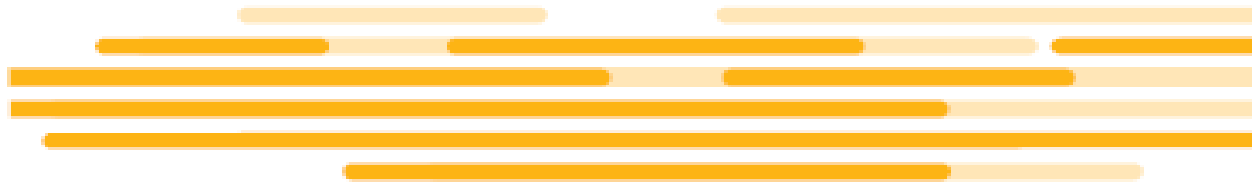


Autism Community Input to: BC Government Development of Accessibility Legislation

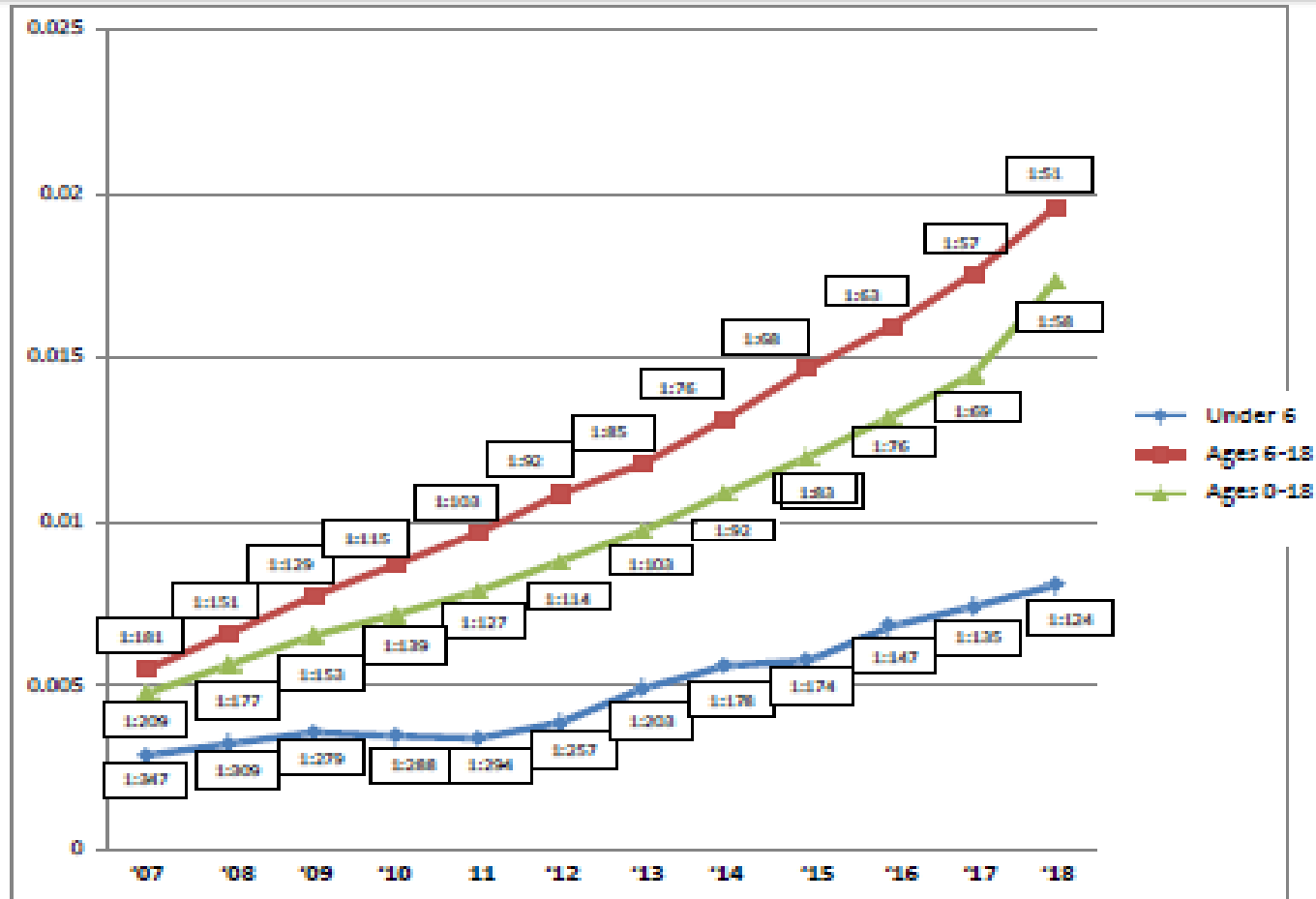
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British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation



