



**Ambitious  
about Autism**



**Employ Autism:  
From school and  
college to work**

Campaign summary April 2016

# Employ Autism: From school and college to work

## Campaign summary April 2016



“We’re launching ‘Employ Autism’ because the opportunity to have meaningful employment is vital for young people with autism. It’s so important to beat the negative stereotypes and show that people with autism can achieve in the workplace.

To kick-start this campaign, Ambitious about Autism’s Youth Council had a meeting in Parliament on employability with MPs, as well as an event for employers at Santander, attended by leading banks, law firms and media companies among others. There is no limit to the kind of jobs people with autism can do, yet the statistics show great talent is being wasted.”

Jonathan Andrews  
Chair of Ambitious about Autism’s Youth Council

## What is the issue?

Our research shows that 99% of young people with autism want to work<sup>1</sup>, but currently only 15% of adults with autism are working.<sup>2</sup> This wastes the talent of potential employees on the autism spectrum, impacts their mental health and life chances, and creates long-term costs to society.

Please support this campaign to help us tap the untapped talent out there - everyone benefits if more people with autism can realise their potential.

Employ Autism is an Ambitious about Autism campaign to transform the employability of young people with autism by improving their transition from school and college to work.

## What does the evidence say?

We need to act now because:

15%

Only 15% of young people with autism believe that employers are likely to offer someone with autism a job.

19%

Just 19% of young people with autism say they have had good careers advice.



A quarter of young people with autism have had no access to work experience.



75% of young people with autism don’t go on to any form of education beyond school.



We would save £9 billion per year across the UK if we supported people with autism to access employment.<sup>3</sup>

With the right support, young people with autism can learn, thrive and get the job they want.

<sup>1</sup> Ambitious about Autism survey, March 2016. All further statistics without footnotes are from this survey.

<sup>2</sup> The National Autistic Society (2012), *The way we are: autism*

<sup>3</sup> Knapp et al (2007), *The Economic Consequences of Autism in the UK*

## We need to act now because:

The new special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years, and the Autism Strategy both highlight the need to focus on employability as an outcome for people with autism.<sup>4</sup> We need to put the resource in place to make this possible. The government wants to halve the disability employment gap. This won't happen unless we focus on improving routes from school and college to work for the 1 in 100 people who have autism.

Not being able to find a job affects a person's confidence, mental health and income, and can lead to long-term unemployment and dependence on the state. It has a particularly scarring effect on young people.<sup>5</sup> It is in all of our interests to work together to give young people with autism a chance to achieve what so many of us take for granted: having a job.

**“When a person with autism thinks they will never find employment we have failed as a society.”**

Young person with autism

**“How does autism take its place in the workplace? It doesn't. At least, that's the opinion from most modern workplaces.”**

Young person with autism

**“There really is no sector which someone with autism won't be interested in.”**

Young person with autism

<sup>4</sup> Department for Education (2015), *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years*; Department of Health (2014), *Think Autism*.

<sup>5</sup> The Work Foundation (2016), *Don't Stop Me Now: Supporting young people with chronic conditions from education to employment*.

## What needs to change?

Employ Autism aims to:

► **give the UK's 75,000 young people with autism a fighting chance of getting a job by ensuring that the right support is in place for them to get meaningful work.**

To deliver this change, Ambitious about Autism is calling for:

**1** Better careers advice for young people with autism

**2** Better access to work experience

**3** More opportunities for young people with autism to develop skills post 16

## What can I do?



Join the campaign now at [ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/employ-autism](https://ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/employ-autism)



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Get your school, college or employer to sign up too



Donate £5 by texting **FUTR16 £5 to 70070**



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