

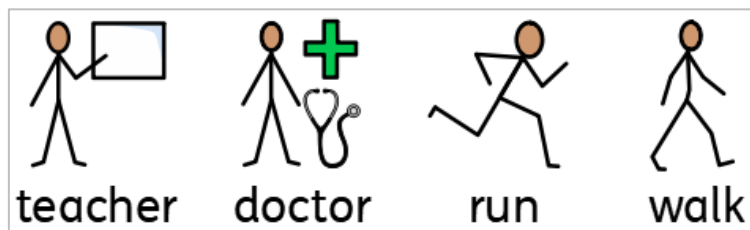
# Widgit Symbols

## Male Schema Update

### Why?

In the Widgit symbol set, the majority of images with people are depicted as gender-neutral so that they are as inclusive as possible. Some symbols we have used, like mother are gender-specific and there are some concepts where we want to have gendered alternatives to the gender-neutral version. For example, when talking about a doctor, sometimes the gender is irrelevant to the topic, but it may be seen as important if you are writing about a male or a female doctor.

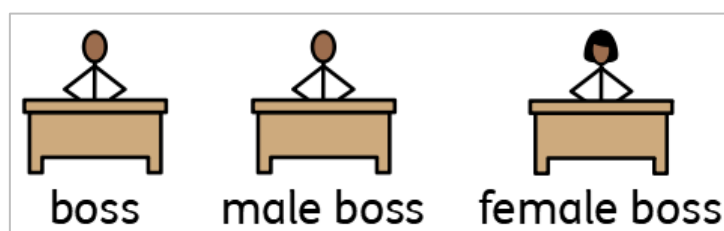
In the original symbols, most people are depicted by a stick person who is intended to be gender-neutral.



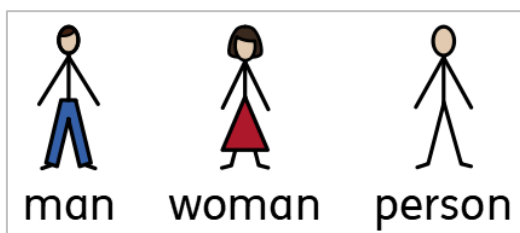
Original people symbols:















To indicate gender, women had long hair and a skirt, and men had trousers. We found that this caused confusion and often gender-neutral symbols were considered as male. Additionally, when the person is behind a desk there was no way to differentiate between the two, for example, between a gender-neutral boss and a male boss.



Because of this, it was decided to add hair to all male symbols to have parity with female and avoid confusion with the gender-neutral stick person. So essentially if a stick person has hair, it has a gender, and if it does not then it is gender neutral.



There are different styles of hair to indicate age – child, teen, adult, elderly

 child	 boy	 girl
 teenager	 teenage boy	 teenage girl
 adult	 man	 woman
 old person	 old man	 old woman

Age is indicated by the body shape, height and additional items. Elderly people have a walking stick and teenagers have a skateboard. We realise these items are not applicable to all people but we need some symbolic item that can work at a small size to represent the differences.

All symbols will have the gender-neutral stick person, and for symbols where gender might be considered important, we will have 3 versions: neutral, male and female.



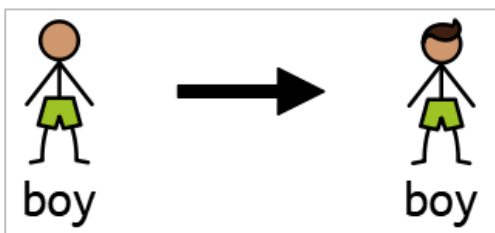
We are hoping that the addition of hair on the male symbols will help people understand that the generic stick person in most of our symbols is gender-neutral rather than male.

## The Changes

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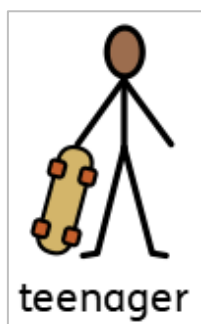
### Boy

The boy symbol element has had a simple haircut added with a small, child-like flick.



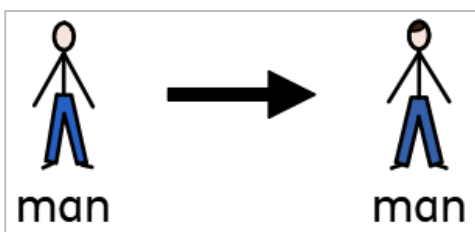
### Teenager

A new gender-neutral version of teenager has been developed – the skateboard element is symbolic of teens.



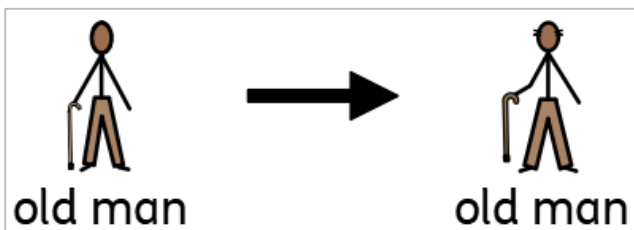
### Man

The man symbol element has had a basic side parting type hairstyle added.



### Old Man

The old man symbol element has had hair in a frizz style added to the sides of his head to represent a man going bald in his old age.



## Feedback

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We hope that you will like the improvements we have made. We are planning more changes and would value your feedback. Please send your comments to [symbols@widgit.com](mailto:symbols@widgit.com)