

# Living in Fear

**Better outcomes for people with  
learning disabilities and autism**

**Easy read Summary**



Julie Beadle-Brown, Colin Guest, Lisa Richardson,  
Aida Malovic, Jill Bradshaw and Julian Himmerich

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## **Better outcomes for people with learning disabilities and autism**

### **Easy read Summary**

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# Living in Fear

**Better outcomes for people with  
learning disabilities and autism**

## **What this is all about**

We have been finding out about the bad things that sometimes happen to people who have a learning disability or autism when they are out and about in the community.

We **asked a lot of people** what they think about these bad things.

We asked **people who have a learning disability or autism**.

We asked **paid and family carers**.

We asked the **police** and people from the **Community Safety Partnerships**.

(Community Safety Partnerships work with the police, to keep people safe.)

We have **written it all down** here to tell you what they said.

**On the next pages you can read what people with a learning disability or autism told us.**

# What people who have a learning disability or autism told us

We have been finding out about the **bad things** that sometimes happen to people who have a learning disability or autism when they are out and about in the community.

We **asked a lot of people** what they think about these bad things.

We asked **people who have a learning disability or autism**.

On these pages we will tell you what the **people who have a learning disability or autism** told us.

Lots of people told us that bad things didn't happen to them.

But almost half of them said that bad things had happened to them.

It was mostly **young people** who had bad things happen to them.

Some of them said bad things had only happened **once or twice**.

But some told us that bad things happened to them **all the time**.

The **bad things that happened** were –

- People **saying nasty things** or **staring or laughing** at them
- **Breaking or stealing** their **telephones, caps** and other things
- Hitting and pushing
- Sexual assaults
- Throwing things at a house where someone with learning disability or autism lives
- Putting nasty things through the letterbox

Quite often the **people doing bad things** were teenagers.

Sometimes it was **older people** who did the bad things.

Sometimes **friends or neighbours** did the bad things.

Sometimes it was **family members** or **other people with learning disability or autism**.

Almost half of the bad things happened at **school, at college or at a day centre**.

Sometimes bad things happened **in the street, near home or on buses and trains**

Sometimes they happened at **shops, in the town, at work or in cafés**.

Half of the people who had bad things happen **told their family** about them.

About a half **told someone who supported them**.

Some told people at **school or college**.

Only about one in three told **the police**.

But a few people **didn't tell anyone**

Some people we spoke to told us **why they didn't tell the police** about the bad things that had happened to them.

They didn't tell the police because –

- they didn't think the bad things were very serious
- they were too **scared** to tell the police
- they didn't know they should have told the police
- they were worried that they **wouldn't be able to explain** what had happened

Most of the people who told the police said **the police were nice** to them.

Most of them thought the police had tried to help to stop the bad things happening.

But some did not think the police were very nice or had tried to stop the bad things happening again.

Some people said the police did not tell them what they had done to stop bad things happening again.

Most of the people we spoke to were **upset by the bad things** that happened.

Some cried for a long time after the bad things happened.

Some of them felt nervous and scared that the bad things would happen again.

Some of them got into trouble with the police because when the bad things happened to them-

- they said things they shouldn't, or
- they did things they shouldn't.

Some of the people who had bad things happen to them **did things to stop it happening again**, like -

- Going to **live somewhere else**
- **Not going to the places** where the bad things happened
- **Not using buses or trains**
- **Not going to school or college and staying indoors more**

A lot of people we spoke to said **they felt better** after changing what they did and where they went.

**On the next pages you can read what  
paid and family carers told us**

# What paid and family carers told us

We have been finding out about the bad things that sometimes happen to people who have a learning disability or autism when they are out and about in the community.

We asked a lot of people what they think about these bad things.

We asked **paid and family carers**.

We have **written it all down** here to tell you what they said.

On these pages we will tell you what **paid and family carers** told us.

Paid carers means people who support other people as their job.

The bad things that happened were –

- Saying nasty things
- Breaking or stealing telephones, caps and other things
- Hitting and pushing

Bad things happening can often stop people with learning disabilities **going out and about** like other people.

Some people with disabilities and their parents and carers **expect and accept bad things** as part of their lives.

They need to understand that they **should not put up with the bad things** that other people do to them.

Sometimes things that some people with disabilities **do in public** can upset other people or make them feel worried.

Some parents don't like it when young people with learning disabilities want to be with younger children.

They think the person with a learning disability might want to harm their children and won't let them be together

Carers can help people with learning disabilities to cope with bad things.

Carers would like to be **better trained** so that they can help people with learning disabilities to stay safe.

Some people with learning disabilities and their carers do not know that the police can help to deal with bad things that happen to them.

The bad things that happen can **upset other people in the family**, including brothers and sisters.

Bad things can sometimes happen to people with learning disabilities or autism when they use **Twitter and Facebook**

When bad things happen, people sometimes think that **nothing will change** if they tell the police about them

Some carers thought that some people **never reported** bad things to the police.

Some carers thought the **police did help** when bad things happened.

But some of them thought that sometimes the police **didn't take the bad things seriously**.

Some carers thought that some of the police **didn't know how to talk to people with autism and learning disabilities**.