Rate in Autism Funding/ Prevalence



*Rate of children in the BC population who have a signed autism agreement with MCFD. Sources: MCFD Autism Funding caseload; Autism Funding Branch end of month counts (includes pending cases) for February 2007 through 2018; Population from BC Statistics
[\[http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx\]](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx)



Service Delivery: Mental Health

Service 1

- **We are asking for:**
- Better Access to ASD Diagnosis and Psycho-educational Assessments, covered under MSP, regardless of the age of the individual, so that individuals receive an accurate and comprehensive diagnosis, and can therefore, seek appropriate treatment.
- Have you had difficulties accessing diagnosis?
- Diagnosed younger than age 6?
- Diagnosed between the ages of 6-18?
- Diagnosed as an adult?
- Self-Identify as ASD?
- How has having (or not having) a diagnosis impacted you?



Service Delivery: Mental Health

Service 2

- **We are asking for:**
- Shorter wait lists for psychiatric assessments & more support for autism training for medical health practitioners.

Have you found it hard accessing mental health services due to:

- **Difficulty finding a practitioner with autism experience or training?**
- **Wait time to see a practitioner?**

To book an appointment have you had to wait:

- **Longer than three months?**
- **Longer than six months?**



Anxiety Disorders

- One of the most prevalent co-occurring mental health conditions with ASD
- Estimates of anxiety disorders in ASD range from 22-84% (compared to 2-20% in 'typical' populations)
- Three most commonly associated with ASD (Hollocks et. al., 2016):
 - Social Anxiety Disorder
 - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
 - Social Phobia

Source: Spectrumworks Consulting Group



Depressive Disorders

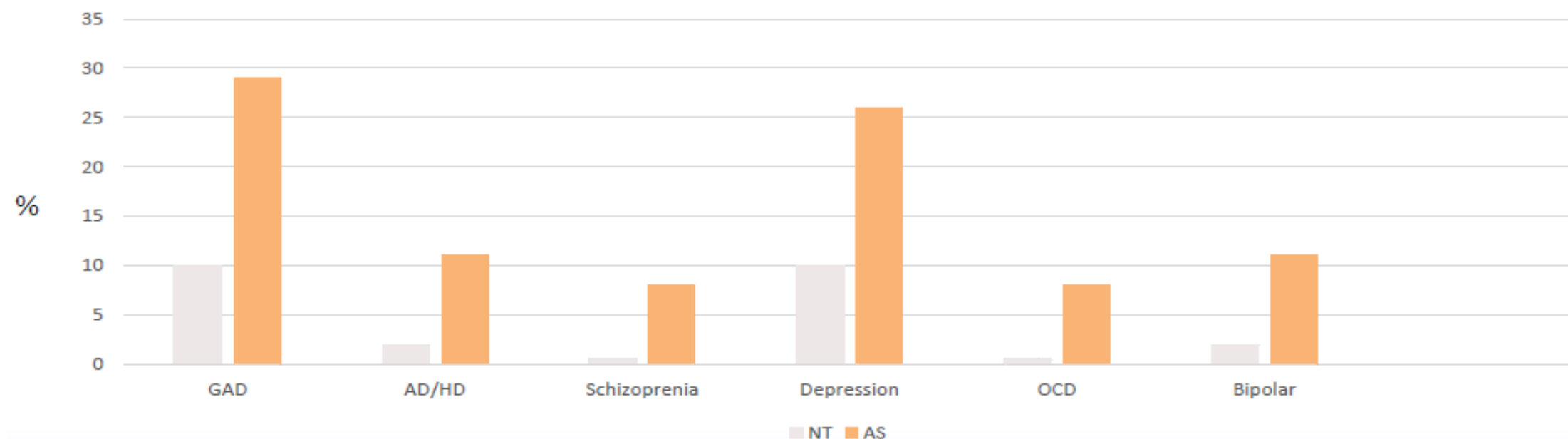
- Incidence rates for normative sample = 7% (DSM-5)
- ASD prevalence rates range from 10 – 53% (Chandrasekhar & Sikich, 2015)
- Confounds:
 - Alexythymia
 - Flat affective expression
 - Unusual facial expression ('standing irritated face')

