

SUBMISSION FROM ISABEL MACPHERSON

1. I am the mother of an 11 year old boy on the autistic spectrum. I am fortunate that he got his diagnosis when he was four. He has a social worker who has secured for us respite with a carer and a playscheme place. However, I have discovered by speaking to other parents that many other children with autism are not so lucky. The amount of support available varies in different areas of Scotland. This is possibly reflected in the varying points made by councils' submissions.
2. The Autism (Scotland) Bill will bring Scotland into line with England. This will bring equality for everyone with autism in the United Kingdom.
3. My son will be at school for for the next few years but I am concerned about his prospects for employment as an adult.
4. Only 13% of adults with autism are in full time employment. Another alarming statistic is that 71% of children with autism also have a mental health problem. This is not an inevitable part of autism. Intervention with the right support at the right time could reduce this.
5. Accurate figures for the numbers of people with autism are needed for planning and providing services. There needs to be more integration of the various services and standardisation to address the "postcode lottery" for services.
6. There is a lack of training involving all professionals, teachers, doctors, social workers, police, employers etc. This results in people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) being left at home which in turn results in a deterioration of mental health.
7. When people with ASD receive support from those who have been trained in ASD, they can become fully included and worthwhile members of the society.
8. Without this Bill, many of these people who have the right to education and jobs, will not get them because of a lack of understanding of autism.

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