SARTAC

Self-Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center

selfadvocacyinfo.org

A National Connection for Self-Advocates

selfadvocacyinfo.org

SARTAC
Self Advocacy and Beyond

Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center

Home   About ⌄   Events   Resources ⌄   Self Advocacy   Support ⌄   Contact Us
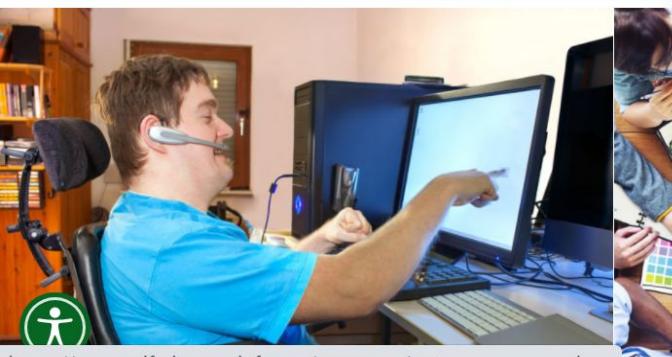
Current Issues Resources

Organization Resources

SARTAC Zoom Meetings

https://www.selfadvocacyinfo.org/resources/sartac-zoom-meetin...
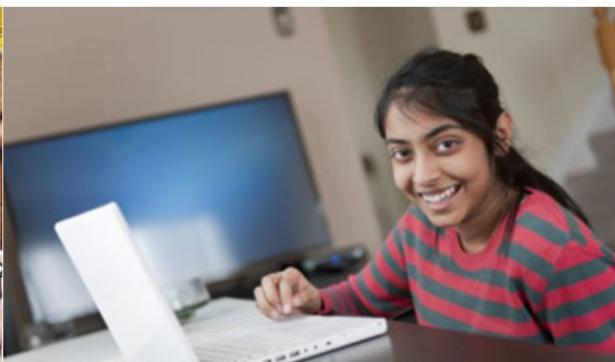
Two Clicks - #1 Click on Resources then #2 Click on SARTAC Zoom Meetings

Easy Read Icons

Presented by the
Autistic Self Advocacy Network

What is Easy Read?

- Easy Read is a style of writing and formatting that uses clear and easy-to-understand language.

- It uses large text and lots of white space.

- Each sentence in an Easy Read document is shown next to a picture icon that supports the information in that sentence.

2. Names and Pronouns

Let's start with when you first meet someone.

When someone tells you their name, call them that name.

If you don't know how to say their name, ask.

You can practice saying their name.

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Why does Easy Read use icons?

- It's not just for fun - it's an accessibility feature

- Can help visual learners better understand the text

- Can help some readers to "anchor" the text and follow along

- Can help create visual links between related ideas

Easy Read Icons

- 4 guidelines for Easy Read icons + some house rules

- Our design process

4 Guidelines for Easy Read Icons: Overview

1. Icons' meanings should be clear

2. Art style should be simple - but not too simple

3. Avoid metaphors when possible

4. Build on previously used icons to create new concepts

#1: Icons' meanings should be clear

This means an icon should have enough information to be understood without too much extra added in.
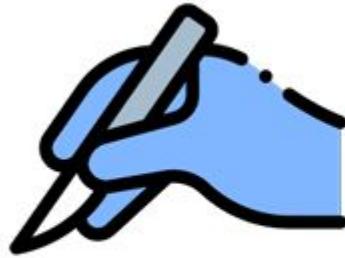
#1: Icons' meanings should be clear

- Without seeing the rest of the arm, we can't tell if it's a gloved hand or just blue

- Object being held isn't clear - it could be a paintbrush

- Not clear what the object is being used for or on

#1: Icons' meanings should be clear

- Icon has a person, which is good!

- Robot surgery isn't very common and certainly not the first thing that would come to mind for many people

- Not clear what the robot is doing

- Yellow light in background makes image more visually cluttered

# #1: Icons' meanings should be clear

- Icon has both surgeon and person being operated on

- Can tell it's a medical setting because of the stethoscope and scrubs

- Can tell it's not a normal doctor's visit because the person is asleep on the operating table

- No distracting background

#2: Style should be simple - but not too simple

Don't use highly complex or stylized icons -- keep it simple

#2: Style should be simple - but not too simple
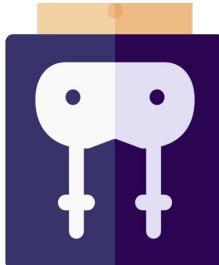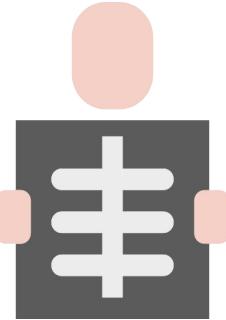
- Simple to the point of being unrecognizable

