



**SA Autism
Strategy**



Government
of South Australia

South Australia's First Autism Strategy

Discussion Paper

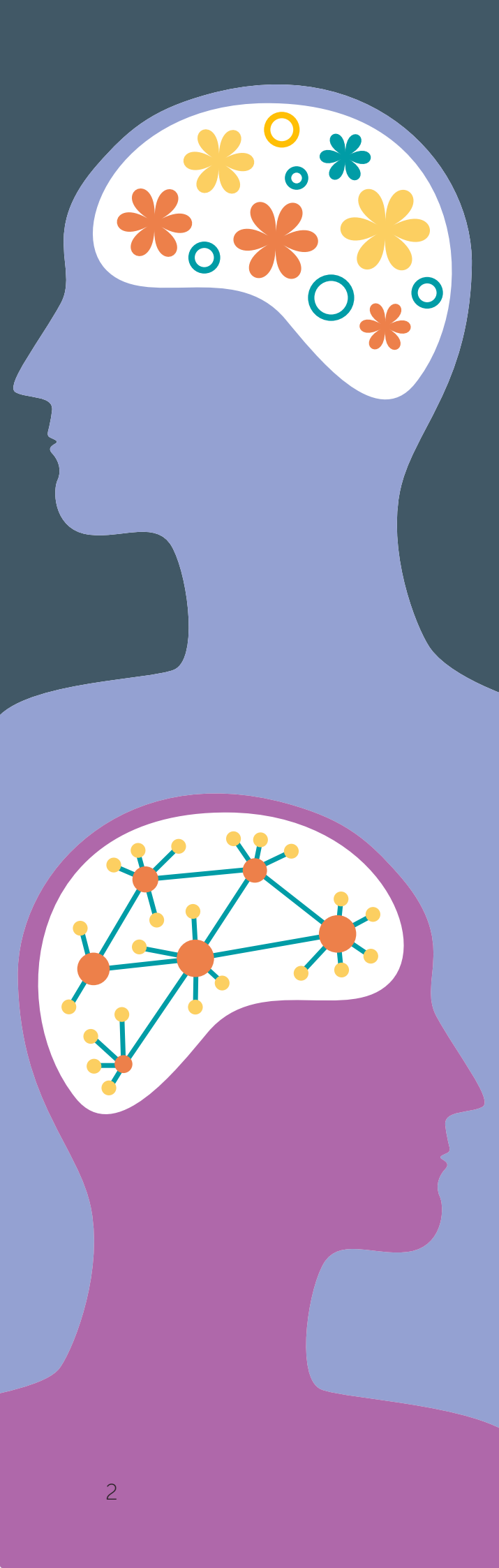




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***Design and imagery used for this consultation is temporary, and will be updated with the release of the Strategy in consultation with members of the autistic and autism communities.**



Purpose

This discussion paper is the start of consultations with the autistic and autism communities. All submissions received will inform the development of South Australia's first Autism Strategy (the Strategy) and the Autism Charter (the Charter). The first topic provides detailed information on these important documents and asks for your thoughts.

We recognise there are people in the autistic and autism communities who prefer person-first language, people who prefer identity-first language and people who use the terms interchangeably.

For this discussion paper, identity-first language was chosen in response to feedback from the autistic and autism communities and has been used with the intention of being inclusive. We will ask for your thoughts on this approach.

An Easy English version of this document is available [here](#).

Background and information

What is happening?

The autistic and autism communities have long advocated for greater community knowledge, understanding and support for autistic people.

A recent member survey undertaken by the Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Australia and New Zealand found 92% of autistic people would find communicating about autism easier if there were broader community understanding and acceptance and increased community education.

This shows it is time to move beyond talking about creating autism awareness. It is time to build knowledge, understanding and acceptance to create lasting, and long overdue, cultural change across the community.

The State Government has listened to the calls of autistic people and families. In a nation first, the Premier appointed an Assistant Minister for Autism to solely focus on representing the autistic and autism communities.

The Strategy will be co-designed with the autistic and autism communities and focus on key priority areas which autistic individuals have repeatedly raised as involving particular challenges and barriers, including:

- respect for rights, autonomy and diversity
- safety, justice and equity
- community understanding, knowledge and acceptance

- government services
- health, mental health and wellbeing
- education, employment and the workforce.

The Strategy will also align to the [State Disability Inclusion Plan \(Inclusive SA\)](#) and play an important role in shaping future State Government policies. The Strategy will be developed to complement the work undertaken in relation to the [Federal Government's National Autism Strategy](#).

Importantly, the Strategy will be co-designed *with* and *for* the autistic and autism communities. It is clear meaningful cultural change and greater inclusion in our community can only come about by consulting, listening, and creating open dialogue with the autistic and autism communities.

The State Government is committed to creating a more inclusive and fairer society for all. As the State's largest employer, the State Government will lead the way in bringing change to our workplaces through the creation of a Charter to be rolled out to all Government agencies.

The development and creation of the Strategy is an important step towards creating a more inclusive and knowledgeable society where autistic people can meaningfully participate in the community.

