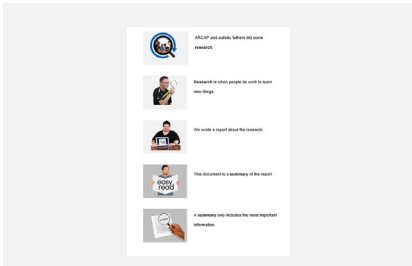


# Autistic adults experiences of having meltdowns

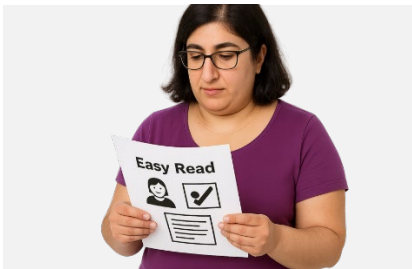
Aspect Research Centre for Autism Practice



## Bold words

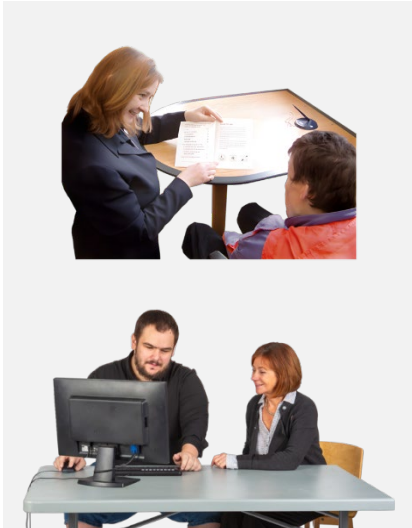


Some words in this document are **bold**.



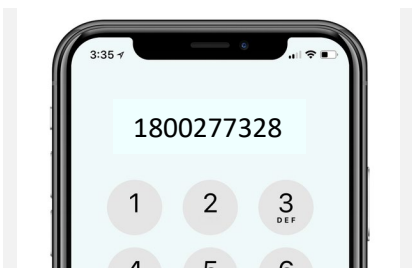
We write what the bold words mean.

## Help with this document



You can get someone to help you

- understand this document
- find more information.



Contact information is at the end of this document.

## About this document



This document is from the Aspect  
Research Centre for Autism Practice.



We are called ARCAP for short.



Some **researchers** did some **research**.



**Researchers** are people who do research.



**Research** is when people do work to understand things.



They wrote a report about the research.



This document is a **summary** of the report.



A **summary** only includes the most important information.

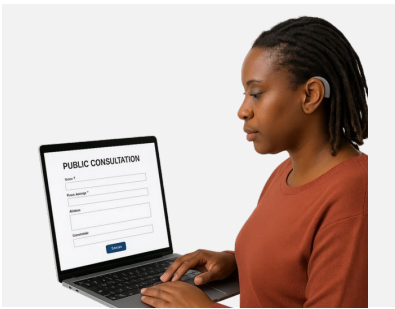
## About the research



The research is about autistic adults experiences of having meltdowns.



32 autistic people filled out a **survey**.



A **survey** is a form that asks you questions about a topic.



The researchers asked the autistic people to tell them if the survey results were wrong or right.

