



Learning about disability in the UK



Easy Read

# Important

## Green writing

In this Easy Read booklet we explain what some words mean.

The first time we mention any of these words, it is in **bold green** writing. We then write what the words mean in a blue box. If any of the words are used later in the booklet, we show them in **normal green** writing.

These words and what they mean are also in a word list at the back of the booklet.

The CDS Easy Read illustrations we develop are intended specifically for use in this publication. The Office for Disability Issues has the right to share, send, print and distribute this product in its current format. The images within this product should not be copied from this document and used for other purposes or passed on to a third party. Do not extract, modify, adapt, alter, or otherwise attempt to change the illustrations for other purposes without written permission from CDS.

CDS, 7 Eastgate, Leeds LS2 7LY

Tel: 0113 399 4000

Web: [www.cds.co.uk/clarity](http://www.cds.co.uk/clarity)

# Contents

About this booklet .....	4
Helping disabled people do the best they can .....	7
Disabled people and benefits. ....	9
What disabled people want in their lives .....	10
Changing the way people think and act towards disabled people. ....	12
How disability changes during people's lives .....	14
What disability means to us. ....	16
People with mental health conditions .....	18
Barriers .....	20
Transport .....	23
Using public services .....	24
Disabled children .....	26
Disabled people and equality. ....	28
Moving from school, college or university into work .....	29
Disabled people in work .....	31
Disabled people who are not working .....	34
What we have found out and what happens next .....	35
Word list .....	37

---

## About this booklet

In September 2012 we wrote a booklet called Helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area – Next steps.



In that booklet we said that we would work with disabled people's groups and people who have had a lot of education, who are called academics, to put together another report.

We wanted the new report to help people to learn about and understand disability, and the issues disabled people have to deal with.

As well as looking at the replies we got to the **discussion** about helping disabled people do the best they can, we have done these things.

## Discussion

This is when people talk to each other and say what they think.

- We have grouped together a lot of **research** that has been written.

## Research

This is work done to find out more about something.

- We have looked again at **surveys** that have been carried out. These include the Life Opportunities **Survey**, the Family Resources **Survey** and the Labour Force **Survey**.

## Survey

This is when we ask people what they think about things.

The Life Opportunities **Survey** asks disabled people about their lives and what needs to be done so that disabled people get full **equality**. It goes back to the same group of people to see how things have changed for them over 1 or 2 years.

## Equality

This means everyone having the same chances to do what they can. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances.

The Family Resources **Survey** asks people about how they live. It also asks things like what money they have coming in, what savings they have and how much it costs to live in their home.

The Labour Force **Survey** asks people things like if they have a job or not. If they have a job people are asked how much they get paid. It also asks if people are disabled.

- We asked the **Office for National Statistics** to talk to disabled people and non-disabled people to find out what they think.

## Office for National Statistics

This is a government department that collects a lot of information about the people and work of this country. The government and other people use this information when making decisions about things.



- We worked with people who are interested in disability. We also looked at work done in other countries.

The next parts of this booklet tell you what we found out.

# Helping disabled people do the best they can

Disabled people are very important to making our **economy** and our **society** a success.

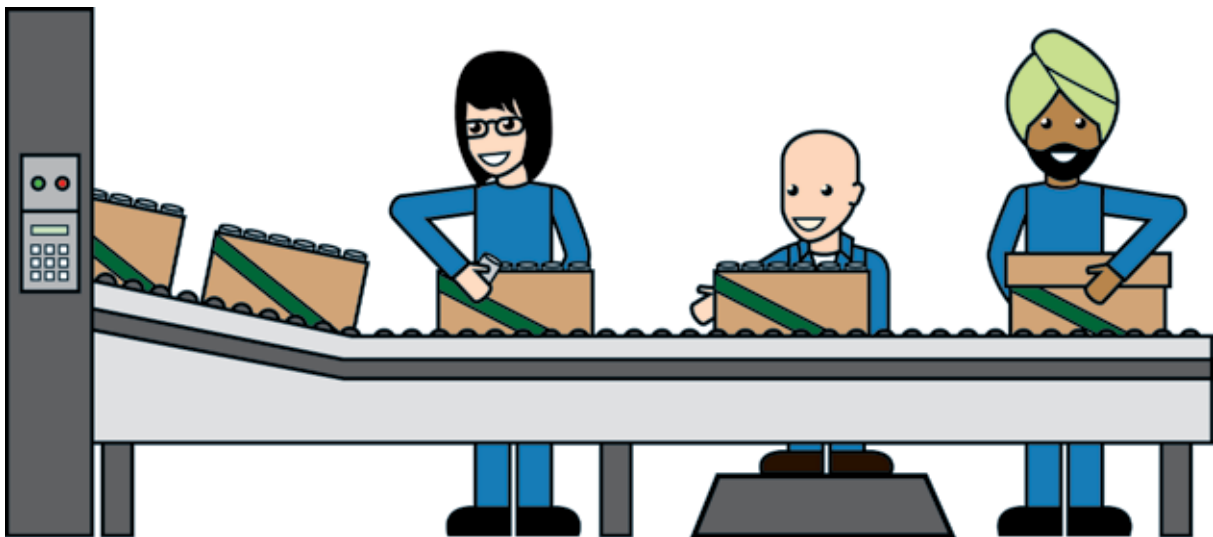
## Economy

The **economy** is how much money the country has. It is made up of the goods and services in the country compared to how many people want to use or buy those goods and services.