Topic 1: State Autism Strategy

Why do we need a State Autism Strategy?

The development and creation of the Strategy is a response to years of advocacy by the autistic and autism communities. It will support a dedicated whole of Government approach to create a fairer and more inclusive society.

Autistic people contribute across all areas of society – in preschools, homes, schools, workplaces and local sports and community clubs.

Over 200,000 Australians are autistic and 1 in 4 Australians have an autistic family member. Autism is also the largest primary disability group in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and South Australia sits above the national average, with 39% of South Australian NDIS participants having autism as their primary diagnosis.

Over half of all autistic people experience poor mental health, with a suicide rate nine times that of the general population.

Currently, autistic people are half as likely to complete year 10 than the general population, and three times more likely to be unemployed than other people with disability.

Members of the autistic and autism communities have shared how access to supports is crucial and can change lives, however, access to services is often dependent on a diagnosis and those services being affordable, available, and accessible.



The State Government is listening to these concerns and, as a start, has responded by committing to:

- \$28.79 million over four years to fund an Autism Inclusion Teacher in every public primary school from the beginning of Term 1, 2023
- an increase to the number of autism-qualified staff in preschools
- access to support services in children's centres
- developing a State Autism Strategy that operates with Inclusive SA and requires all State Government agencies to sign up to the Charter
- investing \$50 million to fund 100 additional speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists and counsellors in the public school system.

The Consultation and Co-design process

Through public consultation, the State Government invites submissions from the autistic and autism communities that will shape the Strategy and Charter.

To start the consultation and co-design process, the State Government wants to hear your feedback on this discussion paper, in your words, with your stories and your experiences.

We hope to hear from a diverse range of members of the autistic and autism communities.

Discussion paper – Public Consultation and Co-design

This discussion paper is the start of public consultation and co-design for the Strategy and Charter with ideas and questions that will help shape them.

On 30 September 2022, a workshop was held with 19 autistic people to co-design this discussion paper and questions. We thank those representatives for their valuable input and guidance.

We are now seeking feedback and guidance from the autistic and autism communities through a public consultation process. This process gives anyone in the autistic and autism communities the opportunity to participate in the development of the Strategy and Charter through submission of responses to the discussion paper (noting not every question needs to be responded to) or the YourSAy survey which has been developed based on the questions posed in this Discussion Paper.





Consultation period:

25 November 2022–20 February 2023



YourSAy survey:

yoursay.sa.gov.au/state-autism-strategy



Easy read version

yoursay.sa.gov.au/state-autism-strategy

If you need further assistance,

have any questions or require an alternative accessible version, please email: SAAutismStrategy@sa.gov.au



Members of the autistic and autism communities will also have opportunities to contribute to the development of the Strategy through:

- **Focus groups facilitated by JFA Purple Orange:**
to be held over the 12 week consultation period for autistic children, autistic young people, autistic adults, parents and carers, and peak bodies and service providers.
- **An Autism Advisory Committee:**
an Expression of Interest process will be shared through social media.
- **Public forums:**
to be held over the 12 week consultation period.
- **Written, audio, visual and video submissions:**
Members of the autistic and autism communities are encouraged to submit written, audio, visual and video submissions to SAAutismStrategy@sa.gov.au

For more information about these opportunities please visit yoursay.sa.gov.au/state-autism-strategy or contact our team via SAAutismStrategy@sa.gov.au

SA Autism Strategy: consultation timeline

Draft Strategy - Public Consultation Process

Once the initial public consultation process is finalised, a draft Strategy will be created. This draft Strategy will then be presented for further public consultation to ensure it accurately reflects the feedback provided and will make a positive difference to the lives of autistic people in South Australia.



Q1

What would give you confidence in the Strategy?

Q2

What can we do to ensure we work in collaboration with autistic and autism communities to develop this Strategy?

State Autism Charter – Consultation and Co-design

The State Government will develop a Charter that all State Government agencies will be required to adopt. The Charter will be co-designed with autistic and autism communities and developed in conjunction with the Strategy.

The Charter is intended to provide State Government agencies with a series of principles and commitments to ensure they are responsive to the needs of autistic people and are accountable for how their services respond to, and engage with, autistic and autism communities.

Principles identified and modified from Inclusive SA for consideration in the Charter include:

- Increased workplace knowledge, understanding and appreciation of autism through informed training provided or endorsed by autistic people, including, but not limited to, best practise communication
- Increased workforce capacity to support autistic students, employees and customers
- Increased participation and leadership opportunities for autistic people in the workforce, social and economic life
- Maintaining collaboration, consultation and conversation with the autistic and autism communities
- Increased autism knowledge and understanding for the built environment of workplaces and organisations
- The right to education and employment opportunities that are accessible for autistic people
- Access to information in appropriate and inclusive forms and styles
- Respect for diversity of all autistic people
- Increased access to, and information about, inclusive support and diagnostic services
- Rights to pursue complaints and discrimination in the workplace
- Maintaining a safe, supportive and inclusive social environment
- Acknowledge and respect the crucial role of families, carers and friendship activities
- Respect the needs and rights of children as they develop
- Acknowledge and respect the diverse abilities, strengths, goals and needs of autistic people
- Acknowledge that many autistic people also have co-occurring diagnoses and complex needs
- A co-ordinated whole of Government approach towards autism inclusion.

