

## **SUBMISSION FROM RODELLE PURVIS**

1. My son was not diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome until he was 14 years old. He is now 26. Because his needs were not addressed within the education and social care departments, his educational results were limited, not due to his learning ability but because he was unable to complete tests in the given time. A proper recognition and acceptance of his condition would have given him the opportunity to gain higher grades, which would have led him to a choice regarding his future.
2. He is 26 years old, and unemployed. He is able to do work; he is fit, healthy and willing. Unfortunately, potential employers have no obligation to access the meditational support, informational support or any other information regarding autism and how it may affect a person within the employment environment.
3. My son lives at home with me and his father. The reason for this is although the support he needs to have independent living option is limited; the services which could provide that support have no legal obligation to do so, so they don't.
4. My son has a social life which is arranged and supported by the family. He is only able to attend social events of his preference providing a family member is able to accompany him. This is because no agencies are legally obliged to address what limited needs he has.
5. A legal obligation on local authorities in Scotland to accept autism as a recognised condition and to supply relevant training for already engaged services, would mean that adults with autism would suffer less mental depression and suicidal thoughts, less self-harm, less criminal practices, less carers suffering from stress, mental anguish and exhaustion.
6. If employers were able to be offered legal guidelines on how to help accept an autistic person to work within their remit, the benefit to that business could be immense and financially rewarding. An autistic person is rarely late for work, rarely ill, very loyal and dedicated to their work, will do what is asked of them and when asked. The autistic person's reluctance to socialise means they would prefer to work rather than idle about during working hours!
7. If all professionals working within NHS, local authority, employment support, social support etc, were legally obliged to undertake regular training and information events, they would be much more efficient at coping and managing persons with autism, with the result that the professionals would be under less stress and more efficient at completing their work satisfactorily.

8. It is very important to the person with autism, and their families, to be assured that the range of service providers are all able to understand the conditions and behaviours associated with those conditions and to work together, train together, and learn together, to better provide and support autistic people and allow them to have a present life and future to look forward to.
9. My son's personal experience within the education system was horrendous for him to have to suffer and for us, his family, to have to cope and manage. My son was, and still is, intelligent, capable and willing, he is eager to learn new skills, he is interested and very comfortable around IT and computing, he is pleasant and polite and would be able to work within the retail industry, he is punctual, presentable and respectful, all talents that should have given him a good footing into the adult world of work, social and living. But, the social services, education and employers had almost no knowledge of autism and even less interest in autism. Now that he is 26 years old, he still has no support from any outside agency. Without the support of myself, my husband and my other son, my autistic son would have no social life, no support and encouragement to live almost independently.
10. Housing providers feel that they do not need to recognise or accept autism. But to enable an autistic person to live independently and safely, the landlords need to be aware of how vulnerable autistic people can be within our community, how misunderstood their behaviour can be and how inappropriate their behaviour could be perceived. Every aspect of an adult's life is affected by autism, the autistic child does not learn to be non-autistic, they do not grow out of their autism, and they do not become less autistic as they get older.
11. After school education ends, college may be an option, possibly even university, but rarely is employment going to be successful without support, information and guidance.
12. Having relationships does happen, some autistic people marry and have families, but they still need support, encouragement and guidance.
13. Living independently is a possibility, but needs support, encouragement and guidance.
14. All professions need to learn how to offer the support, guidance, information and encouragement that autistic people need in order to be fully accepted within our communities.

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