## Society

**Society** means all the people and all parts of life in this country. Being part of **society** can mean being accepted and having your views listened to. It can mean being able to live where you want, vote for a government, or join a group. When people are accepted by others this makes a good **society**.

- More than 3 million disabled people have a job or work for themselves.



- More than half of all disabled people take an active part in trying to make things better in their local area.
- More than 1 million disabled people look after someone without getting paid for doing so. And around 180,000 disabled people have a paid job as a carer.
- All the disabled people in the United Kingdom added together have more than £80 billion to spend each year.





# Disabled people and benefits

Not all disabled people get disability benefits or health-related benefits.

- Around 6 million people get disability benefits or health-related benefits. This is a lot less than the 11 million people who are covered by the **Equality Act 2010**.

## Equality Act 2010

This is a law to make sure that all people are treated fairly and equally.

- Less than half of all families with a disabled child get disability benefits or health-related benefits.
- The number of people who are disabled and get disability benefits or health-related benefits is very different in different parts of the United Kingdom.

Among the under 65-year-olds in the richer parts of London around 5 out of every 100 adults are disabled. But in parts of Glasgow in Scotland, and parts of Wales, around 33 out of every 100 adults are disabled.

# What disabled people want in their lives

Disabled people want the same things in life as everyone else.

- Choice and independence are important to disabled people and non-disabled people. Having good health and a good family life gives people a good quality of life.
- 75 out of every 100 disabled people think they have choice and control over their lives. This is a bit less than non-disabled people.
- If people need help with everyday activities, like washing, cooking and shopping, they are more likely to get help from a member of their family or a friend.



- **Personal budgets** can give people more choice and control over their lives. This helps them feel better about their life. But a lot of people find it hard to look after a **personal budget**. Some people, like those with a mental health condition, are less likely to have a **personal budget**.

## Personal budget

This tells a disabled person how much money they can spend on their care and support services. It also shows how it was worked out.



# Changing the way people think and act towards disabled people

Most people think and act towards disabled people in a good way. Only a few do not.

- Less than 20 out of every 100 people feel uncomfortable or awkward when they think about disabled people.
- 80 out of every 100 people think the **Paralympic Games** had a good effect on the way other people think and act towards disabled people.

## Paralympic Games

The **Paralympic Games** is a sports competition that disabled sports people from all over the world take part in. The **Paralympic Games** are held after the Olympic Games.



- 180 **disability hate crimes** are carried out every day in this country.

## Disability hate crime

If a person breaks the law because they do not like disabled people that is a **disability hate crime**.

- Feeling scared and losing confidence are the most common things that happen when a disabled person is the **victim** of **disability harassment**.

## Victim

This is a person who is hurt by a crime.

## Disability harassment

This is when someone acts badly towards another person because they are disabled.

- The number of people going to court and the number of people being found guilty of a **disability hate crime** went down in 2011/2012. Part of the reason for this was that the police did not take as many people to court.

