Australian Government

National Autism Strategy

# National Autism Strategy 2025–31:

# Review of Community Awareness Activities

## Status:

**Complete**

## Related Actions:

***Commitment 1, Action 1 (a)*** – Examine Australian and international examples of autism and disability awareness and public education activities.

***Commitment 5, Action 6*** – Examine awareness and education activities aimed at reducing discrimination, violence, abuse, bullying, vilification and exploitation experienced by Autistic people.

***Commitment 17, Action 2*** – Review best practice accessibility and inclusion resources to inform government, business and non government organisations.

## Who

Government funded Social Ventures Australia who partnered with Reframing Autism and Aspect.



## Community engagement

- **47 interviews conducted** with individuals and organisations to test relevance, gaps and priorities.
- Strong participation across all priority cohorts.



## What they did

- Conducted a national and international review of autism and disability awareness initiatives and public education approaches.
- Identified and analysed existing programs focused on stigma reduction, community inclusion and discrimination prevention.
- Reviewed best practice accessibility and inclusion resources applicable to government, business and community settings.

## What we learned

- There is **limited evidence** on what successfully changes community attitudes and reduces autism related stigma.
- While **numerous awareness, training and capacity building programs** exist and align with the Strategy, long term impact is largely unproven due to a lack of robust evaluation.
- There is **strong support** for building Autistic people's rights awareness and self advocacy, but very few autism specific programs currently exist.
- **Clear best practice guidance** exists for neuroinclusive design, highlighting practical actions such as sensory aware environments, accessible materials and clear communication.

## Challenges

- A lack of consistent evaluation makes it difficult to determine which awareness approaches lead to sustained attitude and behaviour change.
- Gaps remain in autism specific rights education and self advocacy resources.

## Next steps

- Findings informed grant design for Commitment 1, Action 1(b) to develop initial national awareness and inclusion activities to build capacity of those who work in the youth justice system.
- Up to $643,853 will be provided to Reframing Autism to develop and deliver national activities and resources aimed at improving understanding and capability in the youth justice system to better support Autistic young people, their families, guardians and carers.



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