

Supporting Parents of Children with Autism

Summary of Findings

We conducted a research and advocacy project focusing on parents of children with diagnosed or suspected Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We spoke with **125 participants** (ranging from parents to service providers) on the challenges parents face regarding their child's diagnosis, support for their child, school placements and their mental wellbeing.



When asked about the diagnostic process for their child...

81%

of parents

received no extra support for their child following an ASD diagnosis.

71%

of parents

were dissatisfied with the length of the ASD assessment process.

£2,063

The average cost to parents for private ASD assessments and appointments.



When asked about the support available to their child...

87%

of parents had no access to local ASD services.

46%

of parents mentioned distance or lack of transport as barriers to support.

Parents reported reduced hours to support services due to budget cuts and the need to give up their career due to a lack of ASD-friendly support.

➔ When asked about their child's school experience...

73%

of children in mainstream school did not have support (e.g. assistant).

14%

of teachers were known to have completed Autism Awareness Training.

Satisfaction with school support ranged from **28%** in mainstream schools to **90%** in special schools.

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School was described as **"the biggest cause of pain and distress in the lives of young people with ASD"** due to lack of support and bullying.



➔ When asked about their own parental wellbeing...



97%

often felt overwhelmed and overburdened



85%

often felt anxious



81%

often had no time for self-care



72%

often felt isolated from friends and family

➔ Some recommendations to support neurodiverse children and their parents include:



Increased use of Autism Awareness Training



Increased and extended support for the voluntary sector



Better understanding of neurodiversity in schools



More support and resources for parental wellbeing