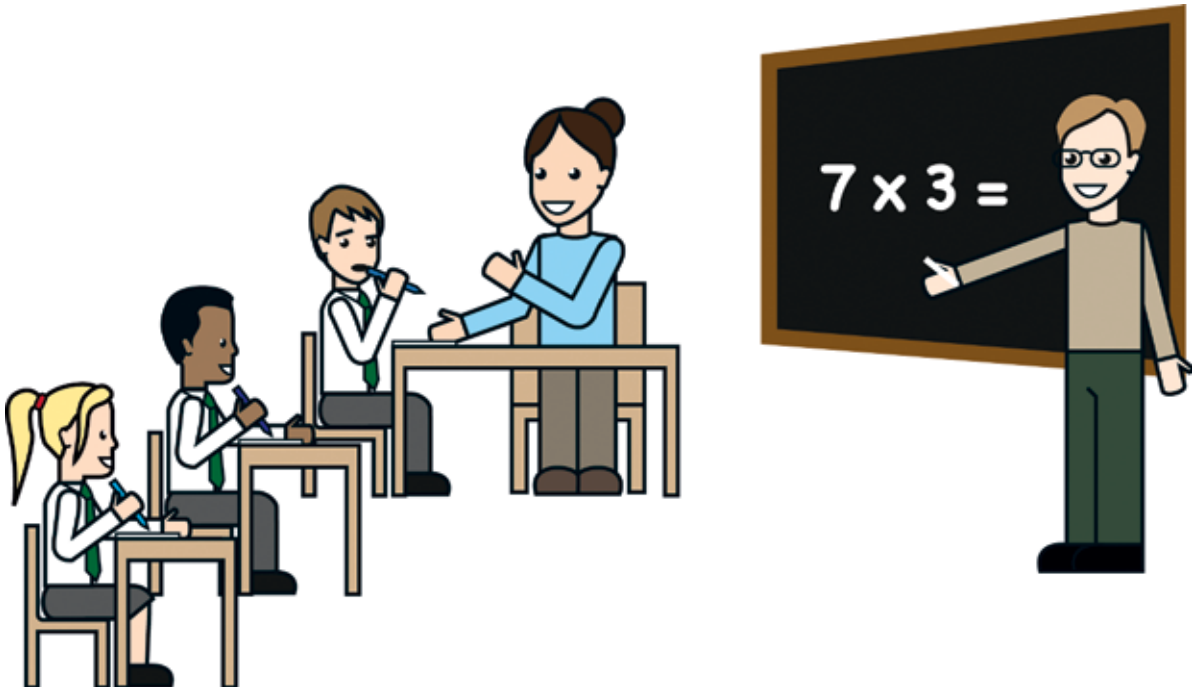
# How disability changes during people's lives

Disability affects everyone. Most people will, at some time in their life, either become disabled or look after someone who is disabled.

- Only a small number of children have health conditions from the moment they are born or have health conditions that are passed on to them from their parents.
- Almost 50 out of every 100 people who are aged 65 and over are disabled.



- But, more than 66 out of every 100 people who are aged 85 and over are disabled.
- By 2026 the number of disabled people aged over 65 will go up a lot.
- 6 million people look after a member of their family or a friend. This will happen more as the number of older people goes up.
- Nearly 75 out of every 100 people in the United Kingdom have friends who are disabled or they know people who are disabled.
- At work, 1 out of every 10 people is likely to be disabled.
- At school, in a class of 30 children, 2 are likely to be disabled.



# What disability means to us

There are many different types of disability and so disability means different things to each of us.

- The **Equality Act 2010** protects more than 11 million people with a health condition or an **impairment** from **discrimination**.

## Impairment

This is something about the way a person does things. It may be things like being unable to walk well, not being able to see or hear other people clearly, not being able to think hard for a long time, or not being able to remember things.

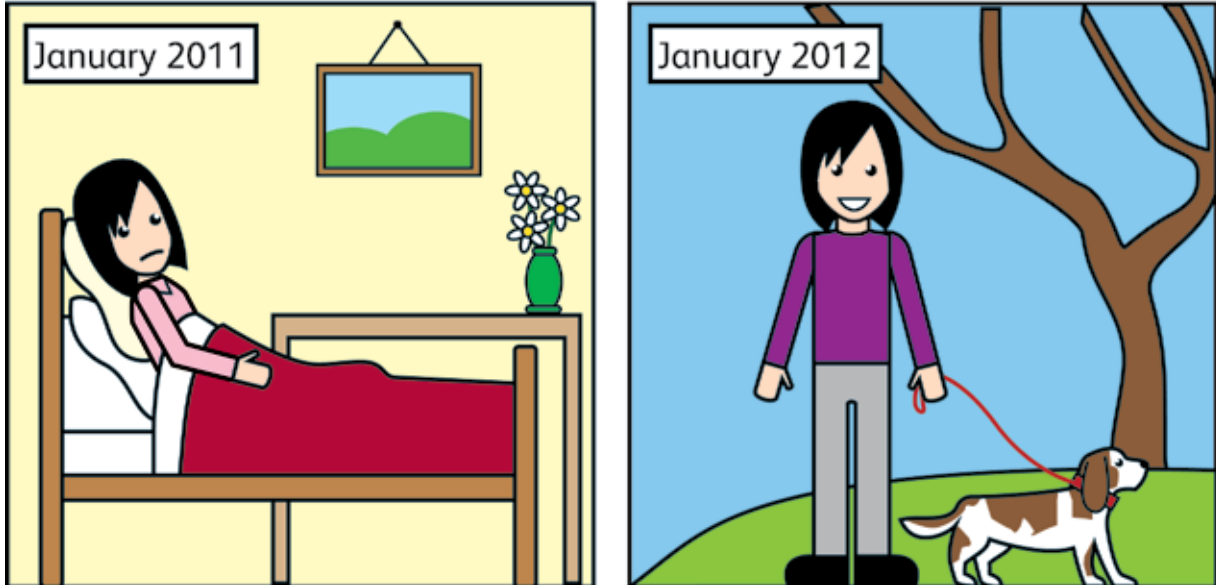
## Discrimination

This is when someone is treated unfairly because of something. People are sometimes discriminated against because of their age, because of the colour of their skin, or because they have a disability.

