



About the research

In March 2022 [Mencap](#) commissioned [National Development Team for Inclusion \(NDTi\)](#) to do some research to better understand what people with a learning disability want when it comes to work, why so few people with a learning disability are able to access or maintain paid work, and what more can be done to help address the barriers to work for people with a learning disability in the UK.

As part of this research, we heard from over 200 people with a learning disability about what they want from work.

51



We spoke to **51 people** with a learning disability in 7 focus groups and 4 interviews across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the focus groups and interviews we asked people to describe their perfect job and to tell us about what is important to them when it comes to work.

We had responses from **188 people** with a learning disability through an online Easy Read survey. In the survey we asked people who have a job if they get paid for it and what they like about their job. We asked people who don't have a job whether they would like a job. We asked everyone to describe their perfect job.

188



9



A group of **9 people** with lived experience of learning disabilities was formed to inform, guide and advise on various aspects of the research. This was called the Research Working Group. All those involved did so as part of their paid Mencap roles or were paid for their time by NDTi.



Do people want a paid job?

86%

of people completing the survey who did not have a paid job said they would like a paid job

49%

of people completing the survey who did have a paid job said that getting paid was one of the best things about their job

Why is getting paid important?



To be independent

"It means I can contribute at home and not depend on my family for money."



To support family

"I have a 4-year old son, and by doing paid work I can financially support his up-bringing."



To spend money on the things they choose

"I'm able to spend money on goods and I'm able to have a good life... go to places, go to friends, socialising."



To feel valued and respected

"That's how I like to get paid, it's to do work and to feel happy inside of me, like I've earned it."



What type of job do people want?



176 people in the focus groups and survey described their perfect jobs



What is important to people in the work they do?

Developing skills

36% of people completing the survey said that learning new skills was one of the best things about their job

“I love learning new things, having a challenge, and keeping the customers happy.”

Making a difference

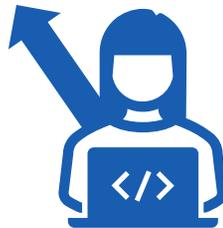
38% of people completing the survey said that helping other people was one of the best things about their job.

“Making sure people are looked after properly and cared for.”

Social aspect

20% of people completing the survey said that meeting new people was one of the best things about their job.

“I like being with people, around them, talking to them.”



Following an interest or passion

25% of people completing the survey said that doing interesting work was one of the best things about their job.

“I love research, it’s something I do in my spare time anyway and I’m into my politics so that’s the campaigning side... I love it... I love my hobbies, but I also love doing them at work.”

Feeling good about themselves

29% of people completing the survey said that feeling good about yourself was one of the best things about their job.

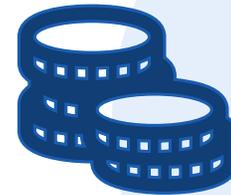
“It made me feel great about myself cos it made me open up, come out of my shell.”



Main findings



86% of people with a learning disability who do not have a job would like to have a paid job. This shows there is still a considerable 'employment gap' faced by people with a learning disability who would like to work.



Getting paid is important to people as it enables them to be independent, support their families financially and have a good life. Being paid also shows people that their contribution is respected and valued.



People's wishes and aspirations for work are as unique as they are, and are informed by their interests, passions and experiences.



Different aspects of work are important to different people; some common themes include following a passion, meeting people and helping others.



More from this research project

There are two other research summaries in this series:

- ❖ What stops people with a learning disability getting and keeping paid work?
- ❖ What can be done to support people with a learning to disability to get and keep paid work?

The **research summaries**, the **full research report** which provides more details about the methods, limitations and the findings from the research, and an **Easy Read** research report are also available on Mencap & NDTi websites.

www.mencap.org.uk

www.ndti.org.uk