- Not clear that these are people or bones

- Not immediately clear that these are showing the inside of the shape behind it

#2: Style should be simple - but not too simple

- Clear that these are people
- Clear that these are showing the bones of the person standing behind it
- People in the icons are calm, which shows that the reason we can see their bones is not due to some horrible trauma
- Just enough detail to convey the idea

#2: Style should be simple - but not too simple

- At a large size, you can tell it's an x-ray

- But remember - these will be shown next to text, not at full size

- At a small size, the image becomes unclear

#3: Avoid metaphors

- Icons' purpose is to **support** and help clarify the text

- Show what the word actually means in context, not what the metaphor means

- Use imagery that people will associate with the concept

#3: Avoid metaphors: "brainstorm"

- Doesn't clarify meaning

- Introduces confusing visual

- Literal depiction

- Concrete representation

#3: Avoid metaphors: "internet"
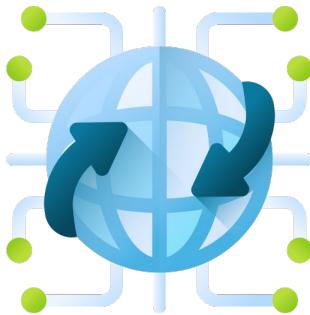
- Clever - but do they represent what the Internet looks like to most people? (No.)

- Abstract ways of representing the idea
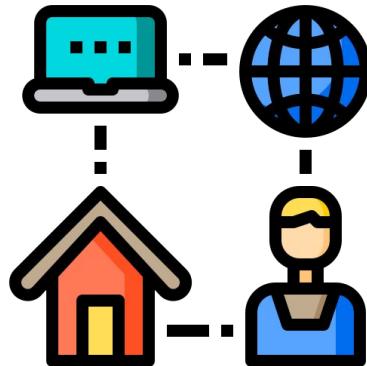
#3: Avoid metaphors: "internet"
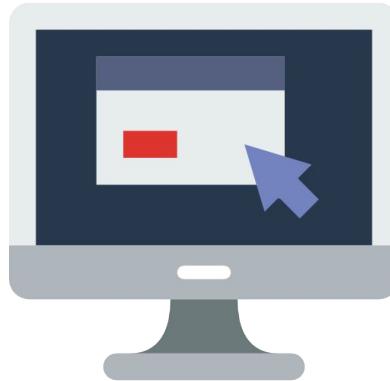
- Both show what the Internet actually "looks like" to people: going online using a computer

#3: Avoid metaphors - *But what about…*

- You **can** use simple, commonly used symbols to represent abstract ideas

- Make sure the symbols you use don't have another, more common meaning

- For example, here are four ways you could represent "getting rid of something":

# #3: Avoid metaphors - "getting rid of something"
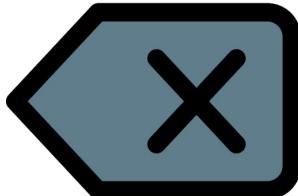
- **Mobile phone delete symbol**: Not widely used/easily recognizable.

- **Eraser:** Better, but has stronger association with "mistake".

- **Trash can:** Closer, but doesn't *show* "getting rid of something"

- **Person throwing something away:** Familiar symbol from trash cans, shows the action that the plain trash can icon abstractly represents.

#3: Avoid metaphors - *Exceptions*

When to use metaphors:

- When the actual meaning is too abstract to be represented concretely AND
- There is a more concrete (but metaphorical) way to represent the idea
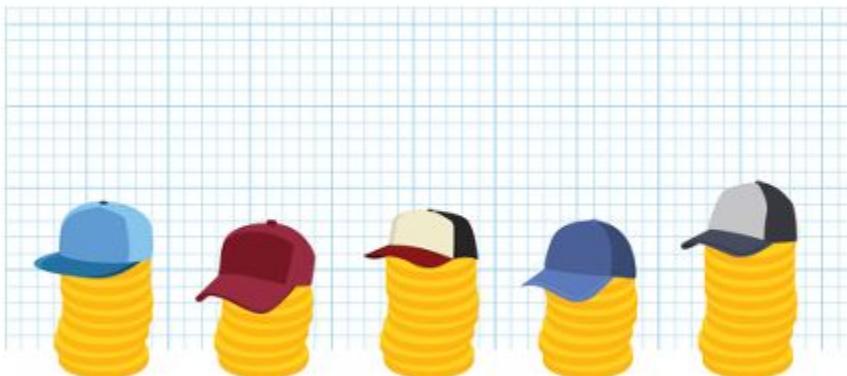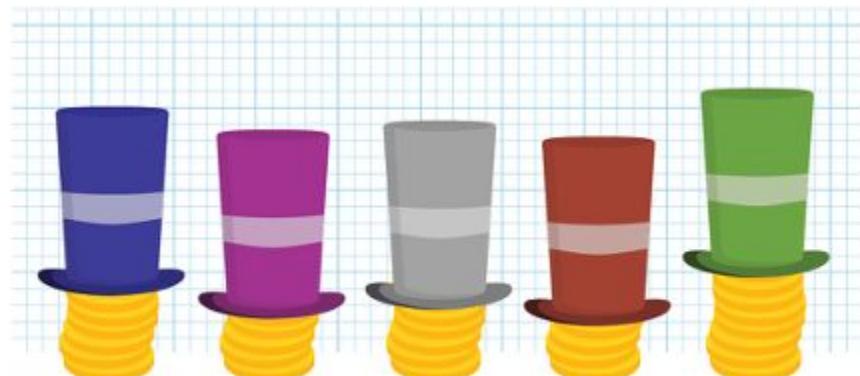