Q3

Of the above principles, which five principles are most important to you?

Q4

What other principles should be included in the Charter?

Topic 2: Defining autism

Autism – definition

Every autistic person is an individual with unique qualities, strengths, weaknesses and support needs. There is not one way that all autistic individuals experience the world. This is why the term 'spectrum' is often used – to reflect that every individual's lived experience of autism is different.

Defining autism for the purposes of the discussion paper and Strategy is complex, but is fundamental to supporting community knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and attitudes over time.

The following definitions have been identified as definitions used by peak bodies:

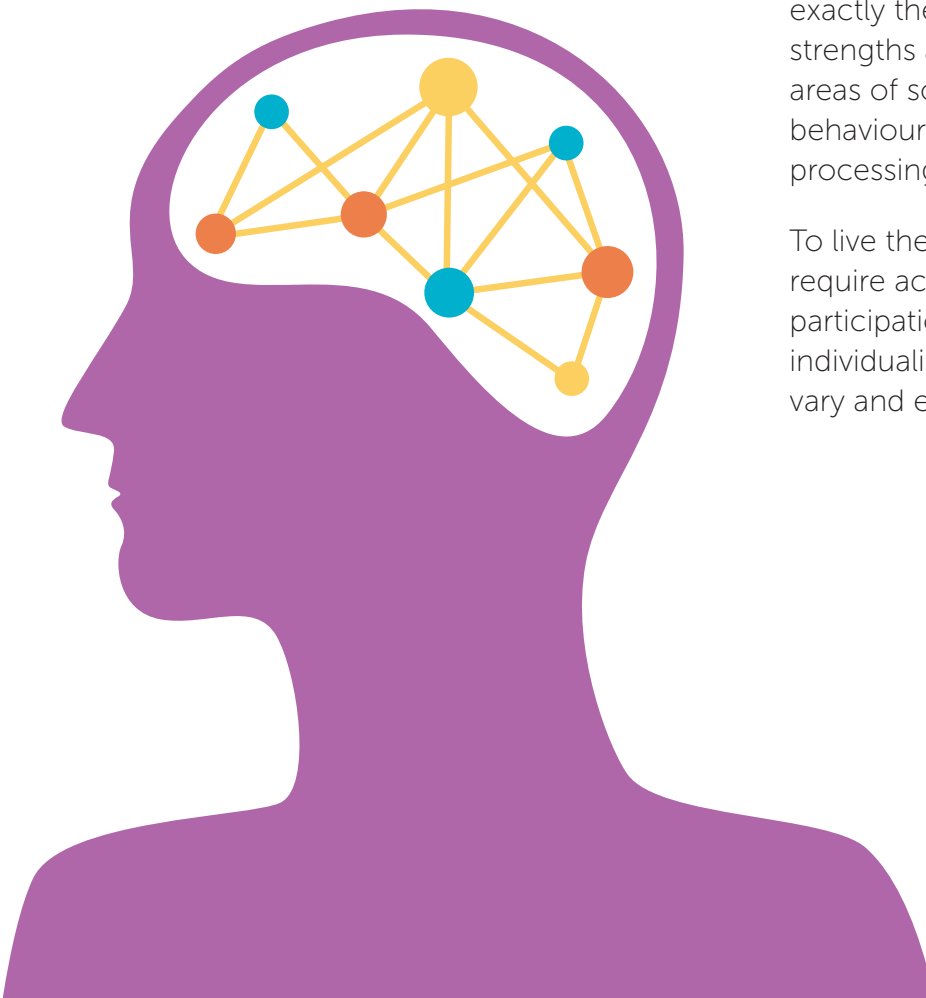
ASPECT (Autism Spectrum Australia)

Autism is a condition that affects how a person thinks, feels, interacts with others, and experiences their environment. It is a lifelong disability that starts when a person is born and stays with them into old age. Every Autistic person is different to every other. This is why autism is described as a 'spectrum'. Aspect describes autism as a different brilliant®.

Australian Autism Alliance

Autism is a complex life-long neurodevelopmental condition resulting from differences in the brain and nervous system. Many people meet the diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder. Autism is characterised by differences in social communication and the presence of restrictive, repetitive and/or sensory behaviours or interests. No two people experience autism in exactly the same way; with individual strengths and difficulties across the areas of social communication, behaviour, language, thinking, learning, processing, and daily living skills.

To live their best lives autistic people require acceptance, accommodation, participation, and/ or appropriate individualised support that can vary and evolve over time.



Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing

Autism spectrum disorder (also simply termed autism) is a persistent developmental disorder, characterised by symptoms evident from early childhood. These symptoms include difficulty in social interaction, restricted or repetitive patterns of behaviour and impaired communication skills. However, these may not be recognised until later, when social demands, such as those related to schooling, become greater.

