

Autism Nova Scotia and Dalhousie researchers conducted a survey of Autistics in Nova Scotia to ask not just what people need in housing, but also what they want. We hope to help to move the conversation beyond bricks and mortar, spaces and beds, toward the pursuit of full, rich, complex, self-determined lives where decisions about people are being made with those people.



There is no **one-size-fits-all** solution for housing. Instead, there is a plurality of situations, that demand a plurality of models and solutions that can adapt to the individual needs and wants of each citizen.

MEETING THE HOUSING CHALLENGE

UNDERSTANDING THE HOUSING NEEDS AND DESIRES OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE IN NS

Improving housing options for everyone requires **public investment, a plan, and coordination**

Often, the **modifications and supports** Autistic people need to live independently are quite simple

There are **many exciting examples** of how to do community living well around the world.

AN INCOMPLETE TRANSITION

Wherever institutional living has dissolved and community living has become the goal, the remaining **patchwork** of family, community, private sector, government and non-profit supports has not coalesced into anything sustainable, let alone easy for families to navigate.

Read the full **Meeting the Housing Challenge** report at www.supportedhousing.ca

FINDINGS + MORE -->

FINDINGS + RECOMMENDATIONS PT. I

- Two-thirds (65%) of all respondents want to move out of their current household. A further 15% said they don't know whether or not they would like to move out...
- ...but just under half think it is likely to happen in the next five years.
- Most respondents lived with their parents; thus, many who felt it was likely they would move said "it's just time" because of their age. and growing independence.
- Others reported being unhappy with their housemates, privacy, noise levels or location.
- Those who said it was unlikely they would move tended to point to financial barriers as the reason why.
- About half of all respondents said they would prefer to live alone. Thirty-three percent said they would prefer to live with a spouse or romantic partner, and one-quarter each (25%) said they want to live with someone who shares expenses or to live with their parent(s) or sibling(s).
- Most said they would like to live in a detached house (61%) or an apartment (55%) (multiple selections were allowed).
- Respondents care a lot about who they live with (as we all do), and like having supportive people around. But they also say they need to be able to make choices for themselves, and they need to be able to retreat to privacy and quiet when they want to.

FINDINGS + RECOMMENDATIONS PT. 2

- Sound-proofing was the most common change respondents would need in their ideal living space.
- Other common changes included sensory calming materials and space between their house/apartment and neighbours.
- Half of respondents said they can live independently but would benefit from someone checking on them periodically. A further 22% said they could live completely independently.
- There are considerable gaps between the supports respondents say they need and the supports they currently receive. The area with the largest gap: housing.

What counts as a good house and location might be subjective and individualized, but it is clear that in order to facilitate a person's goals, a home should be close to the things they have to do and like to do, it should be affordable, it should be adapted to any support or sensory needs, and it should have the right mix of support and independence.

Read the full report at www.supportedhousing.ca.