



Being able to find and navigate supports for autism is important. Many autistic people and their families say it's still too hard to find the help. This is impacting their ability to do basic things and live fulfilling lives.

Amanda's story shows why a new National Autism Strategy is needed to help improve education outcomes for autistic people. It also shares the importance of autistic people helping to shape the Strategy.

Amanda's story

Amanda is passionate about education with 3 degrees – including 2 masters. She is a busy mum of 3 children – ranging from 3 to 16 years old.

Amanda is autistic and received a diagnosis as a young adult. Two of her children are autistic, with the youngest going through the process to get a diagnosis.

When she's not working or running kids to school or guitar lessons, Amanda enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends. She also loves thrift shopping and keeping up with social trends on Instagram and TikTok.

With one child about to enter Year 11 and another just started at primary school, Amanda says her background in education has helped her navigate the system to best support her autistic children.

'Lots of parents don't know what support is out there or what they may be entitled to. They trust that the system or school will just work to best support their children.'

'My kids are lucky, I know how to advocate for them. But I would like to get to the stage where there's no need for families to have to advocate for their children – the support should just be there ready to go.'

'Whatever kids want to do in their life – be a scientist, a carpenter, a counsellor – they should be able to achieve what they want without worrying about the barriers they may face because they're autistic.'

Amanda looks forward to a National Autism Strategy that levels the playing field.

'I hope the Strategy is the step forward that the autistic community needs to be able to live the lives we want. We need the Strategy to help the education, employment and health sectors better support us.'

'It isn't just going to help me and my family. The Strategy represents a new way of supporting autistic people into the future that will be around when my children have children and beyond.'

'The Strategy can benefit the whole autistic community – but only if we all have our voices heard. The autism spectrum is so huge. I can only speak for me and my family – we need the full diversity and intersectionality of experience to be heard and at the heart of the Strategy so that it can help us all.'

Help shape the change. Visit dss.gov.au/National-Autism-Strategy to see how you can have your say on the National Autism Strategy.