

Community insights and unheard perspectives:

Recommendations for inclusive community engagement in the National Autism Strategy



Easy Read

How to use this document



Autism CRC wrote this fact sheet.

When you see the word 'we', it means Autism CRC.



We wrote this document in a way that is easy to read.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



This document is a summary of a report we wrote for the Australian Government.

You can find the full report on our website at autismcrc.com.au/national-autism-strategy



You can ask for help to read this fact sheet.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

Why we did this work

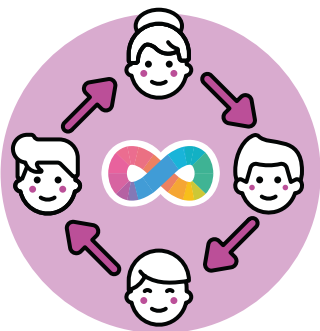


The Australian Government is making a National Autism **Strategy**.

We call it the Strategy.



A strategy is a plan to make things better.



The Strategy needs to help all autistic people.



The Government will be asking people what they want to have included in the Strategy.



Some people need support to share their stories and communicate about their needs.



It is important to include autistic people who need support to communicate about their needs.

What we did



We used **co-design**.

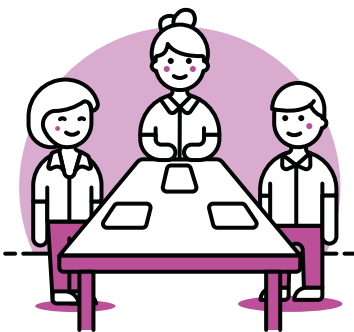
Co-design is when people work together to solve a problem.

Co-design has five steps.



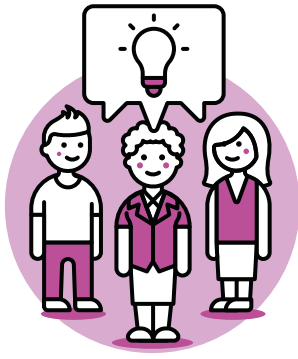
1. Research

This is when information is collected by asking people questions or by reading what people have written



2. Problem definition

This is where a group of people choose one problem that they are going to think about and talk about



3. Solutions

This is where the group shares ideas that can help solve the problem



4. Testing

This is where the group tests their ideas to see if they might work



5. Delivery

Delivery means making a plan to solve the problem.

How we did it



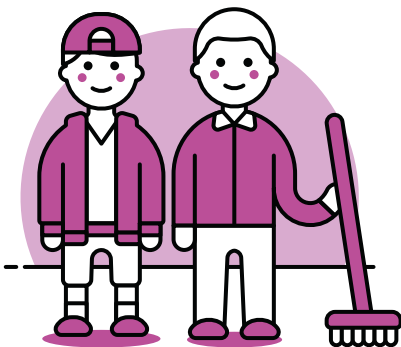
We invited autistic people to join an advisory group. This group helped us decide what we would do:



- We read information written by autistic people



- We researched how to communicate with different autistic people



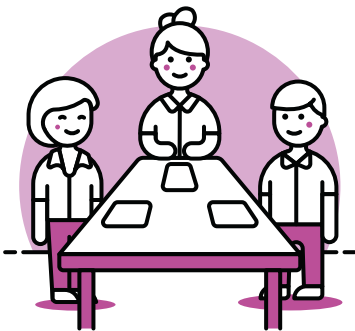
- We wanted to understand the different needs of autistic people



- We asked autistic people if they belonged to different groups. For example, being older or younger or having more than one disability



- We helped write a national survey where we asked questions about what autistic people need



- We delivered workshops



- We talked to lots of different autistic people with different needs and experiences



- We talked to organisations and people who work with autistic people



- We talked to organisations that are run by autistic people to help other autistic people.

What we found out



We found that twelve groups of people might need more support to share their stories and ideas for the Strategy.



1. First Nations – people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



2. People who are **culturally and linguistically diverse**, including migrants and refugees.

Culturally and linguistically diverse people come from different countries or speak languages other than English



3. People who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual or identify as another type of sexuality



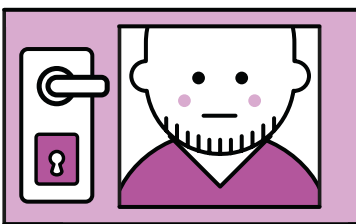
4. People who have an intellectual disability



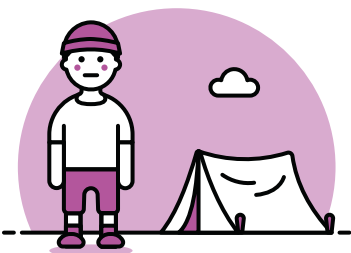
5. People who need support to live in their homes