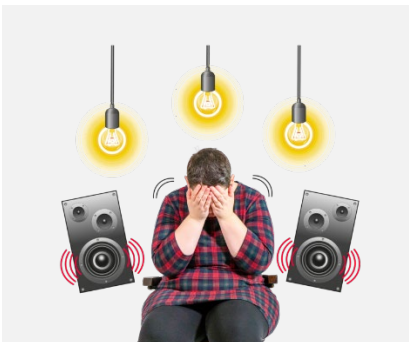
## What they found out



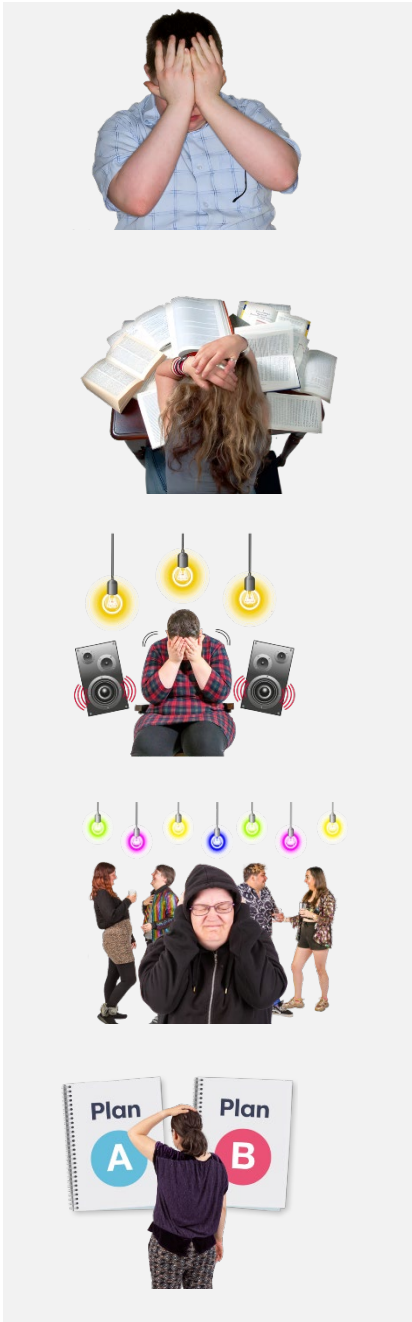
It is hard for autistic people to know how many meltdowns they have.



Some autistic people have more meltdowns than other autistic people.

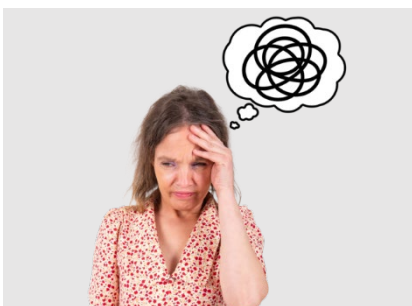


Autistic people can feel overwhelmed by lots of things.



They can feel overwhelmed by:

- feelings
- information
- sensory experiences
- being with other people
- when a routine or plan changes.



Sometimes it can be hard for autistic people to know why they feel overwhelmed.



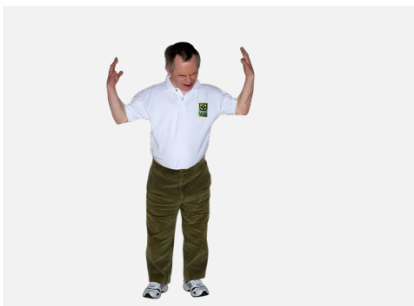
Autistic people can have a meltdown because they feel overwhelmed.



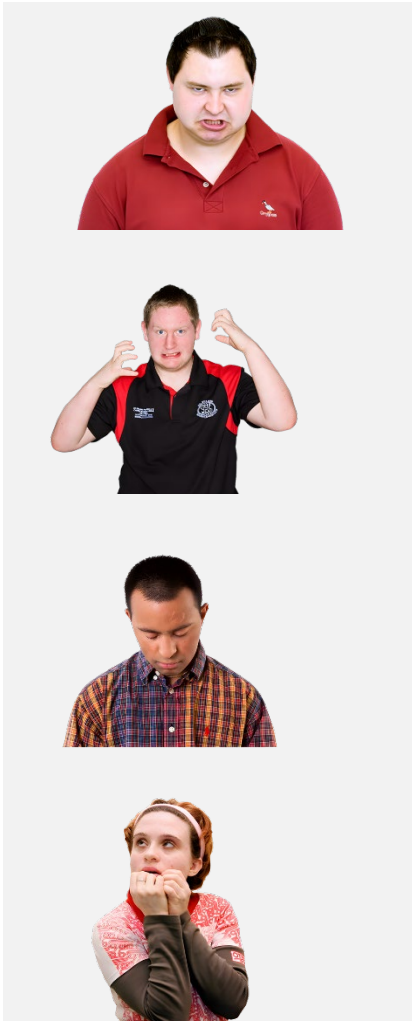
Autistic people can feel overwhelmed when they have a meltdown



They can also feel overwhelmed after they have a meltdown.