Source: Spectrumworks Consulting Group



Comorbidity in ASD

Relative estimates in prevalence rates (% of population)
(Adapted from Croen, et. al., 2015)

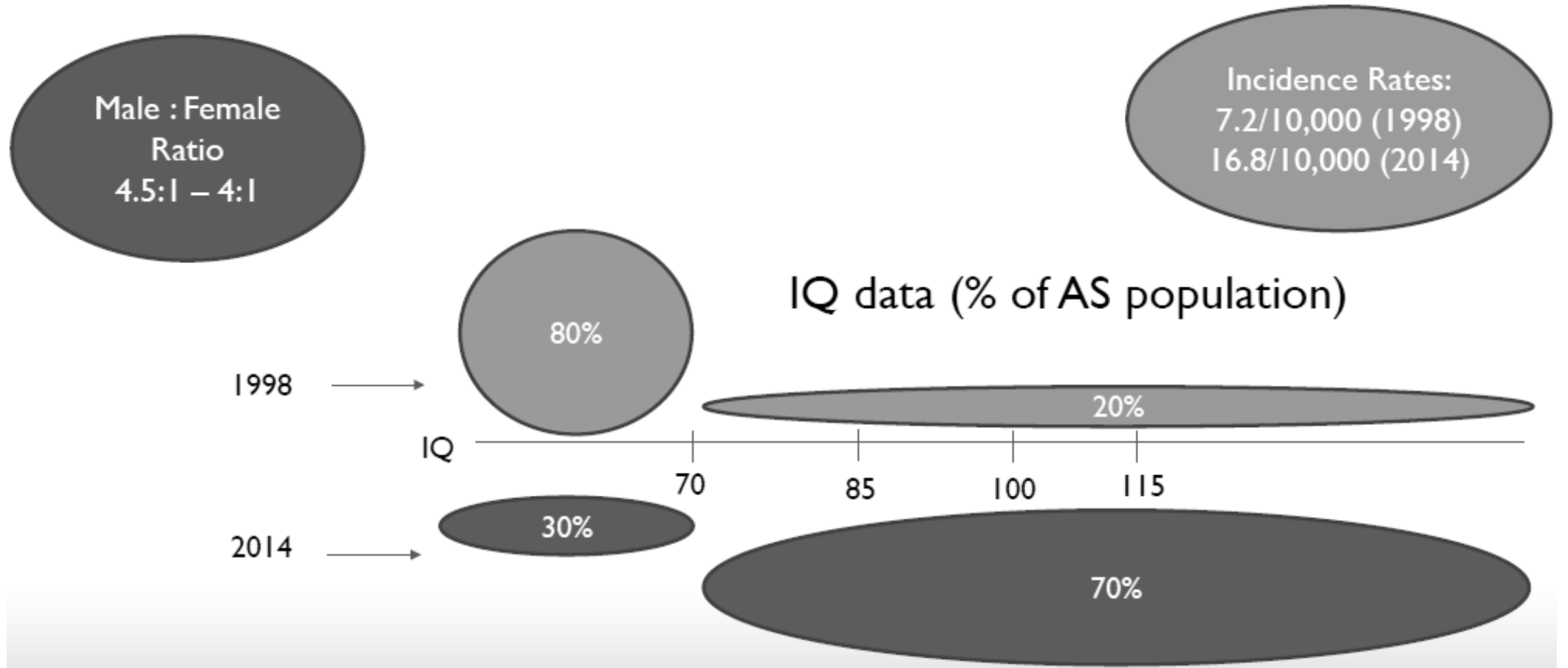


Published in: Lisa A Croen; Ousseny Zerbo; Yinge Qian; Maria L Massolo; Steve Rich; Stephen Sidney; Clarissa Kripke; *Autism*19, 814-823. DOI: 10.1177/1362361315577517
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Changes in ASD demographics (CDC 2014 data)



