

## WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism influences how people experience and interact with the world. It is a lifelong neurodivergence and disability.

Being autistic means you may feel things and react to them differently to non-autistic people. You may find socialising confusing or tiring, and you may become overwhelmed in loud or busy places. You may have intense interests, prefer order and routine, and use repeated movements or actions to calm yourself or express joy.

You can't see when someone is autistic

Each autistic person is different

It is not a medical condition with a treatment or "cure"

Autistic people have strengths and need help with different things

More than 1 in 100 people are autistic and there are at least 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK.

## AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

### THREE AREAS OF DIFFERENCE

There are three key areas of difference between autistic people and non-autistic people:

#### Communication

Autistic people may have different communication styles, skills and preferences to non-autistic people. They may use and understand words, tone of voice and body language, such as gesture and facial expressions, differently.

#### Behaviours and interests

Such as:

- focused and dedicated interests
- repeated movements and behaviour
- preference for order, predictability or routine

#### Sensory processing

Autistic people can be much more or less sensitive than non-autistic people to the five main senses (sight, sound, touch, taste and smell) and senses for balance, movement, spatial awareness and awareness of internal states (such as hunger and temperature). Someone may be very sensitive to one kind of sensory input, but not at all sensitive to another. Their reactions can also change depending on the situation and environment.

### DID YOU KNOW THESE PEOPLE ARE AUTISTIC?

#### LUCY BRONZE



FOOTBALLER

#### GRETA THUNBERG



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

## AUTISM IS A SPECTRUM

What does that mean?

### Autism Spectrum

The Autism Spectrum is NOT linear

less autistic very autistic

The Autism Spectrum looks more like:



Terms like "high functioning", "low functioning" are harmful and outdated.

Autism-sketches

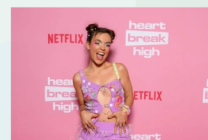
The autism spectrum is not linear from high to low but varies in every way that one person might vary from another.

Every autistic individual has their own strengths, differences, likes, dislikes, and their own life journey and their own unique story.

### WHO ARE YOUR AUTISTIC ROLE MODELS?

Add the names of your autistic role models below, and what they do (if you want!)

#### CHLOE HAYDEN



ACTOR, AUTHOR, ADVOCATE

#### CHRIS PACKHAM



NATURALIST, TV PRESENTER

### SUPPORT RESOURCES

Here are some useful websites for understanding autism:

Autistic Girls Network



Reframing Autism



National Autistic Society



Here is a great comic to explain the Autistic Spectrum



Here are some links for parents:



Autism and mental health

Amaze family support



### WHY DO WE NEED AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH?

8/10

autistic people experience mental health problems



only

26%

of autistic pupils feel happy at school



only

30%

of autistic people are in any type of employment



Find out more on the National Autistic Society website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

#### TIM BURTON



DIRECTOR

#### EMINEM



RAPPER