV Bra has reporters with learning disabilities or autism.



- Their reports look different and are more fun than normal news.



- They interview **politicians** and ask questions for their viewers.

A **politician** is someone who helps decide important things for the country.



**Emily is a reporter at TV Bra.  
She said**

I love being a reporter! I have to be very professional.

I have to follow the script and not talk about personal stuff.

# In the UK



- In the UK, people with learning disabilities make a **podcast** at People First.

**Podcasts** are recordings that you can listen to online.



- People with learning disabilities choose what to talk about.
- They interview people.
- And they record the podcast themselves.



**Luke works on the podcast.  
He said**

I love everything that we do, not just the podcast. And we always have new people to interview. It really makes us grow and grow.



# In the United States of America



- Journalists worked with people with a learning disability to do an **investigation**.



An **investigation** is when journalists look closely at a problem to understand what happened.



- The journalists had meetings with people with learning disabilities.



- And said what they found out in a way that was easy to understand.

# What do these examples tell us?



We can make news for people with a learning disability.



3 things are all very important:

1. News should be easy to understand.
2. News should show more people with a learning disability.  
It should be about things that are important to them.
3. People with a learning disability should help make and present the news.





But it is hard to do all 3 things in the same programme.



So people with a learning disability might need more than one kind of news programme.



**Josh said**

Everyone should have their own way of reading the news and understanding the news.

# What do people with a learning disability want?



Over 30 people with a learning disability answered questions for this report.



They had lots of things to say.  
They did not agree about everything.



They said:

- They want daily news they can understand.
- They want people with learning disabilities to present the news.





- News should be friendly but sometimes serious.



- News should do more than just say what is happening. It should give people useful information.



- They still love TV and radio but some people also like social media and podcasts.



### **Eliph said**

I would like to be able to understand and contribute to more conversations that are happening around me.

# What should happen next?



The BBC should make news for people with a learning disability.



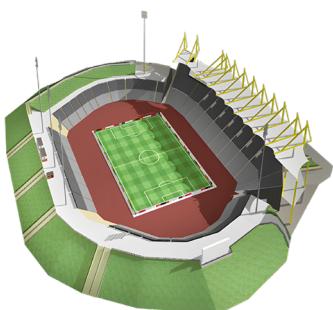
The best way to do this is to make:

1. easy news every day
2. a longer easy news TV show every week.



The weekly programme can give more information.

This can help people with a learning disability understand.



The weekly programme can also have sport and fun things.

This can make the news feel less upsetting.

# What can the BBC do?



The BBC could also

- make easy news stories online.



- ask people with learning disabilities what works well.



- work with a charity to train people with a learning disability.



- start a news club for people with a learning disability.



Easy news looks and sounds different.

The BBC needs to be brave and try new ways of making news.



This can help people with a learning disability.



But this does not mean the BBC must stop doing good reporting.

It means the BBC is doing good reporting for more people.

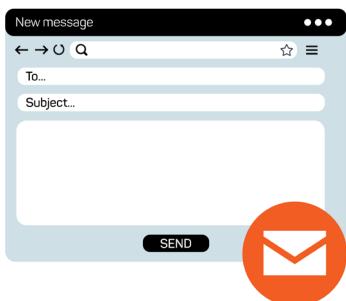


### **Harry said**

It's very, very important that everyone can watch the news in a more accessible format.



Do you have any questions  
about this report?



You can contact me by email:  
[william.kremer@bbc.co.uk](mailto:william.kremer@bbc.co.uk)



Thank you to the Easy News  
Research Group and the lived  
experts for their help and advice.