But some told the police about bad things all the time and the police might **think they were a nuisance**

**On the next pages you can read what the police told us**

# What the Police told us

We have been finding out about the **bad things** that sometimes happen to people who have a learning disability or autism when they are out and about in the community.

We **asked a lot of people** what they think about these bad things.

We asked **the police** and people from the **Community Safety Partnerships**.

(Community Safety Partnerships work with the police, to keep people safe.)

We have **written it all down** here to tell you what they said.

On these pages we will tell you **what we found out from the police**

Most of the police said they were used to dealing with people with a learning disability or autism.

Most of the police thought they **ought to know about learning disability and autism**.

Most of them **do know quite a lot about learning disabilities and autism**.

But there were **quite a lot of things they didn't know**, like –

- some of the police thought learning disability was the same as mental illness
- some of them didn't know that people with a learning disability or autism were more likely to have a mental illness as well
- some of the police didn't know that people with a learning disability or autism often do what other people tell them to do, even if it is wrong to do it

Some of the police said they **dealt with people with a learning disability or autism** as part of their work in the police.

And some of them met people with a learning disability or autism when they weren't at work.

Some of the police had been **trained about** learning disability and autism.

The police said the training made it easier for them to deal with people with a learning disability or autism and to give them better help.

The police told us **what they do when people tell them about bad things**.

They said that bad things like teasing or calling people names were often done by children or teenagers.

They said that sometimes **they couldn't decide** if someone telling them about bad things had a learning disability or autism.

Sometimes the police **couldn't find out enough** about the bad things that happened.

They needed to know things like –

- when the bad things happened
- where the bad things happened
- and who had done the bad things.

Sometimes the police didn't have enough time to give the right help when bad things happened.

But sometimes, people telling the police about bad things couldn't tell them what they needed to know.

**On the next pages you can read about what we have found out**

# What we have found out

After we talked to people about the bad things that can sometimes happen to people with learning disabilities or autism, we thought about everything they told us.

We wanted to work out what it all meant, so that we could decide what to do next.

This is what we found out.

Sometimes people will do bad things to people with a learning disability or autism because they look different.

People often just **put up with bad things** and don't tell the police or anyone else.

But if you just put up with bad things and don't tell anyone, it makes it **harder for the police** to stop bad things happening again.

People often do things to avoid bad things happening, like –

- **going to live in a different house**
- not going out
- not going to school.
- not using buses and trains

But if you do those things, it might **stop you doing the things you want to do**, like meeting your friends, going to school or having a job.

So it's very important to **tell the police or someone else you trust** about bad things as soon as they happen. That way, **something can be done** to stop them happening again.

People can be upset for a very long time after bad things happen.

But there is **not enough help** for people to feel better after bad things happen.

We need **better ways of telling the police** about bad things so that we know how often bad things happen.

And we all need to use **simple words** when we talk about bad things, so that everyone can understand what we mean.

The police need to have **ways of finding out** if the people telling them about bad things have a learning disability or autism.

**We have to stop bad things happening.**

**And we have to help people more when bad things do happen.**

Everyone whose job is to help people must **work together to stop bad things happening** and **help people** if bad things do happen.

And they must all **know exactly what they have to do.**

**On the next pages you can read about  
what we should do next**

# What we should do next

After we talked to people about the bad things that can sometimes happen to people with learning disabilities or autism, **we thought about everything they told us.**

We wanted to work out what it all meant, so that we could decide what to do next.

We have **written down** here the things we think we should do next so that everyone can read about them.

There are lots of things we think we should do.

These are the most important things we need to do.

This is what we want the **Government** to do -

- make a better **plan to stop bad things** happening
- make the police **find out more** about how often bad things happen to people with learning disabilities or autism and what type of bad things happen
- make **the law** about the bad things that happen to people with learning disabilities or autism much **easier to understand**
- make it much **easier to tell the police** when bad things happen

- **make schools teach children** that it is wrong to bully and harass people with learning disabilities or autism
- make the **training** for people who care for and support people with learning disabilities or autism **much better** so that they know how to help when bad things happen
- tell social workers to make sure that the care they arrange for people with learning disabilities or autism must help to keep them safe when they are out and about in the community

This is what we want the police to do -

We want **the police** to have **much better training** so that they can help much more when bad things happen.

We want the police to **meet more people** with a learning disability or autism and find out much more about them

This is what we want Community Safety Partnerships to do -

We want Community Safety Partnerships to say how the police and everyone else should help when bad things happen.

We want Community Safety Partnerships to take the lead in **stopping bad things happening**.

And we want Community Safety Partnerships to **take the lead** in making sure people with learning disabilities or autism are helped when bad things happen.

This what we want doctors and nurses to do -

We want **doctors and nurses** to ask people with a disability or autism if bad things have happened and upset them.

If everyone does what we want them to do, we think that **things will be better** for people with learning disabilities or autism -

- people with learning disabilities or autism will **not have such bad things happening to them**
- and the bad things will **not happen so often**
- people will know how to get help when bad things happen
- people will know how to report bad things to the police
- the police and other people will be able to help more than they can now

