

Accessibility in Australia – facts and figures

Accessibility is the term used to describe how services, settings, information or environments can be used by as many people as possible. For Autistic people and families, accessibility can include whether a place or service is predictable, understandable, sensory-accessible, flexible, and supported by people who respond with respect and understanding.

This information sheet presents key findings from Aspect's national study about Autistic people's experiences accessing everyday services and supports across Australia. A total of 246 people took part in the study – 149 Autistic adults who reported on their own experiences and 97 parents/caregivers who responded on behalf of an Autistic person.

Accessibility across everyday life

Accessibility barriers were common across daily life.

AREA OF EVERYDAY LIFE	AUTISTIC ADULTS EXPERIENCING ACCESSIBILITY DIFFICULTIES
Healthcare	64%
Employment	81%
Employment support services	71%
Public transport	70%
Shopping	82%
Education and training	71%
Community activities	72%

**Our purpose
a different brilliant®**

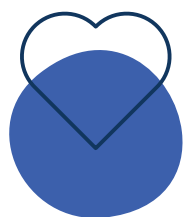
Understanding, engaging
and celebrating the strengths,
interests and aspirations of people
on the autism spectrum.



Common everyday accessibility barriers

Across everyday services, settings and supports, the most frequently reported barriers were:

- sensory environments (22%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (17%)
- communication and information barriers (16%)
- staff attitudes and understanding (15%)
- wait times and limited availability (11%)
- cost and affordability (9%).



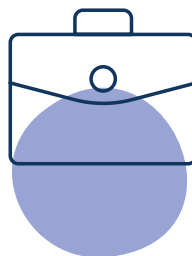
Healthcare

Autistic adults with healthcare difficulties most often reported these accessibility barriers:

- staff attitudes or understanding (71%)
- cost or affordability (68%)
- sensory environments (66%)
- long wait times or limited availability (63%).

The healthcare settings most often reported as difficult to access or use were:

- mental health services (61%)
- general practitioners (60%)
- hospitals (49%)
- allied health services (49%).



Employment

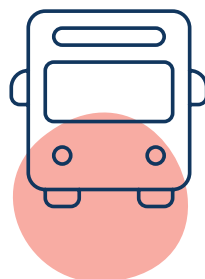
Autistic adults with employment difficulties most often reported these accessibility barriers:

- sensory environments (84%)
- communication or information (78%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (77%)
- staff attitudes or understanding (63%).

Employment support services

Autistic adults with employment support difficulties most often reported these accessibility barriers:

- communication or information (75%)
- staff attitudes or understanding (70%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (55%).



Public transport

Autistic adults with public transport difficulties most often selected these accessibility barriers:

- sensory environments (91%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (70%)
- communication or information (62%).

The transport services most often reported as difficult to access or use were:

- trains and trams (81%)
- buses (72%)
- planes and airports (43%).



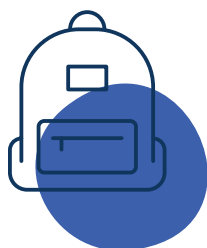
Shopping

Autistic adults with shopping difficulties most often reported these accessibility barriers:

- sensory environments (94%)
- communication or information (51%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (50%).

The retail settings most often reported as difficult to access or use were:

- supermarkets and grocery stores (96%)
- other retail stores, including clothing and electronics stores (79%).



Education and training

Autistic adults with education and training difficulties most often reported these accessibility barriers:

- communication or information (80%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (57%)
- staff attitudes or understanding (52%).

The education settings most often reported as difficult to access or use were:

- universities (63%)
- TAFE (20%).



Community activities

Autistic adults with community activity difficulties most often reported these accessibility barriers:

- sensory environments (94%)
- unpredictable or inconsistent processes (48%)
- communication or information (46%).

The community settings most often reported as difficult to access or use were:

- cafés and restaurants (86%)
- cinemas and live performance venues (51%)
- swimming pools (40%)
- gyms and fitness centres (39%).

Parents and caregivers told us ...

- **Accessibility barriers affect the whole family – not just the Autistic person.**
- **Families spend significant time planning, preparing and advocating just to access everyday services.**
- **Parents often reported feeling judged or blamed when their child experienced distress.**
- **Inaccessible environments reduced opportunities for family participation and community connection.**

You can find more facts and figures for Autistic adults and parents in the research article