- Out of the 11 million people with a health condition or an **impairment**, around 3 million people say they are disabled.
- There are some times in a person's life when they are more likely to get a health condition or a disability.



- Many health conditions can affect people at different times. Up to 1 out of every 3 people with a health condition or an **impairment** say they do not have it a year later.



- Each year around 1 out of every 12 people get an **impairment**.
- Some people are more likely to be disabled than other people. For example, people over **state pension age**, people with only a few, or no, qualifications from school and people who do not get paid very much are more likely to be disabled.

## State pension age

The government pays you **State Pension** when you get to **State Pension age**. Just now, the **State Pension age** is 65 for men and 60 for women. But the **State Pension age** will go up over the coming years until it is 68 for both men and women.

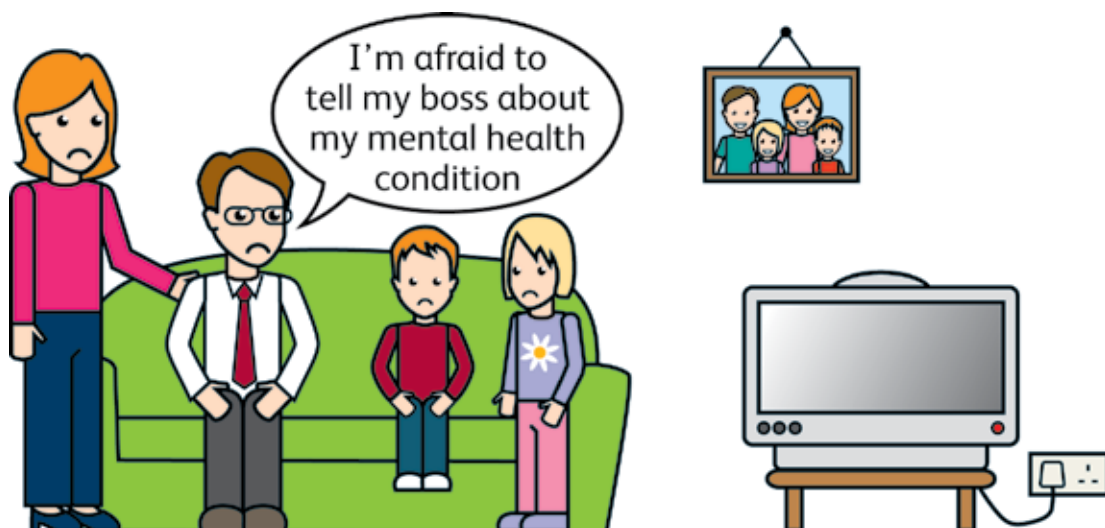
# People with mental health conditions

People with mental health conditions do not do as well in life as other people.

- For people under 65, the same number of people have a mental health condition as all the physical health conditions added together.
- Around 18 out of every 100 people have a mental health condition.
- 40 out of every 100 people who make a claim for the **Employment and Support Allowance** have a mental health condition or an **impairment** that affects their behaviour.

## Employment and Support Allowance

This is a benefit for disabled people and people who have a health condition. Most people will talk to a Jobcentre Plus worker who will help them get ready for work.



- People with a mental health condition
  - are more likely to face **barriers** when trying to buy things or get services like health services.

## Barriers

These are things that stop disabled people living like other people. For example, the ways other people think and act towards disabled people.

- are less likely to have a job than people with other kinds of **impairment**.
  - are more likely not to be looking for a job.
  - are likely to have fewer friends and to know fewer people than people with other **impairments**.
- Many people do not feel comfortable dealing with people who have a mental health condition.



# Barriers

There are less **barriers** for disabled people in some areas of life now than there used to be.

- Children with **special educational needs** who do not have a **special educational needs statement** are doing better at getting qualifications.

## Special Educational Needs

This is when a child has a learning disability or difficulty that

- makes it much harder for them to learn than most children of the same age, or
- makes it much harder for them to use school services than most children of the same age.

## Special Educational Needs statement

This document describes what a child can do and what they find difficult. It also says what help the child should get as long as they are at school.

- Disabled people are less likely to be living in **poverty** than they were in 2005.

## Poverty

This is when a person or family does not have enough money to pay for the things they need, or to take part in everyday life as much as other people.



- There are fewer disabled people who are 19 and who do not have a **level 3 qualification**. The gap between disabled people and non-disabled people is getting smaller.

## Level 3 qualification

A **level 3 qualification** is like an A level. A **level 3 qualification** shows that you know many things and that you have lots of different skills. A **level 3 qualification** is used for jobs where people have to work on their own.