Source: Spectrumworks Consulting Group



Service Delivery: Mental Health

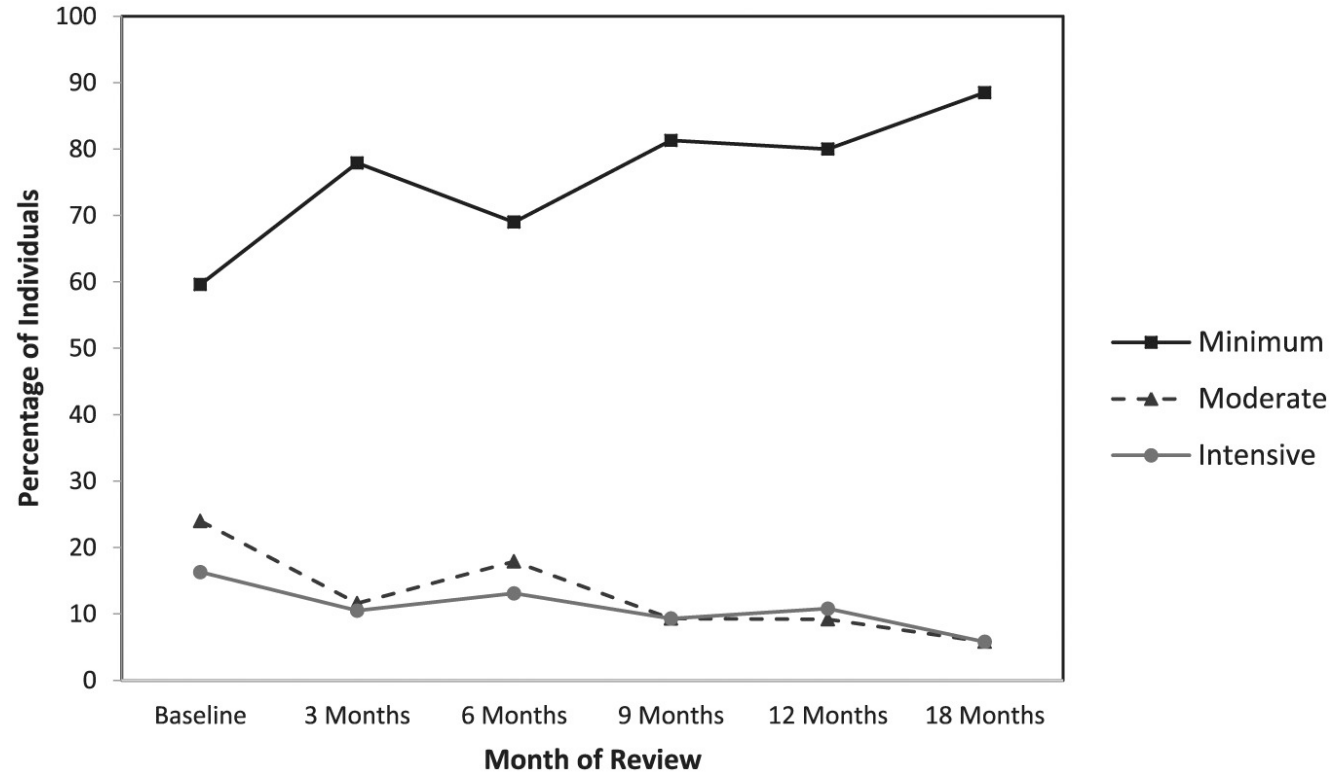
Service 3

- **We are asking for:**
- Government led assurance that no one will be turned away from mental health services due to an ASD diagnosis.
- Is access to mental health supports important to you?
- Have you been turned away from mental health supports?
- If so, what were the reasons given to you for this?



Levels of Support

Percentage of individuals with ASD requiring support
n = 104



Published in: Valerie Brooke; Alissa Molinelli Brooke; Carol Schall; Paul Wehman; Jennifer McDonough; Katherine Thompson; JanSmith; *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*43, 181-193. DOI: 10.1177/1540796918783202 Copyright © 2018 TASH