Autistic people can have big feelings when they have a meltdown.



They might feel

- angry
- frustrated
- sad
- scared.



Autistic people do not know how to cope with their feelings during a meltdown.



Meltdowns can make autistic people feel pain.

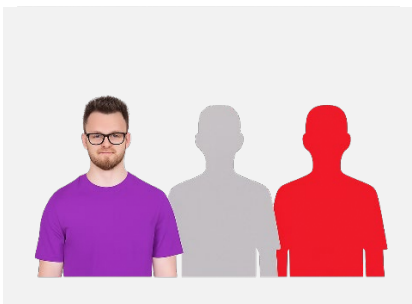


Meltdowns can make it hard for autistic people to

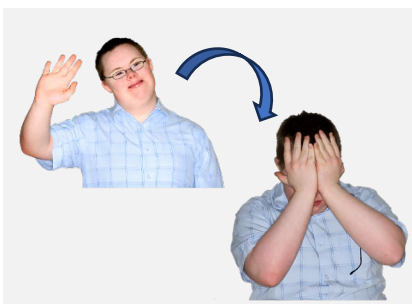
- think properly
- understand things



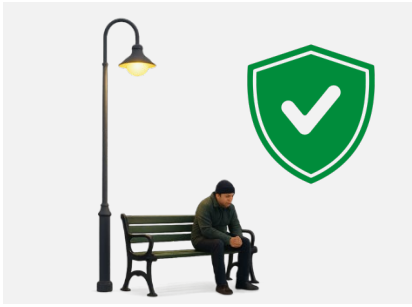
It can be hard for autistic people to remember what happened when they had a meltdown.



Autistic people said that they feel like a different person when they have a meltdown



They said that they behave in a different way.



Some autistic people have learnt how to be safe when having a meltdown



Autistic people said they feel like they explode when they have a meltdown

When Autistic people have a meltdown they might



- cry



- scream



- hit



- throw things



- break things



- hurt their bodies.



These things help autistic people to get rid of the feelings they have.



Autistic people try to

- avoid having a meltdown
- stop having a meltdown
- control their meltdown.



Autistic people want to be alone when they start having a meltdown.



Being alone stops autistic people from being overwhelmed by other people.



It also stops autistic people from hurting their relationships with other people.



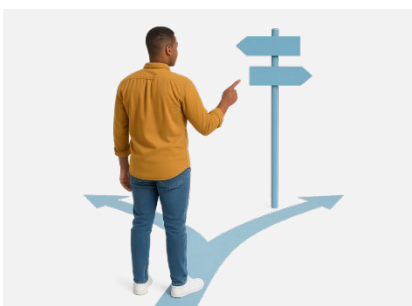
Some autistic people can stop a meltdown if they know what made it happen.



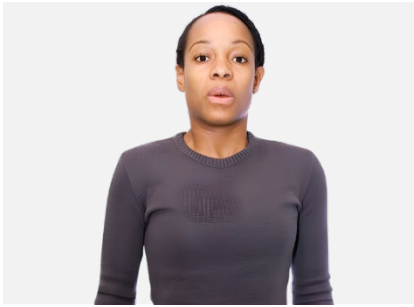
Some autistic people only have meltdowns in front of people that they know.



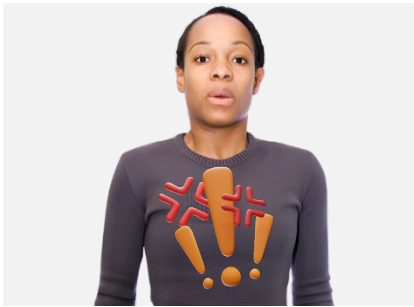
Autistic people said that having **autonomy** helps them to not have lots of meltdowns.



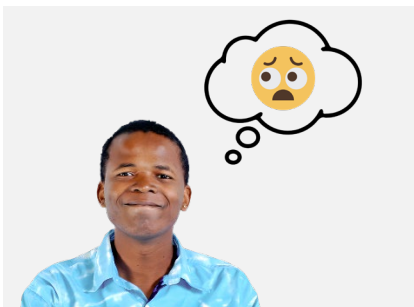
**Autonomy** is when you get to make your own choices.



