



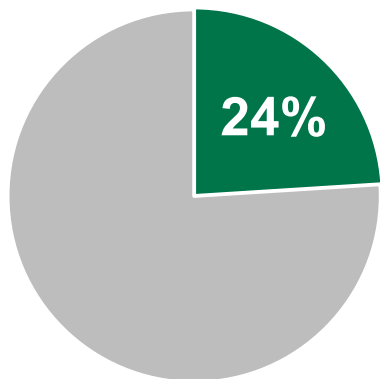
Key Findings from the National Autism Indicators Report: Transition into Young Adulthood

This fact sheet summarizes key findings from the National Autism Indicators Report which can be found here: drex.lu/autismindicators. The Autism Indicators report tracks statistics about issues facing individuals on the autism spectrum. These statistics set the stage to discover whether quality of life for those with autism and their families is improving over time.

The Life Course Outcomes Research Program is building a base of knowledge about the things other than clinical interventions that promote positive outcomes for people on the autism spectrum and their families and communities.



Some never saw or talked with friends, and were never invited to social activities, within the past year.



24% of young adults with autism were socially isolated.

Social and Community Participation among Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum



When we interact with others in our daily lives at work or at school, we may find peers who share our interests. We might be invited to social activities in the community with colleagues who then become our friends. We also might get a chance to give back to our community.

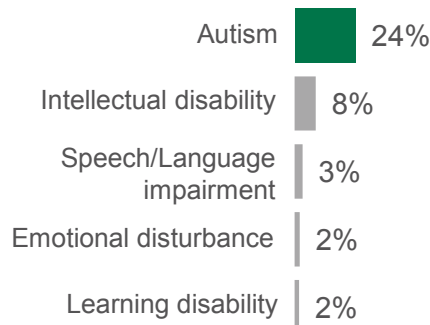
When young adults on the autism spectrum are disconnected from work and continued schooling, sometimes opportunities for socialization, friendships and community participation may be absent as well. Young adults who have less social and community participation likely have fewer opportunities to find out about jobs, schools, or training programs to further their learning.

In this report, we examine social and community participation as well as social isolation. We used data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLT2) collected in 2009 when young adults were 21 to 25 years old.

Higher rates of social isolation for those with autism

Far more young adults on the autism spectrum experienced social isolation within the past year compared to their peers with other types of disabilities. While nearly one-quarter of those on the autism spectrum experienced social isolation, very few of their peers with learning disability, emotional disturbance or speech-language impairment were socially isolated.

Young adults with autism had higher rates of social isolation within the past year than their peers with other types of disabilities.



Percent socially isolated in past year

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Half of young adults had driving privileges and one-third were registered to vote.

While ability to drive is not necessary for social interaction and community participation, it does enhance independence and access to activities and eliminates a barrier to employment. Civic participation is another key form of adult independence and community participation. Nearly 30% of young adults on the autism spectrum had a driver's license or their learner's permit and 51% were registered to vote.

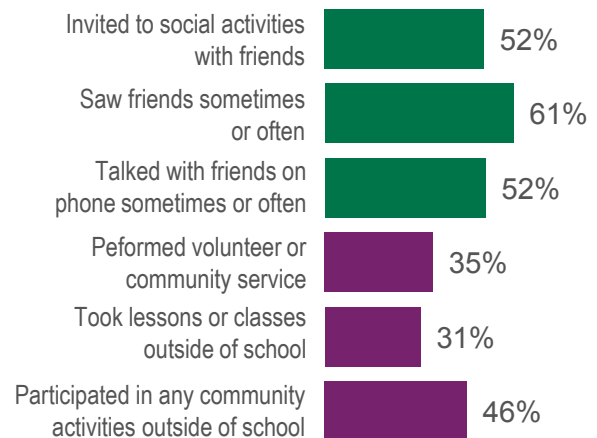
Approximately one in four young adults on the autism spectrum was socially isolated; one in three had no community participation.

Some young adults participated in social and community activities within the past year.

We examined whether young adults participated in key social and community activities within the past year. Approximately 76% of young adults participated in at least one type of social activity during the previous year, and 68% participated in at least one type of community activity.

We looked at how young adults fared across social and community participation indicators. We considered young adults to be socially isolated if they never were invited to social activities, and never saw friends, and never talked with friends on the phone in the last 12 months. We considered young adults to have no community participation if they never volunteered or performed community service, never took lessons or classes outside of school, and never attended community activities outside of school in the last 12 months.

Over half of young adults with autism had any social interaction during the past year. Fewer had any community participation.



Percent participated in activities in past year

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Social and Community Participation Factors

We explored factors that may be related to social and community participation:

Household Income

Nearly 33% of those from lower income households (<\$25K) were socially isolated within the past year compared to 15% of those from the highest income households (>\$75K).

Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic young adults had the highest rate of social isolation within the past year compared to white (23%) and black young adults (18%).

Conversation Ability

Nearly 44% of those with the lowest level of conversation skills were socially isolated in the past year, compared to 7% of those with the highest conversation skills.

Living Arrangement

Young adults who ever lived with their parents (22%) were less socially isolated in the past year than those who ever lived in a supervised setting (43%).

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