2 April 2024

Celebrating Autism Acceptance Week

Autism Acceptance Week runs from 2-8 April, celebrating the contribution that people on the autism spectrum make and raising awareness of the difficulties they face in everyday life.

The goal of Autism Acceptance Week is to challenge stereotypes, combat stigma, and advocate for the rights of autistic individuals. Rather than focusing solely on deficits or challenges associated with autism, the emphasis is on recognising the unique strengths, talents, and perspectives that autistic individuals bring to the world.

But it is also important to acknowledge the difficulties, prejudices and discrimination experienced by autistic people. Autism is a neurodiverse condition, where autistic people's brains work differently. It's also likely to be classed as a disability. As trade unionists, we can support this view, following the social model of disability which states that people are disabled by the barriers created by society rather than the conditions they have.

Autistic people face many barriers in society, from bullying and exclusion to trying to fit in a work environment that was designed exclusively with neurotypical people in mind. Research from the [National Autistic Society](#) revealed that only 26% of autistic students felt happy at school, whilst barriers continued into adulthood. Only 29% of autistic adults are in any form of employment.

Through raising awareness and acceptance of autism, we can create workplaces and processes which make it easier for autistic people to thrive in the workplace, matching duties to their skills and unique abilities.

With more than 150,000 people waiting on an autism assessment in the UK, and 70% of autistic people experiencing mental health problems, we must also continue to campaign for better funding for services and greater access.

Get involved

Share this story on social media using the buttons below and using the tags #AutismAcceptance Week or #WAAW24. Wales TUC has also produced an excellent guide on Autism Awareness in the Workplace.