There is no definitive test for autism; instead, diagnosis is made on the basis of developmental assessments and behavioural observations. This snapshot explores the prevalence and characteristics of people with autism, and their use of disability support services.

Autism SA

Autism is a neurological developmental difference that changes the way an individual relates to the environment and people in it.

Autism changes the way that an individual sees, experiences and understands the world.

There is not one way that an autistic individual experiences the world, this is why the term 'spectrum' is used- this is to reflect the fact that every individual's lived experience of autism is different.

Individuals on the spectrum may have skills in particular areas, while finding other aspects of life particularly challenging. How skills develop across a life span varies as much as autism itself and can vary significantly from person to person.

Reframing Autism

Autism is a neurodevelopmental difference. Autistic individuals' brains develop in distinct ways that do not correspond to how "typically developing" ("TD") brains are expected to develop. Thus, Autistic individuals think, process, sense, move and interact atypically.

World Health Organisation

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are a diverse group of conditions. They are characterised by some degree of difficulty with social interaction and communication. Other characteristics are atypical patterns of activities and behaviours, such as difficulty with transition from one activity to another, a focus on details and unusual reactions to sensations.

Q5

Which definition (or parts of each definition), if any, do you think best represents autism? If so, why?

Q6

Do you see any problems with the use of any of these definitions? If so, what are those problems?

Q7

In your own words, how would you define autism?

Language is Important

We recognise that language is an important factor in identity.

Person-first language aims to put the person before their disability and includes terminology such as 'person with autism', 'people on the autism spectrum', or 'individual with autism'.

Identity-first language reflects the belief that being autistic is a core part of a person's identity and includes terminology such as 'autistic person', 'autistic individual' or 'autistic'.

Interchangeable language uses both person-first or identity-first language, with no specific preference to either.

Reflecting the diversity of language preferences within the community, both person-first and identity-first language is usually adopted.

We also recognise that language is an important factor in community identity. For the purpose of the Strategy, it is important to define how best to refer to the autistic and autism communities. Through consultation, we understand that the autistic community is the community of autistic people themselves. You must be autistic to be a member of the autistic community. Whereas, the autism community includes people who are not autistic themselves, such as parents of an autistic person and professionals who provide support to autistic people. Throughout this document, we have referred to these two community groups as autistic and autism communities as we acknowledge that they are two different communities with a common interest, however, each community will have a different perspective or viewpoint.

Q8

What is your preference between person-first, identity-first or interchangeable language and why?

Q9

Do you think it is appropriate to use the term 'autistic and autism communities' when referring to autistic people, their families, carers and professionals who support autistic people?

Q10

Are there some language terms often used in relation to autism that you find problematic? If so, what are they and why?

Topic 3: Rights, autonomy and diversity

Diversity: No two autistic people are the same

Like all members of the community, autistic people differ in their characteristics, skills, knowledge, needs and experiences, and possess fundamental human rights, responsibilities and autonomy. However, autistic people have shared how they have often faced stigma, discrimination, and barriers in the community. This is often in relation, but not limited to, their:

- individual worth and dignity
- right to realise physical, social, sexual, reproductive, emotional and intellectual capacities
- right to self-advocacy or autonomy to make decisions, including supported decisions and to take risks
- cultural and linguistic diversity
- age, race, class and religious beliefs
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- gender identity and sexual orientation
- privacy and confidentiality
- right to live free from neglect, abuse, trauma and exploitation
- right to pursue complaints and access justice
- diagnosis or journey to diagnosis
- communication style (tone and vocabulary), personal expression and expression of emotions.

Q11

What can be done to support autistic people that also identify with one or more diversity groups, including LGBTQIA+ and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

Q12

What can be done to support autistic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Q13

What else should the Strategy include to support or promote the fundamental human rights of autistic people?

Rights: Safety and equality

All people have the right to feel safe in their community, alone or with loved ones. Members of autistic and autism communities have shared how some autistic people are less likely to be aware of surroundings, recognise when a situation or environment may not be safe and take precautions to stay safe. In addition, the autistic and autism communities have shared how they feel that autistic people may be targeted based on their behaviours (e.g. stimming or sensory overload). The increased risk and fear of safety can cause both physical and psychological trauma.



Q14

What else should the Strategy include to support those impacted by trauma in the autistic and autism communities?

Q15

Do you feel safe in the community?
What makes you feel safe or unsafe?

Q16

What measures can be taken to prevent discrimination, exploitation, violence, and abuse of autistic people?

Topic 4: Community attitudes

Although community awareness of autism is very high, community understanding, and attitudes can be barriers to autistic people's inclusion in social and economic life.

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Australia and New Zealand member survey found that almost 74% of autistic people do not know what they can request when it comes to asking for what they want and need. Almost 76% of responders felt that if they did ask for support, they would not be listened to.

In the same survey, 15% prefer not to tell people they are autistic, and most respondents feel most comfortable talking about their autism with someone they know or if they need a service or support.