- Fewer disabled people find it hard to use different types of transport, like buses, trains and taxis. Since 2005, this number has fallen from 27 out of every 100 disabled people to 22 out of every 100 disabled people.
- Fewer disabled people find it hard to use goods and services. Since 2005, this number has fallen from 40 out of every 100 disabled people to 32 out of every 100 disabled people.
- There are more disabled people with a job. The gap between disabled people with a job and non-disabled people with a job has closed by 33 out of every 100 people.



- The way people think and act towards disabled people both in the United Kingdom and across Europe is getting better. But this does depend on the type of **impairment** the disabled person has.

# Transport

The cost of using some types of transport can be a problem for disabled people.

- Compared to other countries in Europe, disabled people in this country are less likely to find it hard to use transport.
- Disabled people between 16 and 64 are more likely than non-disabled people to say that the cost of using transport stops them using it as much as they would like to.
- Less than 10 out of every 100 disabled people say the cost of using buses or how often the buses run stops them using buses as often as they would like to.
- Cost is much less of a barrier to people who are getting the **state pension**.

## State pension

This is money most people get when they retire. It is paid out of money they pay to the government during their working life.

# Using public services

Disabled people still have **barriers** to using **public services**.

## Public services

**Public services** include a lot of the services you use, like

- Parts of the local council that give you services like the children's or adult service, somewhere to live, and buses and trains.
- Schools and colleges.
- Doctors, dentists and hospitals.
- Government departments like jobcentre plus or the tax office.





- Some disabled people find it hard to move around buildings, especially those people with long-term pain or **chronic health conditions**.

## Chronic health condition

A **chronic health condition** can be helped but cannot be cured. This can be things like asthma, eczema, arthritis, epilepsy and diabetes.

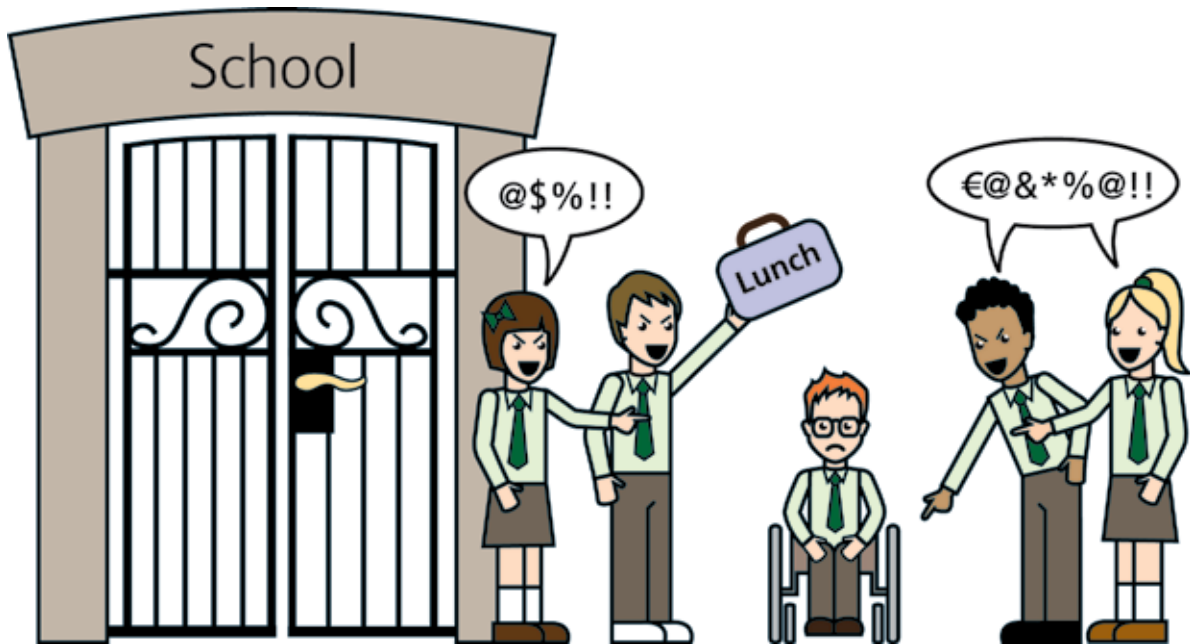
- Around 33 out of every 100 disabled people find it hard to get in touch with pension and benefit services, especially when using the telephone.
- Disabled people are more likely to come across **barriers** when they try to get health care.
- 60 out of every 100 disabled people use the Internet at home. But this is much less than the 86 out of every 100 non-disabled people who can use the Internet at home.
- The number of people who use the Internet at home changes by age and sex. Only 40 out of every 100 disabled women age 64 and over use the Internet at home.

## Disabled children

Disabled children come across **barriers**. But they take part in some activities as much as non-disabled children.

- Only 3 out of every 100 disabled people had their **impairment** or health condition when they were born.
- By the time young people are aged 19, 7 out of every 100 have an **impairment** or a health condition.
- The parents of a disabled child are more likely to split up and live apart.
- A disabled child is more likely to have a disabled brother or sister.
- The parents of disabled children say their children have **barriers** to learning at school, to playing with other children, and to taking part in sports and games.

