

Topic 3.1.2: Eligibility criteria

In the last section you learned about being inclusive when you think about recruitment. In this section, we will talk about eligibility criteria, or the experiences and backgrounds people may need to be in a study.



Remember when we talked about the Belmont principle of **Justice**? The Belmont principle of Justice and the Disability Rights principle of inclusion remind us how important it is to invite lots of different people to be in a research study.

For example, when people of different ages and races or ethnicities, people with disabilities, and people who do and do not get developmental disabilities services are included, what you learn from the study represents more types of people.



It's also important to know who to invite to each study based on what the team is trying to learn. You need to make sure you only include people who are eligible or meet eligibility criteria. **Eligibility criteria** are a list of the are a list of characteristics that people need to be in a research study.

Eligibility criteria are important for a few different reasons:

Sometimes researchers have eligibility criteria for **scientific reasons**. Researchers need to make sure people can get information that helps answer their research question. For example, to be in a study about what it's like to be autistic and interact with healthcare providers, everyone in the study has to be autistic.

Sometimes researchers have eligibility criteria for **safety reasons**. Sometimes, people can get hurt if they are in the study, so researchers make sure they aren't in the study. For example, if you are researching a new medicine to treat diabetes, that medicine might hurt someone who also takes medicine for a heart condition. The researchers would exclude people who take those medicines so they don't get hurt.



Sometimes when people are not eligible for a study it can be disappointing. People might even feel upset. You'll learn how the Mental Health for All team handled this.



You will probably ask a lot of people to be in the study. Many may not want to or not be able to be in your research study. That is ok. In fact, having some people say no means you are doing a good job!