

How do we get autism support right in Aotearoa New Zealand?

Easy Read

October 2023



What this document is about



This Easy Read document is a **summary** of some **research** that was done by:



- Autism New Zealand



- Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.



A summary:

- is shorter than the full report
- tells you the main ideas.



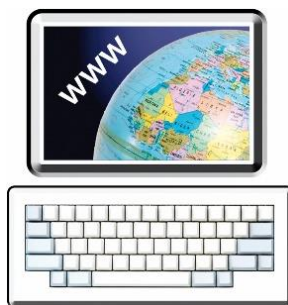
Research is when work is done to:

- find things out
- understand what those things mean.



The research team wrote a report called:

How do we get autism support right in Aotearoa New Zealand?



You can find the full report on this **website:**

www.autismcrc.com.au/nz-report



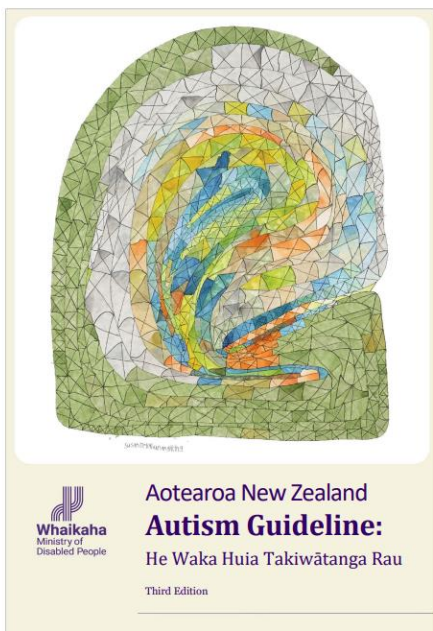
In this Easy Read document when we say **we** this means the research team:

- Autism New Zealand
- Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.

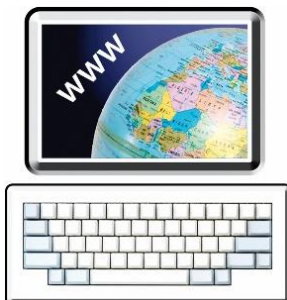


Aotearoa New Zealand has a chance to change autism support in the years to come because of:

- changes in the health system
- work done by Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People
- the Aotearoa New Zealand **Autism Guideline: He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau.**



The **Autism Guideline** has information about some of the best ways of supporting autistic people in Aotearoa New Zealand.



You can find the Autism Guideline on the Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People **website**:

<https://tinyurl.com/5ct7favx>

What the research was about



Our research was about:

- what support / services there are for **autistic people**
- what it is like to use these support / services
- ideas for how to make autism support better in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Autistic people have brains that work differently from the brains of people who are not autistic.

Their brains work differently:

- in lots of different ways
- in ways that are often different to other autistic people.



Who took part in the research?



About 1 thousand people did a survey including:

- 3 hundred autistic people
- 4 hundred parents / caregivers of autistic people
- 2 hundred and 50 people who work with autistic people
- 40 whānau / family members of autistic people.

How we did the research



A **survey** was done as part of the research.

A **survey** is when you ask people their opinion about something.



The survey helped us understand what autistic people and their support people think about:

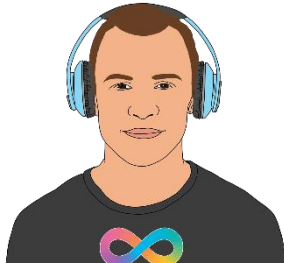
- the autism support that people can access in Aotearoa New Zealand right now
- what autism support in Aotearoa New Zealand can look like in the future.





We had 2 **advisory groups** who helped us:

- make the survey
- understand what people who did the survey said.



An **advisory group** is a group of people who know a lot about:

- autism
- the kinds of support that autistic people can use in Aotearoa New Zealand.



The 2 advisory groups were the:

- Autistic Advisory Group
- Partnership Advisory Group.



Who was in the research team



The research team was made up of:

- autistic people
- people who are not autistic.

The research team were from:



- Autism New Zealand



- Te Herenga Waka –
Victoria University of Wellington.



The researchers from Autism NZ were:

- Chanelle Moriah
- Lee Patrick
- Doctor Larah van der Meer.



The researcher from Victoria University of Wellington was Doctor Hannah Waddington.

What the research found



Most people were not happy with the way autistic people are supported in Aotearoa New Zealand.



They said some people in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- accept autistic people
- understand autism.



They also said that some people do not accept / understand autism.



Autistic people still experience:

- **bullying**
- **discrimination**
- **racism.**

Bullying is when someone is treated badly like nasty things being said to you / about you.

Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of things like being:

- autistic
- disabled.



Racism means nasty or unfair treatment of someone because of:

- where they come from
- their language
- their skin colour
- their religion / beliefs.



Most people were happy with the **recommendations** in the Autism Guideline.



Recommendations are ideas on how to make things better.



But some people were not happy with how these recommendations are being followed.



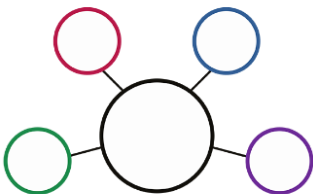
People said 1 way to improve things is to have training for autistic support services at:

- universities / education places
- workplaces.



Other things people said would be helpful were:

- more **advocacy services**
- the whole of Aotearoa New Zealand following a new **strategy** / way of supporting autistic people.



Advocacy services assist people by making sure their voices are heard.



A **strategy** is a plan of how to make things work better.



People said that services should:

- do better to make everyone feel supported
- make sure to follow all human rights.



People said the 2 most important things were better access to:

- therapy and support
- **mental health** support.





Mental health conditions may mean things like:

- depression
- anxiety disorders
- eating disorders
- schizophrenia.



People said that autistic people are the most important people to be involved in:



- decision making about what autism support should look like in the future



- the setting up of autism support.



People also said it is important that whānau / family are involved in decisions about autism support.

Recommendations for what to do now



This research tells us that it would be good to have the following things:



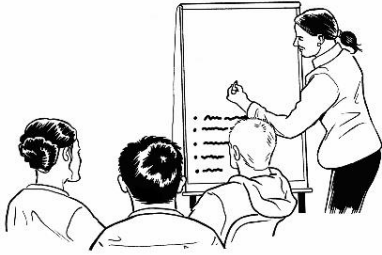
- training about autism for workers who support autistic people
- more support services that every autistic person can use



- support / services that work together to help autistic people
- a strategy / action plan for Aotearoa New Zealand that is about autism



- an autism **awareness campaign.**



An **awareness campaign** is a programme that teaches people about autism.

Acknowledgements



We would like to thank the following people and organisations for their help:

- the Autistic Advisory Group
- the Partnership Advisory Group
- Altogether Autism
- Insight Research
- Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.



We would also like to thank the autistic people and the autistic communities who took part in the research.

Where to get more information



More information is available on the Autism CRC **website**:

www.autismcrc.com.au/nz-report

On the Autism CRC **website** you can download the:



- final report
- community summary
- Easy Read summary.



You can also send an email to:

research@autismnz.org.nz



This information has been written by Autism NZ and Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.

It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.

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