- Teachers and other people say that telling children they are disabled or non-disabled can have good and bad effects. If a child is told he or she is disabled, the child may not expect to do as well as other children.
- Young disabled children are more likely to be picked on or bullied.



- Disabled children are as likely to go to a library or a museum as non-disabled children. But disabled children are less likely to take part in sports than non-disabled children.

# Disabled people and equality

Disabled people do not yet have **equality** in all areas of life.

- Families where at least 1 person is disabled are more likely to be living in **poverty** than families where no one is disabled.
- People with an **impairment** know fewer people than people without an **impairment**.
- Disabled people are more likely to come across **barriers** when they are learning at school or college, or training for a job.
- Disabled workers earn less than non-disabled workers. This works out to be around 8 pence less for each pound earned.
- Paying the normal monthly household bills is likely to be harder for families with a disabled person.
- Disabled people, especially young disabled people, are more likely to be **victims** of crime than non-disabled people. They are less likely to trust the **criminal justice system**.

## Criminal justice system

The **criminal justice system** means the police, the courts, prison and probation. It deals with people who break the law.

# Moving from school, college or university into work

Moving from school, college or university into work is harder for disabled people than non-disabled people.

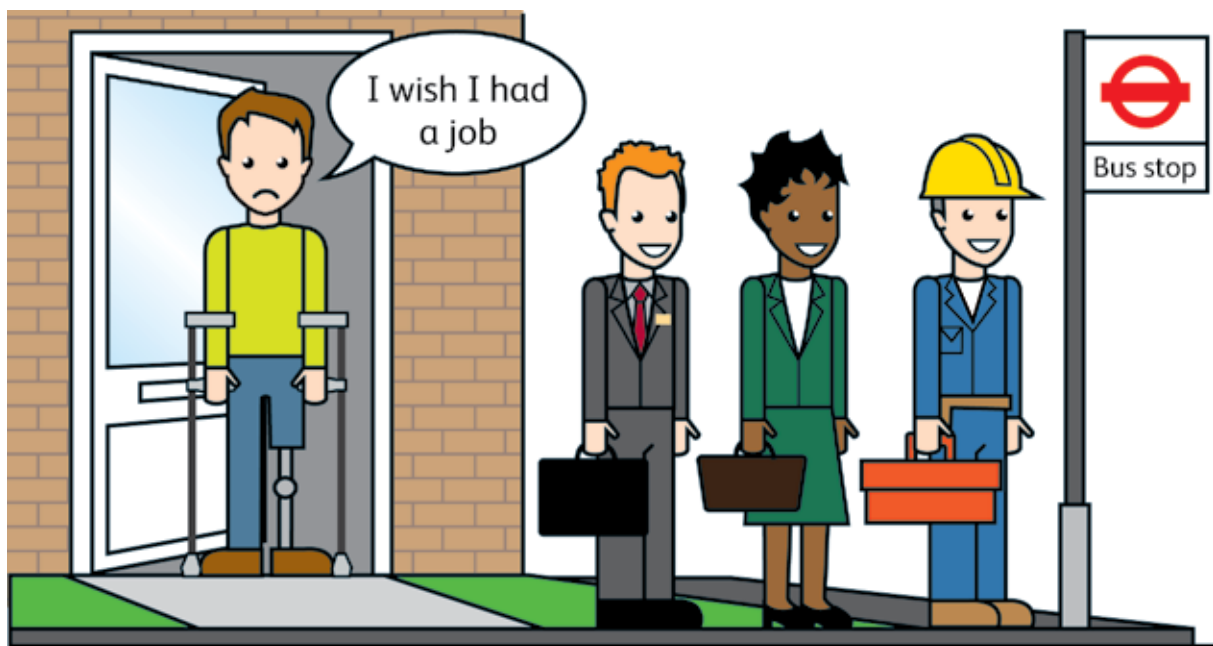
- Disabled people are less likely to go to university than non-disabled people. But even so, 40,000 disabled people **graduate** from university each year.

## Graduate

This is when a person at university takes and passes tests called examinations. This means they get a degree called a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science.



- 60 out of every 100 disabled people who **graduate** from university find a job in 6 months. This is almost as many as non-disabled people who **graduate** from university.
- After leaving university the gap between the number of disabled people in work and the number of non-disabled people in work gets bigger each year.
- Wheelchair users who **graduate** from university are much less likely to get a job than other disabled **graduates**.
- Young disabled people are 2 times more likely not to be at college or university, not to have a job or not to be training for a job.
- Disabled people are more likely not to have passed any examinations at school or college.
- Only around 17 out of every 100 disabled people who have not passed any examinations will have a job.



# Disabled people in work

Many disabled people have good jobs.