Understanding the needs of, and challenges faced by, autistic people is critical to ensuring that all State Government agencies adopt appropriate inclusive policies and practices. This includes disproving myths and misconceptions about autism, such as:

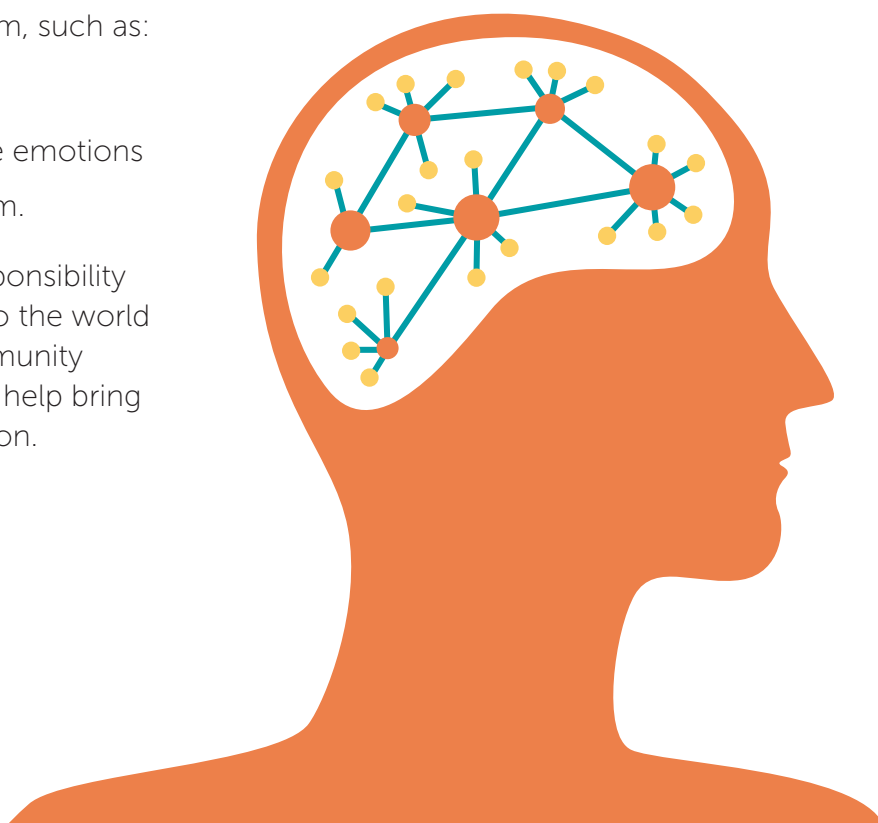
- only boys are autistic
- autistic people don't have emotions
- people grow out of autism.

Importantly, it is not the responsibility of autistic people to adapt to the world around them. Instead, community attitudes need to change to help bring about greater autism inclusion.

Creating an autism inclusive society

The autistic and autism communities have long advocated for meaningful cultural change. All people, including autistic people, have the right to enjoy their community and experience the highest level of physical, emotional and mental health. However, the State Government recognises autistic people are often subject to a lack of understanding and acceptance of autism. This can limit opportunities for autistic people to engage and participate in their communities while also negatively impacting their physical, emotional and mental health.

The community requires greater understanding, and knowledge around autism - how it is a natural and ordinary part of human diversity, and how autistic people can live full lives with interests, desires and dreams just like any other Australian.



Sense of belonging

Connection to community is important for all South Australians. Strong social connections can improve quality of life, help give a sense of belonging and provide better health outcomes. Through initial consultation on the discussion paper, we heard that creating opportunities for connections, networks and mentorship between members of the autistic and autism communities would support these communities to build relationships, confidence and a sense of belonging.



Q17

What community networks or connections are important to you in helping to build a sense of belonging?

Q18

What are some common misconceptions and myths about autism you have seen/heard?

Q19

What methods can be used to better inform the community about autism?

Q20

What do you think could be improved in the community?

Topic 5: Access to Government Services

Government Services

People need to be able to access Government Services in order to take part in social, cultural and economic life. However, many in the autistic and autism communities have shared their negative experiences using government or public services including, lack of community knowledge, discrimination and abuse, as well as intense and unpredictable sensory environments.

Q21 What Government services are important to you?

Q22 How has your experience been in accessing Government services?

Q23 How can Government services be changed to be more inclusive towards autistic people?

Criminal Justice System

Autistic people are more likely to be victims and witnesses of crimes than offenders. Autistic people have also shared how they face particular challenges when engaging with the criminal justice system, which includes SA Police, the court system and correctional services (e.g. prisons, community corrections and the Parole Board).

Q24 Have you had any experiences with the criminal justice system either as a victim, witness or offender? If so, what more can be done to improve the justice system to be more knowledgeable towards autism?

It is important to note: *other government services are referred to in Topic 6 and Topic 7.*

Topic 6: Health, mental health and wellbeing

Diagnosis

At any stage in life, diagnosis is crucial in providing autistic children, adolescents and adults and their carers access to relevant information, services, referrals, and practical support, in accordance with their individual and evolving needs and preferences.