"caps on spending"   "raising the caps"

#3: Avoid metaphors - *Exceptions*
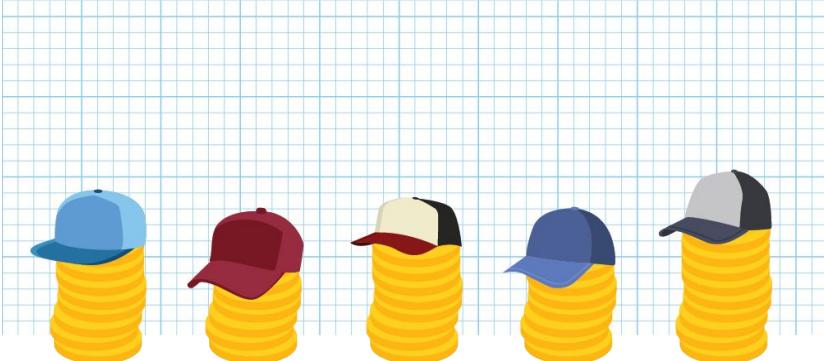
- Hats symbolize a "cap" on spending. Clear that the money can't go higher than the "cap" allows

- **Key question:** Does this metaphorical image help clarify the *literal* meaning of an idea?

#4: Build on previously used icons

- Important to pick clear images:

  - The icon associated with a particular idea will be used throughout the document to refer to that idea

  - Image will also form the basis of related ideas
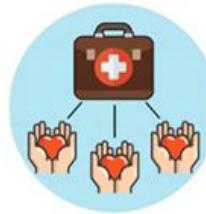
managed care

When a state pays an insurance company to run their Medicaid program. Then, the insurance company pays for the health care for people on Medicaid.

Managed Care Organization (MCO)

Private insurance companies that make a deal with the state to run the state's Medicaid program.

#4: Build on previously used icons

- You should only use one icon per concept.
    - Icons can be combined in different ways for multiple concepts, but don't change which icon you use to represent a single concept.

    - Helps the reader form associations with certain images

    - Makes it easier to combine icons later because the reader will be familiar with each icon's meaning

#4: Build on previously used icons - *One icon per concept*

 I looked for a new neighborhood to live in.

 I moved to a new neighborhood.

 I'm happy in my new neighborhood.

#4: Build on previously used icons - *One icon per concept*

I looked for a new neighborhood to live in.

I moved to a new neighborhood.

I'm happy in my new neighborhood.

#4: Build on previously used icons

- You don't have to come up with a new image for every single concept.

    - In fact, it's often better if you don't!

    - You can use repetition to build upon a concept you previously established.

#4: Build on previously used icons

pays one time

pays for hospital visit

states pay a lot

Medicaid pays the doctor

#4: Build on previously used icons
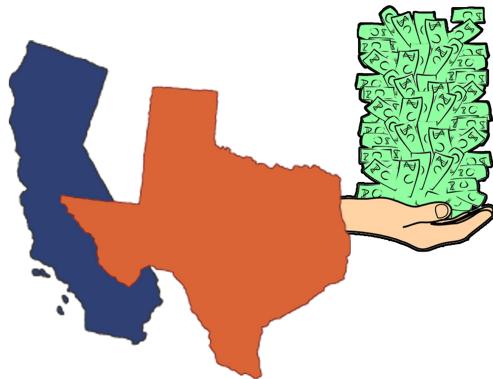
"States pay a lot"

Used a higher pile of money
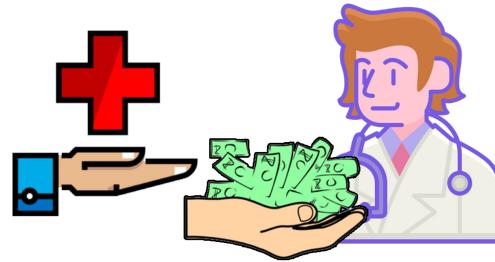
"Medicaid pays the doctor"

Medicaid also uses the "giving hand"

#4: Build on previously used icons

- You can combine multiple icons to represent multiple concepts.

check if the MCO is good

MCO helps people move into the community

state starts a new managed care program

ASAN House Rules

- Don't use same icon twice on a page (unless you have the same exact sentence twice on a page)

- No shields (on their own) or cops to represent safety

    - We like to use knights instead

- Your readers have different races, genders, disabilities, etc - your icons should also include different types of people!

