

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF NEURODIVERSE PEOPLE AS PART OF CANADA'S **NATIONAL AUTISM STRATEGY**?

The Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance (CASDA) is hosting a series of community conversations on autism and neurodevelopmental difficulties (NDDs). We are interested in discussing how best to promote meaningful community life for persons of all ages, whether they are on the autism spectrum or have other NDDs. We want to learn and understand how to promote *SOCIAL INCLUSION within the COMMUNITY* by...

Shifting Perspectives from Awareness-to-Acceptance

Information from the series of working group conversations will be used to write a policy brief highlighting key recommendations. This policy brief will be given to the Public Health Agency of Canada to inform a National Autism Strategy.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “COMMUNITY”?

We have defined the term “community” as a geographical location where people live and interact, and have access to surrounding buildings and spaces. Such buildings and spaces include, but are not limited to, recreational centres, libraries, workplaces, schools, grocery stores, restaurants, banks, parks and shops. This broad definition will permit us to make recommendations that concern the federal government and that are applicable to all Canadians who also identify with other community groups (e.g., language, religion, culture etc).

WHO'S INPUT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We want to bring together people of ***all ages from across Canada*** to ensure that Autistic and neurodiverse people can participate and connect with others meaningfully in their communities.

Specifically, we are seeking insight from:

- Autistic or neurodiverse people and their families, community members including but not limited to librarians, shopkeepers, bus drivers, police, and educators
- Personnel representing the federal government

WHAT TYPE OF INPUT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

- What are the three main issues limiting the social inclusion of Autistic and neurodiverse people living in Canada in terms of accessing and using community facilities and infrastructure, including community transport, and recreational, commercial, work, and educational buildings?
- What accommodations or strategies can we develop to overcome barriers to access and use buildings and spaces within the community?