



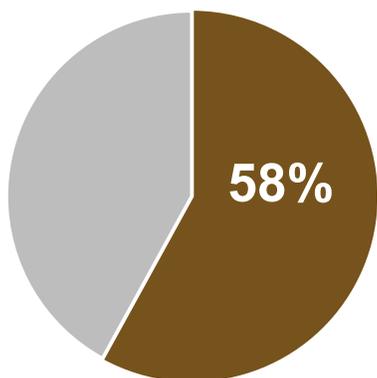
Key Findings from the National Autism Indicators Report: Transition into Young Adulthood

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.



One purpose of special education is to prepare students for employment after high school.



58% of young adults with autism ever worked between high school and their early 20s.

Employment Outcomes of Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum



Employment provides an important link to financial independence, health insurance, benefits, and social relationships. Nearly 99% of young adults in the U.S. will work at some point between ages 21 to 25 years.¹

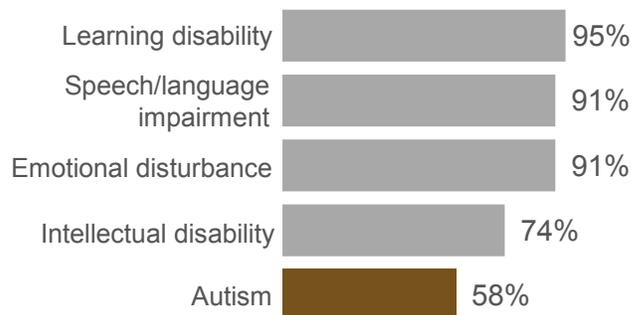
Employment is the primary transition goal of students with disabilities as they prepare to exit high school.² Each year 50,000 students on the autism spectrum leave high school – many hoping to find jobs.

In this report, we examine employment – meaning work for pay, outside the home, not including volunteer jobs. We used data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) collected in 2009 when young adults were 21 to 25 years old.

Lowest employment rate across disabilities

Compared to their peers with other types of disabilities, young adults with autism had the lowest rate of employment. While 58% of those on the autism spectrum ever worked during their early 20s, over 90% of young adults with emotional disturbance, speech impairment, or learning disability ever worked, as well as 74% of young adults with intellectual disability.

In their early 20s, young adults with autism had far lower rates of employment than their peers.



Percent ever worked after high school

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

For those who worked, jobs were low wage, part-time.

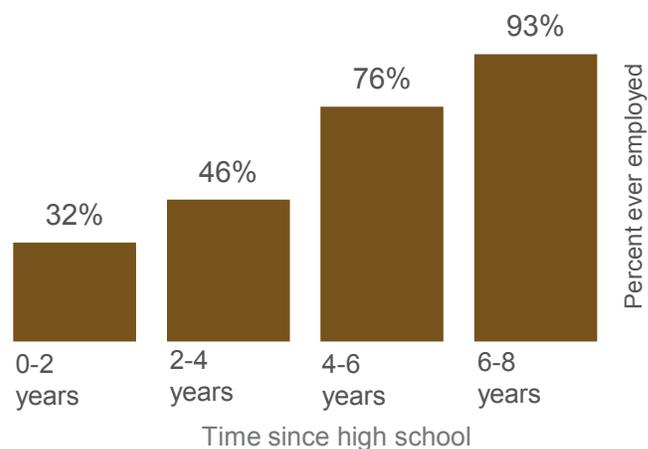
Young adults on the autism spectrum who worked after high school held an average of about three jobs total during their early 20s. Nearly 80% worked part-time and earned an average of \$9.11 per hour. Full-time workers earned an average of \$8.08 per hour.

Nearly 42% of young adults on the autism spectrum never worked for pay during their early 20s.

Job rates low right after high school

Young adults on the autism spectrum experienced a delayed launch into the world of work. Only about one-third were employed during the first two years after high school. It took many years for the employment rate of these young adults to match that of their peers with emotional disturbance, learning disability, or speech-language impairment.

As time passed after high school, the percentage of young adults with autism who had ever been employed increased.



Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Employment Factors

We explored factors that may be related to employment:

Household Income

Nearly 72% of those from upper income households (>\$75K) ever worked after high school compared to 33% of those from the lowest income households (<\$25K).

Race and Ethnicity

Twice as many white young adults (66%) worked compared to black and Hispanic young adults (37% and 34%, respectively).

Conversation Ability

Nearly 90% of those with the highest level of conversation skills ever worked, compared to 15% with the lowest conversation skills.

Work Experience

The employment rate was over twice as high for those who worked for pay during high school (90%) versus those who did not (40%).

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Sources:

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013). *America's Young Adults at 25: School enrollment, number of jobs held and labor market activity: results of a longitudinal survey*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Labor.
2. Cameto, R., Levine, P., and Wagner, M. (2004). *Transition Planning for Students With Disabilities. A Special Topic Report From the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