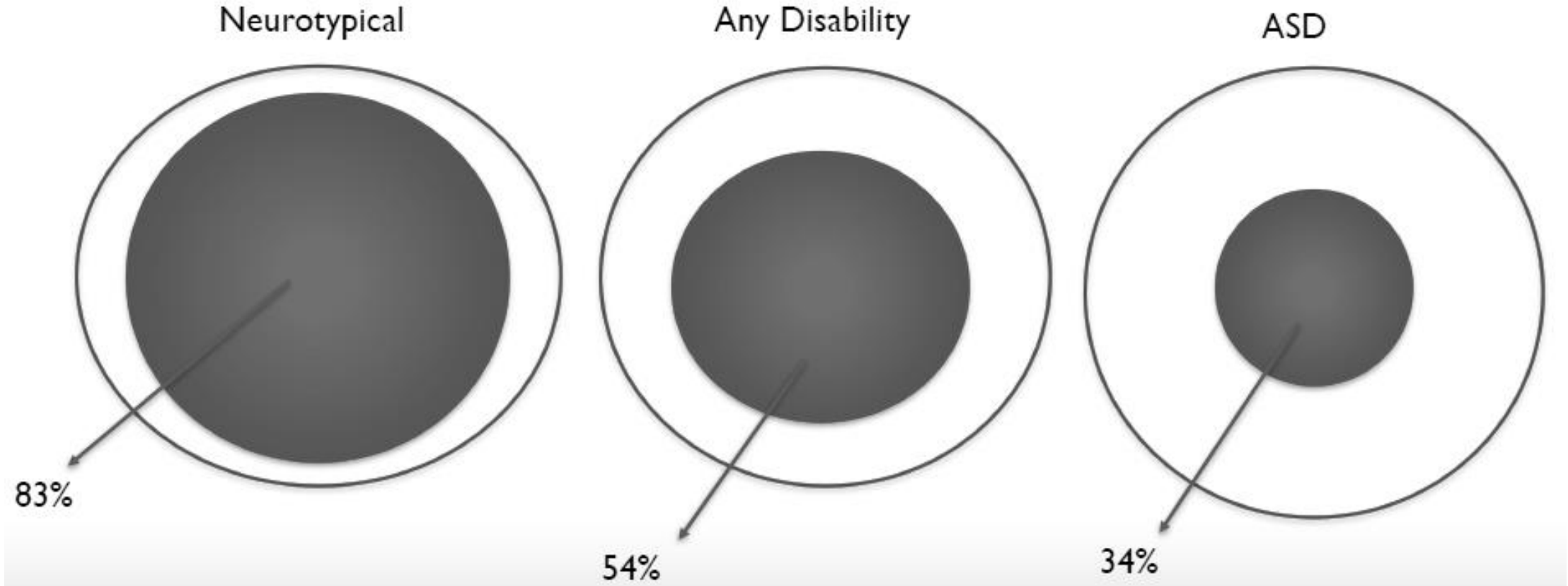
Service Delivery: Mental Health

Service 4

- **We are asking for:**
- Government to lead on more mental health coverage within Medical Plans, in the Public and Private sectors.
- Has the state of your mental health ever interfered with your ability to function at work or school?
- What are the primary barriers to getting the mental health supports that you need:
 - Cost?
 - Limited number of medical health practitioners with autism expertise?
 - Waitlists?
 - Other?



Labour Force Participation Rates (Scott et. al., 2015)