The Icon Process

The Icon Process: Overview

1. Identify central concepts

2. Identify repeated concepts

3. Decide on visual representations

4. Figure out what you can do with existing clipart

5. Figure out what images you'll need to make yourself

6. Find and make the icons

1. Identify central concepts

- First, we go through each paragraph and identify the central concept.

  - We usually organize these in a spreadsheet.

- Central concepts are a few words describing the most important takeaway from a paragraph that can be represented in an image.

  - It will take some practice to get good at this.

1. Identify central concepts: Examples

- Sometimes the President and Congress disagree on what is important.

  - The central concept here is "disagreement".

- Congress is supposed to pass the budget by April 15. It usually takes longer than that.

  - The central concept here could be "by April 15." But that would leave out the fact that it usually takes longer. So the central concept here is "takes longer," or, even better, "takes a long time."

Keep in mind that you'll have to illustrate concepts!

- "Takes a long time" is easier to illustrate than "takes longer."

    - In order to show "longer", you have to also show what it's longer than.

    - Then, you have to show that one thing has "more time" and another has "less time."

    - If your concept is "takes a long time", all you have to illustrate is "long time."

- Simpler central concepts lead to easier, less abstract, and clearer illustrations.

1. Identify central concepts

3-1	people gathered together
3-2	share ideas
3-3	talk about important things
3-4	work on project
3-5	make action plans
4-1	difficult/struggle
4-2	bad for autistic ppl
4-3	problems in meetings
4-4	solving problems

- Left side shows page number and paragraph number.

- Right side shows central concept

2. Identify repeated concepts

- When you're identifying central concepts, you'll most likely find that certain concepts are repeated.

- Make note of where certain images could be repeated

- There are two reasons to do this:

  - 1) It's important to figure out how you can reduce the number of separate images you'll need to find/ make

  - 2) Like we said before, re-using images for the same concept can help reinforce their meaning throughout the document.

2. Identify repeated concepts

61-4	help more people
63-4	best way to help
10-2	help
13-3	some groups can help
16-3	helps

10-3	include everyone
34-2	everyone welcome
36-5	feel welcome
60-3	meetings that welcome

- Found multiple places where the central concept was "help" or "everyone is included"

- Made a note that we could repeat that image in multiple places

3. Decide on visual representations

ask	speech bubble with question mark
list of questions	list
give to people	a hand extending with a piece of paper
time to come up w answers	a person thinking with a thought bubble
favorite part	a star
what could have been better	speech bubble with thumbs up and question mark

- The left side has the central concepts we wrote.

- The right side has our ideas for what pictures to use to represent those concepts.

4. Figure out what you can do with pre-made clipart

- Sometimes you'll need an image with multiple parts.

- Break down the image into the different parts you'll need to find

- This makes it easier to make a "shopping list" of images

| a person with a speech bubble, bubble has a picture of a sandwich with a question mark next to it	person	speech bubble	sandwich	question mark

4. Figure out what you can do with pre-made clipart

- Sometimes, you'll need to make edits to an icon itself.

    - For example, taking a pre-made clipart image of a person and changing their facial expression or what they're doing with their arms.

    - You should keep track of these kinds of edits, too.

    - It'll help you to estimate how long your Easy Read project will take overall.

5. Figure out which images you'll need to make yourself

- Sometimes your search for a specific icon won't turn up much.

- In those cases, you may need to make a new image.

- For example, we had to create a new icon for "letter board":
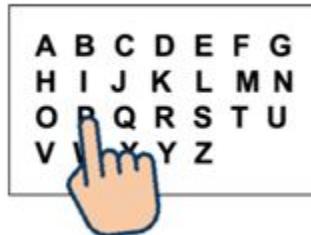
Some people who use AAC have a letter board.

6. Find and make the icons

- **This is the most time-consuming part of the Easy Read process!**

- We recommend saving each image with a filename that will help you find it later.

  - If it's only used once, we name our icons after the page they appear on and which paragraph they're in on the page. For example, "45-2.jpg".

  - If they're icons for a repeated term, you can use the name of the concept they're depicting. For example, "share ideas.png"

Where can I find pre-made images?

Sites that we use to find images:

- Flaticon - flaticon.com

- Vecteezy - vecteezy.com

- Freepik - freepik.com

- Envato Elements - elements.envato.com

- Human Pictogram 2.0 - pictogram2.com/?lang=en

- Adobe Stock - stock.adobe.com