- Over 300,000 disabled people work as managers.
- Around 100,000 self-employed disabled people have at least 1 person working for them.
- Only 5 out of every 100 disabled people age 25 or over have never worked.



- Around 33 out of every 100 disabled people say their health condition or **impairment** does not mean they can only do some kinds of work or that they can only do a certain amount of work.
- 20 out of every 100 disabled people say that changing the times they have to be at work or cutting down the number of hours they have to be at work has helped them.

- There are very few disabled people working as top managers. There are also very few disabled people working as builders, engineers, computer workers, artists, **media** workers, cooks and chefs, and hotel and restaurant workers.

## Media

The **media** is things like newspapers, magazines, television and radio.

- 20 out of every 100 disabled people say they have been given less duties at work than they would like because of their disability.

The things that young and old disabled people go through at work are not the same.

- People who get an **impairment** later in life are finding it easier to stay in their job. Even though the number of disabled people in work is low, 500,000 more disabled people age 50 or over are in work now compared to 10 years ago.
- The number of young disabled people in work is falling. But so is the number of young non-disabled people in work.



- Once young people finish school, college or university, the gap between the number of disabled people in work compared to the number of non-disabled people in work gets bigger very quickly.
- Young disabled people are 5 times more likely to say that they did not get a job or an interview because of their disability.
- More disabled people are taking **apprenticeships**. But there are still fewer disabled people on **apprenticeships** than there would be if they had their fair share.

## Apprenticeship

An **apprenticeship** is a paid job. It involves learning new skills while you work.



# Disabled people who are not working

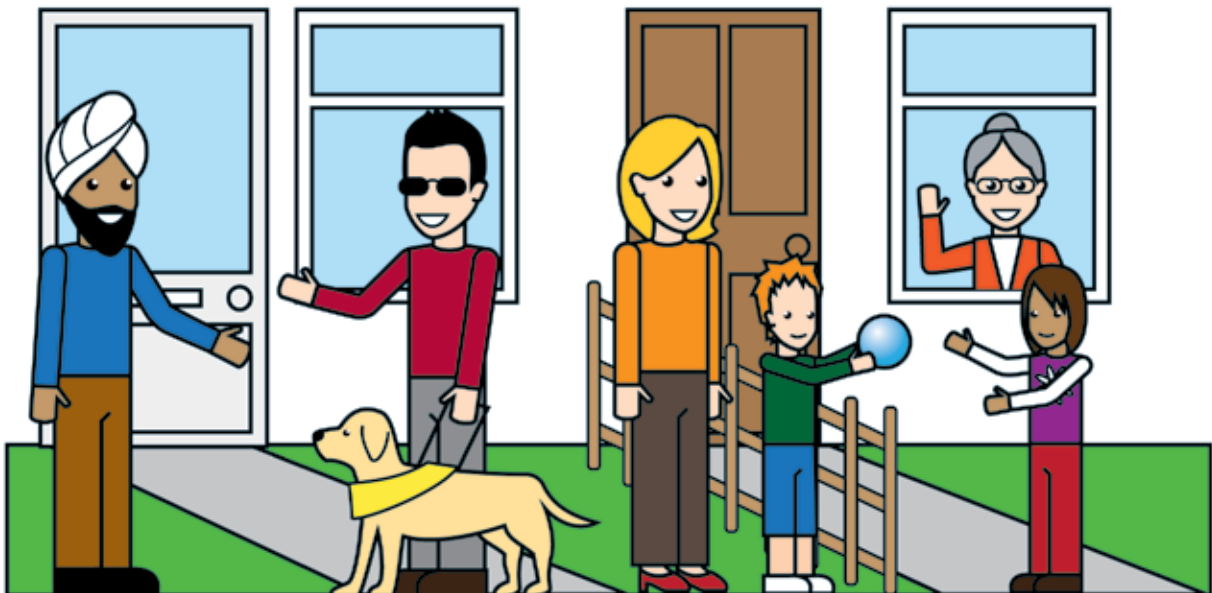
Many disabled people do not look for a job. But 30 out of every 100 disabled people who do not have a job say they would like to work.

- If the number of disabled people in work matched the number of non-disabled people in work, an extra 2 million disabled people would have a job.
- In this country 3.7 million disabled people under 65 do not have a job. But only about 11 out of every 100 disabled people are looking for a job. Most of these disabled people say that they do not want to work.
- If a disabled person is not looking for a job they only have a 1 in a 100 chance of getting a job in a period of 3 months.
- 50 out of every 100 families where no one has a job has a disabled person in the family.
- In big cities or areas where a lot of factories and businesses have closed down, less than 20 out of every 100 disabled people have a job.

# What we have found out and what happens next

Over the last few years things have been getting better for disabled people in some areas of life.

- Disabled people are doing better at school, college and university.
- There are more disabled people in work.
- More disabled people find it easier to use transport and goods and services.
- The way people think and act towards disabled people is getting better.