While a [National Guideline for the Assessment and diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders](#) was launched in 2018, many members of the autistic and autism communities have shared that they continue to face barriers in relation to receiving a diagnosis and those services being affordable, available and accessible.

Autistic women and girls have also shared how they experience additional barriers in receiving a diagnosis – often autism presents differently in women and girls and therefore often goes unrecognised. Many autistic women and girls have shared how they are better at ‘camouflaging’ and ‘masking’ in order to fit in.



Q25

How was your experience with the diagnostic process?

Q26

Who are the particular diversity groups in the autistic community that may face additional challenges in receiving a diagnosis?

Q27

What can be done to better support diagnosis in women and girls?

Health and Mental health factors

Members of the autistic and autism communities often share, and recent data shows, that autistic people have less access to health care despite autistic people having an increased rate of co-occurring health and mental health conditions and diagnoses.

The healthcare and mental health needs of autistic people are often complex and require a range of integrated services, that includes health promotion, care, and rehabilitation. Collaboration and connections between health practitioners (e.g. General practitioners and allied health professionals), government services (including public health system e.g. hospitals and local health networks) and the NDIS or aged care is important to respond where a person has complex needs.

Q28

What can be done to improve the pathways for autistic people in accessing the support they require through state government services such as public health services (e.g. GPs, hospitals or local health networks)?

Q29

Do you feel like there is appropriate information and support available for autistic people to access health and mental health services?
If not, what could be done to improve this?



Wellbeing factors

Autistic and autism communities have long advocated for meaningful cultural change for improved community awareness and understanding for autistic people. Many have repeatedly shared how social exclusion in all areas of life has contributed to poor mental, emotional and physical health outcomes for autistic people, restricting opportunities and access to programs, supports and spaces that may significantly improve their overall health and wellbeing.

These challenges are often said to be greater in regional and country communities.

The Strategy, in connection with Inclusive SA, should respond to the wellbeing barriers facing autistic people through the implementation of State Government agency Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs) inclusive.sa.gov.au/inclusion-in-action/community-plans

Q30

What else should the Strategy include to support inclusion and promote improved wellbeing practices amongst the autistic community?

Q31

What more can be done to support the wellbeing of autistic people from the regions and country towns?



Topic 7: Education, employment and the workforce

Education

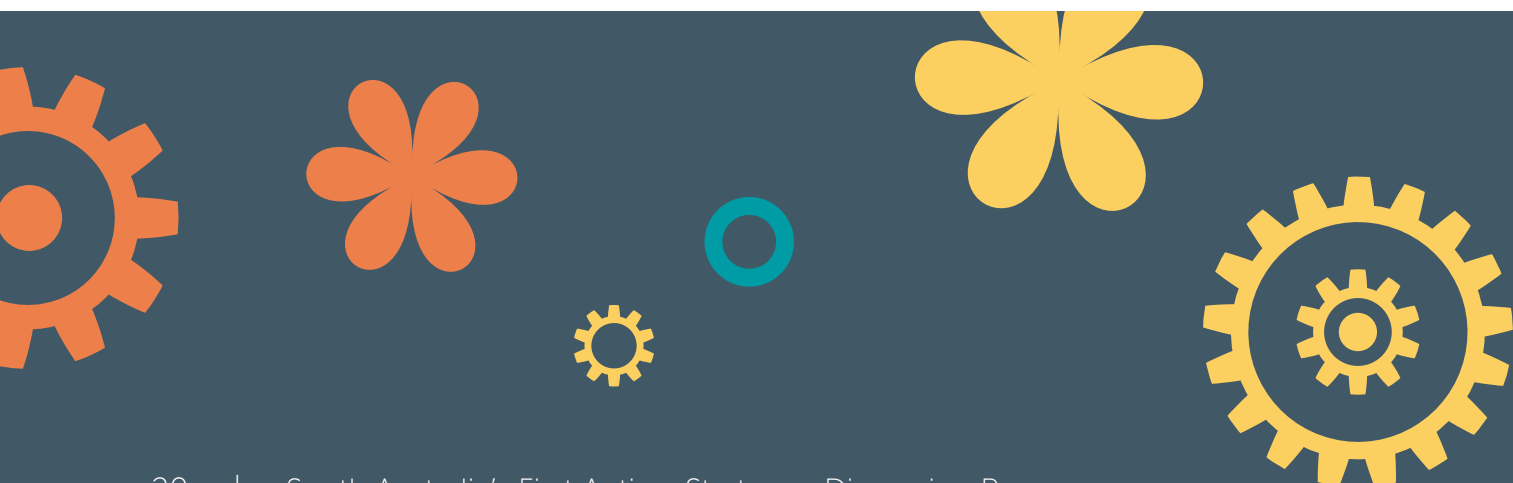
The State Government believes in the power of education as the greatest equaliser. However, the autistic and autism communities have shared how they face particular challenges accessing education.