6. People who live far away from cities and towns



7. People who live in prison



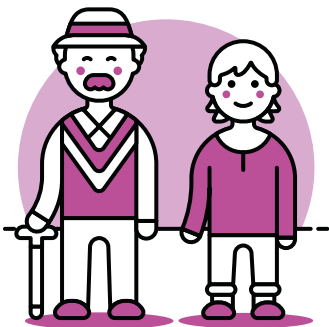
8. People who are homeless



9. People who do not use spoken words as their only way to communicate



10. Older people



11. Older carers of autistic people



12. Children and young people.

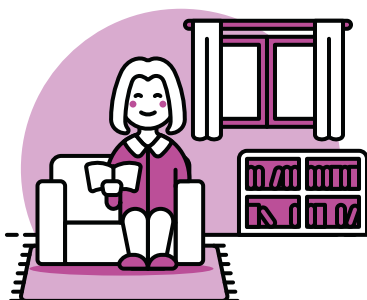
What the people we talked to said



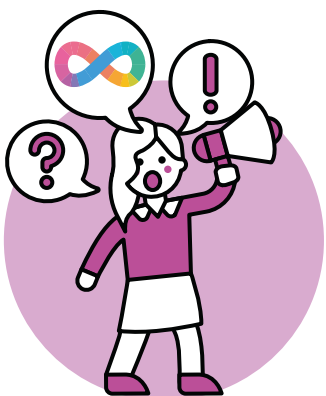
Autistic Australians need to hear about the Strategy in different ways.



- Written information should be accessible and be available in Easy Read or plain English



- Information about the Strategy should be available to people who do not own computers



- Organisations that are trusted by groups can help share information about the Strategy.



The Strategy should be accessible and include everyone.



- Everyone should be given time to think about what they want from the Strategy



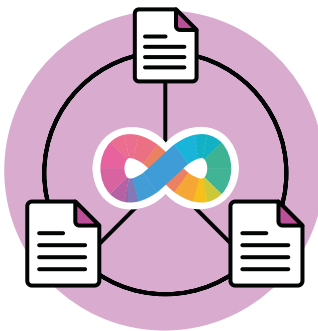
- The Strategy should include information and stories that have already been shared by autistic people



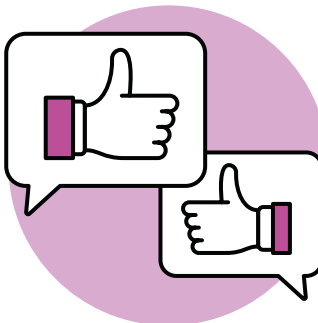
- Everyone should know what will happen with their stories and information



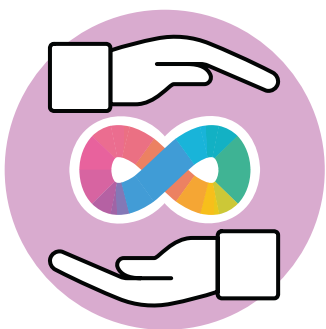
- Some things might be upsetting for some people to talk about. These people should be offered support if they need it



- Autistic people should be involved in every part of making the Strategy



- Autistic people should be told what is happening during every part of making the Strategy



- People should feel safe to share their stories and ideas



- All people should be seen as individuals

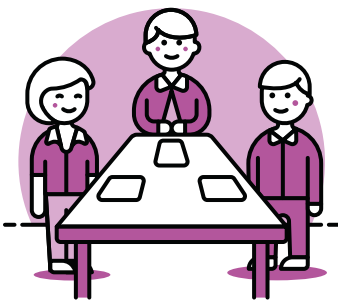


- There should be different ways for people to help make the Strategy.

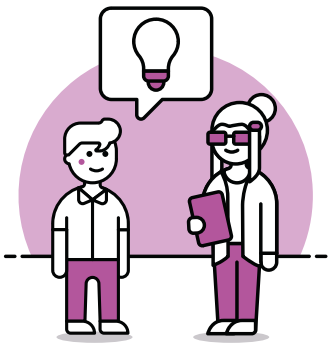
What happens next?



We have shared this information and the report with the Government.



The Government will start talking about the Strategy.



They will ask autistic people and the people that support them to have their say.



We think this information will help the government to support all autistic people to share their stories and ideas for the Strategy.

Our values



Inclusion

Valuing lived experience



Innovation

Solutions for long term challenges



Evidence

Truth in practice



Independence

Integrity through autonomy



Cooperation

Capturing opportunities together



AutismCRC

Independent national source of evidence for best practice



autismcrc.com.au