Source: Spectrumworks Consulting Group

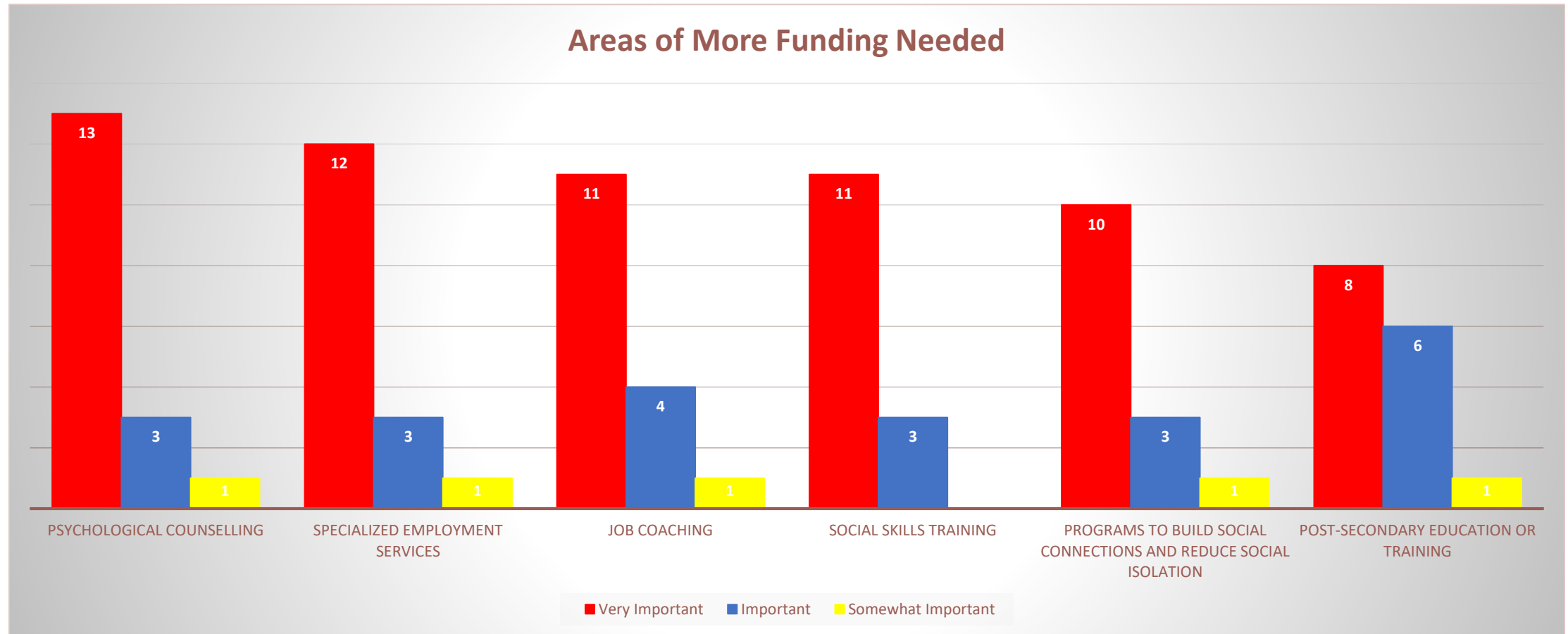


Service Delivery: Cradle to Grave Support 1

- **We are asking that:**
- MCFD Autism Intervention Funding be continued to age 21. Our kids mature more slowly, and need additional support through transition to adulthood.
- The Criteria for Level of Adaptive Functioning is too low and too narrow, as it does not consider executive and social skills well enough to capture a person's ability to live and function independently in work & life.
- **We are asking for:**
- Adult Services & Programs to be adequately funded.
- **What was your experience transitioning from high school?**



Handout 1 - In which areas would more funding be most helpful to you?



Service Delivery: Cradle to Grave Support 2

- **We are asking for:**
- One-Stop Wellness: Streamlined access to services customized to individuals.
- **Good Practices:**
- The Foundry, in BC, serving ages 12-24. We would like the Foundry concept expanded to also serve older adults.
- Keltie Mental Health Services elevated from being a resource service to being also an intake/referral service?
- Have you been excluded from programs or services because you were beyond the age range of that program?
- Is the Foundry model one that would make sense for you?
- Have you consulted Keltie Mental Health Services?
- Did you find helpful/useful information?



Location & Environment for Adult Services

- **We are asking for:**
- Services that are accessible by transit, in community settings, available to any BC resident, regardless of their place of residence.
- To what extent has the location of a program or service been an issue for you?
- Have you been turned away from a program or service because you did not reside in the right jurisdiction?