Data shows autistic people are half as likely to complete Year 10 and many members of the autistic and autism communities have also shared their experiences of trauma associated with the school environment, which can lead to parents/carers choosing to home school. Transition periods (e.g. changing classrooms, teachers and moving from preschool to primary to secondary learning environments) can be particularly challenging and require appropriate supports for children and young people to manage the change effectively. Mentors and support networks can assist with this, creating a sense of belonging and increasing confidence and capacity.

The State Government is listening and has responded to these concerns and, as a start, is funding an Autism Inclusion Teacher in every public primary school in South Australia from Term 1, 2023. Up to one day per week funding will be offered to free up teachers to take on the role. Furthermore, there will be an increase in staff with autism-focused training in preschools and further allied health supports through the State's children's centres.

The State Government also supports life-long learning which includes, but is not limited to, university, TAFE and adult learning. While we acknowledge that autistic people are half as likely to complete Year 10, many autistic people also engage in adult learning.

Learning happens in many settings, not just formal educational environments, therefore Autistic people must be accommodated in all settings, throughout their life, where learning is undertaken.



Q32

What could educators and leadership in preschools and schools be doing to help autistic children and young people reach their full potential?

Q33

How has your experience been when communicating with schools?

Q34

What are the ways communication between families and schools can be improved?

Q35

What could educators and leadership in universities/TAFE/adult learning be doing to help autistic adults achieve their potential?

Q36

How can the built environments of educational settings be improved to be more inclusive towards autistic children and students?

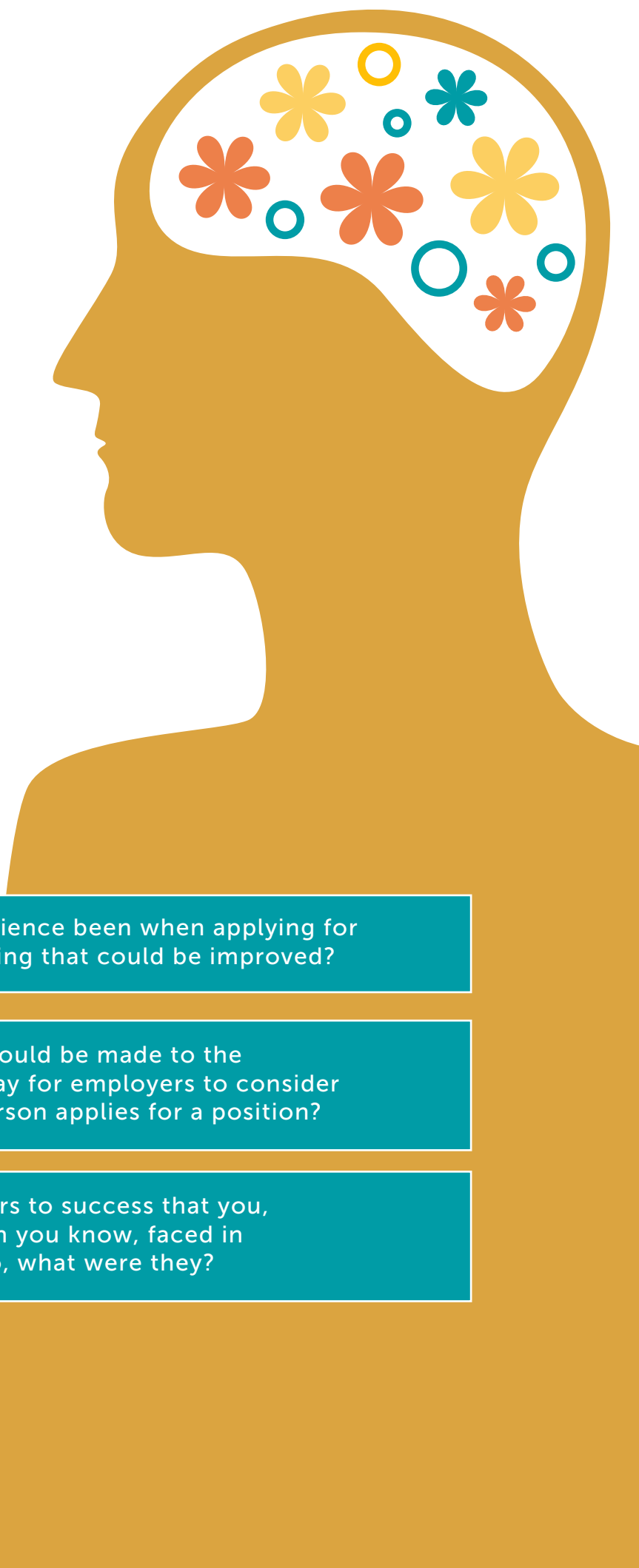


Employment and the workforce

The State Government is committed to creating a fairer society for all where everybody has opportunities to succeed and prosper, including in our workforce.

Data has shown how the unemployment rate for autistic people is more than three times the rate for people with other disabilities and almost eight times the rate of people without disability.

Participation in the workforce is important for social inclusion and economic independence. Despite the varied and diverse skillset of autistic people, which could prove invaluable to employers, autistic people continue to be underrepresented in the workforce.