Disabled people still do not do as well as non-disabled people in things like learning and work. Some disabled people seem to have been left behind more than others. For example, people with mental health conditions.

In the next part of this **discussion** we will look at things like making sure we deal with the things that matter most to disabled people.

The Life Opportunities **Survey** gives us a lot of information that we can look at. Things like the main **barriers** disabled people come across.

A new report on the Life Opportunities **Survey** will be written next year.

We will also try to find out these things.

- What makes people think about disability in the way that they do.
- Find out more about disabled people looking for a job.
- Find out more about what happens in other countries.

# Word list

## Apprenticeship

An **apprenticeship** is a paid job. It involves learning new skills while you work .....33

## Barriers

These are things that stop disabled people living like other people. For example, the ways other people think and act towards disabled people .....19

## Chronic health condition

A **chronic health condition** can be helped but cannot be cured. This can be things like asthma, eczema, arthritis, epilepsy and diabetes.....25

## Criminal justice system

The **criminal justice system** means the police, the courts, prison and probation. It deals with people who break the law.....28

## Disability harassment

This is when someone acts badly towards another person because they are disabled.....13

## Disability hate crime

If a person breaks the law because they do not like disabled people that is a **disability hate crime** .....13

## Discrimination

This is when someone is treated unfairly because of something. People are sometimes discriminated against because of their age, because of the colour of their skin, or because they have a disability .....16

## Discussion

This is when people talk to each other and say what they think .....5

## Economy

The **economy** is how much money the country has. It is made up of the goods and services in the country compared to how many people want to use or buy those goods and services .....7

## Employment and Support Allowance

This is a benefit for disabled people and people who have a health condition. Most people will talk to a Jobcentre Plus worker who will help them get ready for work. ....18

## Equality

This means everyone having the same chances to do what they can. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances. ....5

## Equality Act 2010

This is a law to make sure that all people are treated fairly and equally .....9

## Graduate

This is when a person at university takes and passes tests called examinations. This means they get a degree called a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science .....29

## Impairment

This is something about the way a person does things. It may be things like being unable to walk well, not being able to see or hear other people clearly, not being able to think hard for a long time, or not being able to remember things .....16

## Level 3 qualification

A **level 3 qualification** is like an A level. A **level 3 qualification** shows that you know many things and that you have lots of different skills. A **level 3 qualification** is used for jobs where people have to work on their own.

## Media

The **media** is things like newspapers, magazines, television and radio .....32

## Office for National Statistics

This is a government department that collects a lot of information about the people and work of this country. The government and other people use this information when making decisions about things.....6

## Paralympic Games

The **Paralympic Games** is a sports competition that disabled sports people from all over the world take part in. The **Paralympic Games** are held after the Olympic Games.....12

## Personal budget

This tells a disabled person how much money they can spend on their **care and support** services. It also shows how it was worked out .....11

## Poverty

This is when a person or family does not have enough money to pay for the things they need, or to take part in everyday life as much as other people.....21



# Public services

Public services include a lot of the services you use, like

- Parts of the local council that give you services like the children’s or adult service, somewhere to live, and buses and trains.
- Schools and colleges.
- Doctors, dentists and hospitals.
- Government departments like jobcentre plus or the tax office ..... 24

# Research

This is work done to find out more about something .....5

# Society

Society means all the people and all parts of life in this country. Being part of society can mean being accepted and having your views listened to. It can mean being able to live where you want, vote for a government, or join a group. When people are accepted by others this makes a good society.....7

## Special Educational Needs

This is when a child has a learning disability or difficulty that

- makes it much harder for them to learn than most children of the same age, or
- makes it much harder for them to use school services than most children of the same age ..... 20

## Special Educational Needs statement

This document describes what a child can do and what they find difficult. It also says what help the child should get as long as they are at school .....20

## State pension

This is money most people get when they retire. It is paid out of money they pay to the government during their working life .....23

## State pension age

The government pays you **State Pension** when you get to **State Pension age**. Just now, the **State Pension age** is 65 for men and 60 for women. But the **State Pension** age will go up over the coming years until it is 68 for both men and women.....17

## Survey

This is when we ask people what they think about things . . . . .5

## Victim

This is a person who is hurt by a crime . . . . .13

## How to contact us

Email      [fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)



Telephone   020 7340 4000



Letters      Office for Disability Issues  
                 (Disability Strategy Team)  
                 Ground Floor  
                 Caxton House  
                 6-12 Tothill Street  
                 London  
                 SW1H 9NA



## More information

You can get more information about helping disabled people do the best they can on our website at [www.odi.gov.uk/fulfillingpotential](http://www.odi.gov.uk/fulfillingpotential)

ISBN: 978-1-78153-246-1

Produced by the Office for Disability Issues

© Crown copyright

Produced in the UK, February 2013