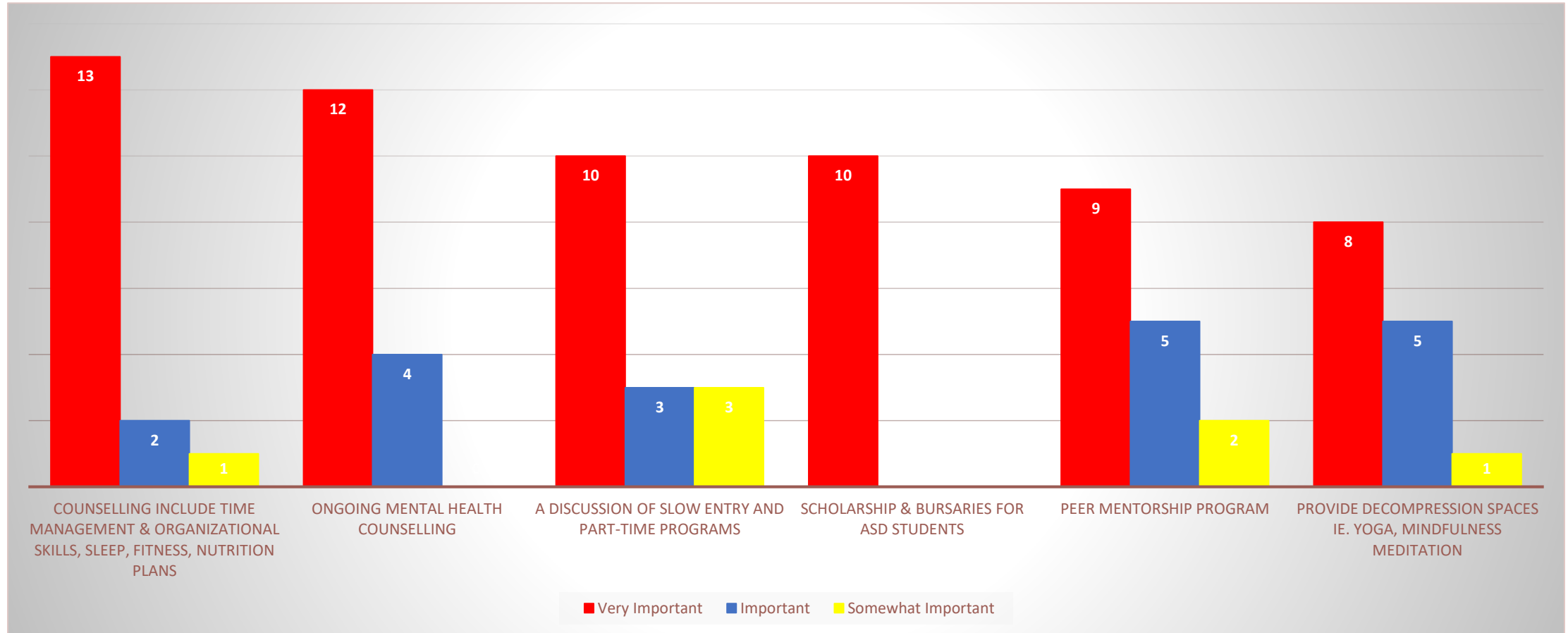


Education – Universities & Colleges

- **We are asking that:**
- Universities & Colleges provide our capable students more “life” supports to augment their classroom accommodations.
- Have you attended or do you plan to attend a University or College program?
- What worked/didn’t work for you in your post-secondary program?
- Retrospectively, do you think that it is better to do fewer courses the first year/each year?
- Retrospectively, do you think that a post-secondary Access program, such as at Douglas or Kwantlen College, would have been a better start for you, before attending a regular program?



Handout 2 - What type of assistance or services would most help you succeed in post-secondary education programs?



Education – Technical & Trades

- **We are asking that:**
- Technical & Trades institutions, such as BCIT, create more opportunities for ASD individuals in trades.
- Have the technical/trades programs that you were interested in, been available to you?
- What was this experience like for you?
- Did you complete your program?



Extent to which employees met requirements for good workplace performance



Employers' perception of the costs and the benefits of hiring individuals with autism spectrum disorder in open employment in Australia, (Scott, et. al., 2017)



Internal Challenges

- Social Difficulties (e.g., rudely terminating or interrupting conversations, inability to communicate needs, lack of spontaneous speech, and inappropriate use of trendy language phrases)
- Deficits in social communication (e.g., such as having difficulties in reading between the lines, being unable to understand facial expressions and tones of voice, and asking too many questions)
- Failure to understand complex (and often implied) instructions
- Hygiene challenges
- Job interviews

Source: Spectrumworks Consulting Group



Internal Challenges

- Executive functioning challenges (e.g., planning, working memory, initiating tasks, managing affect)
- Co-existing mental health needs (e.g., anxiety, depression, phobia)
- Challenging behaviours (e.g., strong sensory reactions, tantrums, strong need for routine)