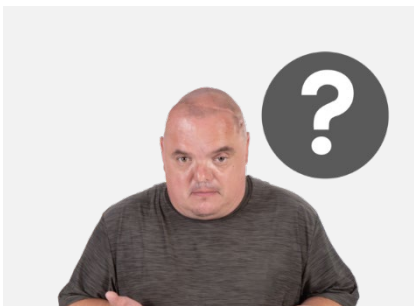
Some autistic people have learnt how to control their behaviour during a meltdown.



But they still feel the meltdown inside their bodies.



Some Autistic people said that they hide their meltdowns to keep safe.



Some autistic people do not know if they are going to have a meltdown.



This makes them feel scared when they have a meltdown.



Some autistic people have meltdowns that change.

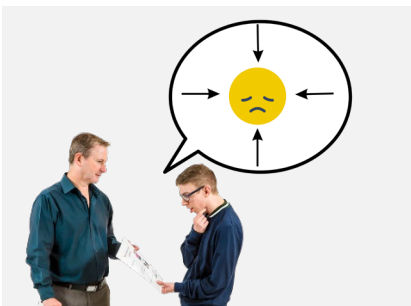
## Why this research is important



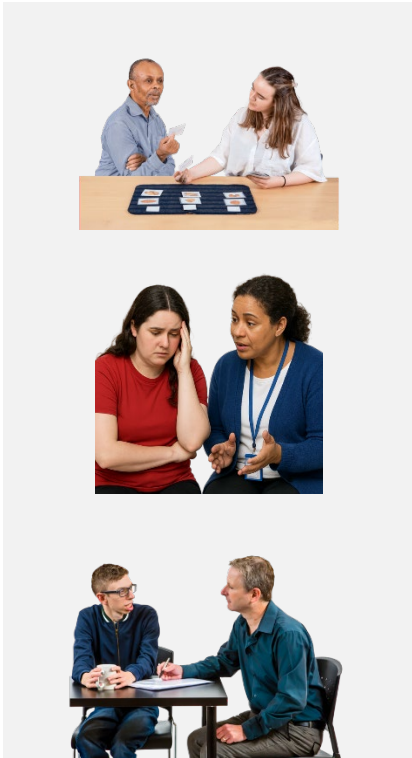
This research helps people understand that autistic people's experiences of meltdowns are not the same.



It helps people understand how autistic people think and feel when they have a meltdown.



This research helps people understand that autistic people have meltdowns for lots of reasons.

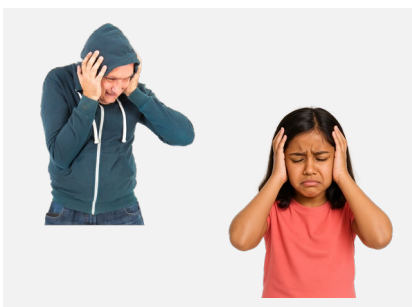


It helps therapists understand that it is important to help autistic people cope with

- the parts of meltdowns that upset them
- their feelings.



Researchers need to do research about autistic children's experiences of meltdowns.

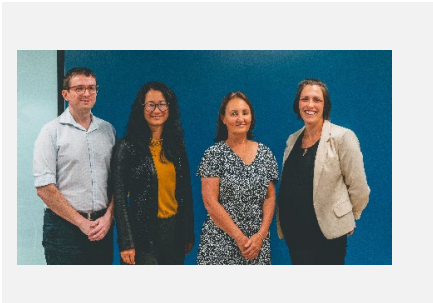


This will help people understand if autistic children have the same meltdowns as autistic adults.



It will help people understand if meltdowns change when autistic children become adults.

## Contact information



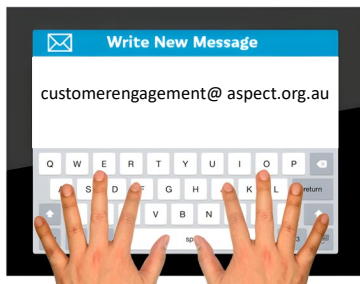
For more information contact  
ARCAP.



Call 1800 277 328



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