Q37 How has your experience been when applying for jobs? Is there anything that could be improved?

Q38 What adjustments could be made to the employment pathway for employers to consider when an autistic person applies for a position?

Q39 Are there any barriers to success that you, or an autistic person you know, faced in the workforce? If so, what were they?

Topic 8: Spaces and the built environment

Spaces and the built environment refers to the human-made spaces in which we live, and significantly impacts the quality of life of autistic people. The opportunity for autistic people to independently interact with the built environment is often compromised (and sometimes denied) due to the mismatch between their specific needs and the 'built form.'

Research has emphasised how the altered perception of sensory stimuli and processing of information coming from the environment is one of the main issues experienced by autistic people, including:

- adverse responses to specific sounds or textures, temperatures, smells or lighting
- distress at changes to routine, locations, travel, interior design.

The necessity to consider living environments on the basis of universal design (which includes, but is not limited to, the specific needs of autistic people) has gained increasing importance in urban planning and urban design fields over the past decade, though it is clear more needs to be done. Therefore, it is essential to investigate further how the built environment in our past, current and future infrastructure projects impacts autistic people to promote their autonomy and enhance their overall quality of life.

Q40

If spaces and the built environment were more inclusive towards autistic people, what would it look and feel like?

Q41

Are you aware of any locations in South Australia where there are dedicated and incorporated 'autism-friendly' designed spaces? If so, what has made these spaces inclusive, safe or successful?

Discussion Paper Questions - Master list

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|------------|---|
| Q1 | What would give you confidence in the Strategy? | Q9 | Do you think it is appropriate to use the term 'autistic and autism communities' when referring to autistic people, their families, carers and professionals who support autistic people? |
| Q2 | What can we do to ensure we work in collaboration with autistic and autism communities to develop this Strategy? | Q10 | Are there some language terms often used in relation to autism that you find problematic? If so, what are they and why? |
| Q3 | Of the above principles, which 5 principles are most important to you? | Q11 | What can be done to support autistic people that also identify with one or more diversity groups, including LGBTQIA+ and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. |
| Q4 | What other principles should be included in the Charter? | Q12 | What can be done to support autistic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? |
| Q5 | Which definition (or parts of each definition), if any, do you think best represents autism? If so, why? | Q13 | What else should the Strategy include to support or promote the fundamental human rights of autistic people? |
| Q6 | Do you see any problems with the use of any of these definitions? If so, what are those problems? | Q14 | What else should the Strategy include to support those impacted by trauma in the autistic and autism communities? |
| Q7 | In your own words, how would you define autism? | Q15 | Do you feel safe in the community? What makes you feel safe or unsafe? |
| Q8 | What is your preference between person-first, identity-first or interchangeable language and why? | | |

- Q16** What measures can be taken to prevent discrimination, exploitation, violence, and abuse of autistic people?
- Q17** What community networks or connections are important to you in helping to build a sense of belonging?
- Q18** What are some common misconceptions and myths about autism you have seen/heard?
- Q19** What methods can be used to better inform the community about autism?
- Q20** What do you think could be improved in the community?
- Q21** What Government services are important to you?
- Q22** How has your experience been in accessing Government services?
- Q23** How can Government services be changed to be more inclusive towards autistic people?
- Q24** Have you had any experiences with the criminal justice system either as a victim, witness or offender? If so, what more can be done to improve the justice system to be more knowledgeable towards autism?
- Q25** How was your experience with the diagnostic process?
- Q26** Who are the particular diversity groups in the autistic community that may face additional challenges in receiving a diagnosis?
- Q27** What can be done to better support diagnosis in women and girls?
- Q28** What can be done to improve the pathways for autistic people in accessing the support they require through state government services such as public health services (e.g. GPs, hospitals or local health networks)?
- Q29** Do you feel like there is appropriate information and support available for autistic people to access health and mental health services? If not, what could be done to improve this?

- Q30** What else should the Strategy include to support inclusion and promote improved wellbeing practices amongst the autistic community?
- Q31** What more can be done to support the wellbeing of autistic people from the regions and country towns?
- Q32** What could educators and leadership in preschools and schools be doing to help autistic children and young people reach their full potential?
- Q33** How has your experience been when communicating with schools?
- Q34** What are the ways communication between families and schools can be improved?
- Q35** What could educators and leadership in universities/ TAFE/adult learning be doing to help autistic adults achieve their potential?
- Q36** How can the built environments of educational settings be improved to be more inclusive towards autistic children and students?
- Q37** How has your experience been when applying for jobs? Is there anything that could be improved?
- Q38** What adjustments could be made to the employment pathway for employers to consider when an autistic person applies for a position?
- Q39** Are there any barriers to success that you, or an autistic person you know, faced in the workforce? If so, what were they?
- Q40** If spaces and the built environment were more inclusive towards autistic people, what would it look and feel like?
- Q41** Are you aware of any locations in South Australia where there are dedicated and incorporated 'autism-friendly' designed spaces? If so, what has made these spaces inclusive, safe or successful?