Source: Spectrumworks Consulting Group

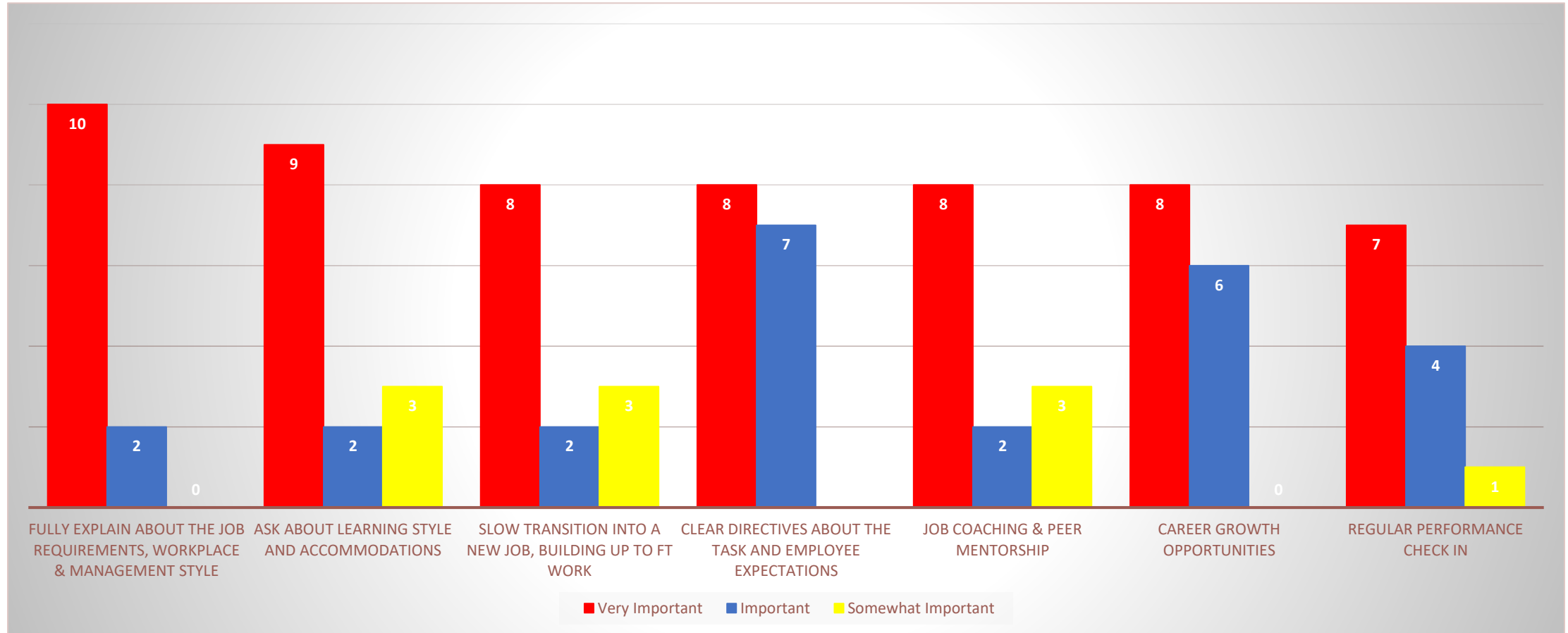


Employment

- **We are asking that:**
- Government identifies itself as an Inclusive Employer and demonstrates Inclusive Hiring through its Policies and Practices, and encourages inclusive hiring in the Private Sector.
- Government encourage, internally, and in the Private Sector, the adoption of best practices in providing employment for ASD individuals.
- **What practices/conditions have negatively impacted your ability to succeed at work?**
- **What practices/conditions have enabled you to succeed at work?**



Handout 3 - Which of these employment practices/policies are most important to you? That would enable you to be successful in your job?



Employment

- **Good practices:**
- Work-Able, BC Public Service Internship.
- BC Government support to President's Group to encourage business to hire inclusively.
- Do you have knowledge of similar initiatives?
- Can you envision ways that these ideas could be taken further?



Housing

- **We are asking for:**
- Affordable housing options that would offer residents maximum independent living in supportive, mixed communities, close to transit and services.
- **What is your hope for housing for you?**
- **Do you aspire to living independently, in your own home?**
- **What supports would you need to do so?**



Other Areas for Consideration

Are there other areas that we have not considered?

RSVP: joetteheuft@gmail.com

If you would like to add more to this conversation, the Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction is also hosting a virtual town hall, **Wednesday, November 20, 6:30pm-8:30pm.**

To register: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/accessibility>

To provide comments by telephone: **844-878-0640 (toll free)**



Acknowledgements

This presentation was developed with input from:

- Stephanie Jull, PhD, VP Programs, Training & Community Engagement, Canucks Autism
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- Malcolm Jenkins, The Foundry



Thank you all for coming and for your hard thinking on these difficult subjects!

