

2019 Submission - Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System

Who is Aspergers Victoria?

Aspergers Victoria Inc (AV) is the only NFP and peak body focused on Aspergers/ASD (Level 1). Since 1991 AV has used its member's and volunteer's lived experience of Aspergers to provide effective community supports and advocacy for Asperger individuals and their supporters. AV focuses on the strengths and abilities of the Asperger population to create a positive attitude and understanding of Aspergers in the community. This truly reflects our strengths-based community supports and advocacy for Aspergers and their supporter,s including the valuable contributions our members can and do make to society. Aspergers Victoria supports and services include:

- A wide range of peer groups for Teens, young adults, adults, partners, parents and carers
- Employment support, a jobseekers drop-in-support centre & on-the-job coaching
- Educational events and self regulation/awareness sessions
- Workshops including Social Skills Toolkit program for adults and teens.
- Aspergers Helpline which provides information and crisis support to our Asperger community.
- Research support to ensure the right understanding and aspects are being researched for our community
- Information about professional services available
- advocacy: to support our members with the education, employment, medical and NDIS systems.

Our focus is to help our Aspergers and translate their requirements when they are unable to successfully communication their needs to the non-Aspie world.

In partnership with our Aspergers community, AV works to change practices, attitudes and values that perpetuate inequality and exclusion of our neuro-different community. The demand for our focused services has increased exponentially as our Aspergers/ASD (Level1) individuals fall through the cracks of available supports, including school, NDIS, Centrelink, and Government employment services and programs. Our key priority is to support our Aspergers from early teens through to adults, and their supporters.

A key aspect which is often misunderstood is that Aspergers/Autism is simply a different neurology and way of processing the world and is not a mental health condition.

Aspergers individuals are very capable autistics with high intellect and cognitive ability however we have challenges with social communication and sensory sensitivities that make it difficult to "fit in". Aspergers are cognitively very capable and do not have any intellectual impairment. Many Aspergers are very valued members of society and have contributed to human progress as inventors, musicians, scientists, researchers, actors, philosophers and more. However, in today's environment many have been traumatised by the education and employment systems and have not reached their true potential and become underutilised members of society.

Asperger individuals can become socially and economically isolated and marginalised through the community's misjudgement and mistreatment and the failure to provide appropriate specialised supports. However, as is often the case, when Aspergers are not understood or not supported the right way, misdiagnosed or dismissed as a disability, this can lead to the development of co-morbid mental health issues including depression, anxiety and may result in suicide. The Asperger population has a lower life expectancy due to the serious mental health implications that are created by misunderstanding, mismanagement and incorrect support.

Aspergers Victoria (AV) is for Aspergers and it is our aim that our support and services are provided and guided by Asperger individuals and those with lived experience. We are currently managed by peers with Aspergers and Aspergers lived experience, and our Aspergers members are heavily involved in creating the services and ensuring that they meet their needs – this underpins and informs our successful approach to supporting Aspergers.

Our organisation adheres to the social model of disability and focuses on changing the community environment that creates and perpetrates the pathologising approach to Aspergers as a 'disability' not a diffability. Currently the issues pertaining to obtaining an adult diagnosis and the lack of specialised adult therapy supports have become central issues for our Asperger adults and, in particular, women Aspergers who are very often diagnosed later in life and by then have sustained severe mental health issues which could have been prevented had informed diagnostic and health services been available.

The clear message from our members is that adults and especially female adults can't access the right supports without a diagnosis. However the quest for a diagnosis of Aspergers, frequently leads to misdiagnosis and resulting increase in anxiety and depression that is avoidable. Current diagnostic tools and therapy supports are primarily males and primary children normed and focused and do not take into account the significant differences displayed by Asperger women.

To gather information from our community we created a survey that was circulated to our 700 members and families and our 12,000 social media followers. The results of the survey are attached to our submission. We have also attached the Victorian Governments Inquiry into Autism 101 Recommendations including those relating to Mental Health

1. What are your suggestions to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness and reduce stigma and discrimination?

This submission is about the mental health of people with Aspergers (ASD Level 1). The term Aspergers was subsumed post DSMiV under broader Autism Spectrum Diagnosis in the DSM 5 but still exists in the ICD-10 classification system. The term Aspergers is still used by many in the Autism community to signify the lived experience and specific Autistic characteristics of those Autistic individuals who are very cognitively able. This submission is also concerned with the mental health of their supporters who develop mental health conditions from lack of community inclusion and understanding.

It is important that the Commission's Advisory Committee and the community at large understand that Aspergers itself is not a mental health condition but a different neurology. If approached with a strengths based, inclusive approach and understanding that Aspergers individuals are highly capable, can thrive and be highly valued members of our society and contribute to our economy and social wellbeing.

Unfortunately though, many Aspergers individuals are misunderstood, misjudged, isolated from their peers, misdiagnosed/undiagnosed, and experience inappropriate and ineffective therapeutic support resulting in many Asperger individuals being excluded from social, education and employment opportunities. The result is that Asperger individuals are marginalised and are at serious risk of developing co-morbid severe mental health problems. Understanding and acceptance of differences in our community is critical to achieve inclusion and a halt of the slippery slide into mental illness.

The label of Autism (ASD) homogenises a very diverse range of characteristics, cognitive and other abilities and challenges. Our Aspergers members find that their characteristics differ greatly from a large number of individuals classified as ASD and look to AV to provide the individualised and specialised targeted to support the specific needs of Asperger individuals. Improved understanding of differences and how to support and appreciate those rather than trying to normalise these differences would help many bypass the mental health pathways.

The broad nature of the classification of ASD and homogenisation of the terminology results in a lack of understanding of the strengths of Asperger individuals, and leads to a stigmatisation of Aspergers under the label of ASD (level 1), leading to capable Aspergers being assumed to be and treated by others (even other Autism organisations and professionals) as if they are disabled – when they are very capable cognitively able individuals. Or not receiving the basic adjustments they need to thrive.

*"In regard to communities that support young people with ASD, they should be trained in autism-positive awareness, and being aware of low expectations and "othering", and the pitfalls of seeing non-autistics as universally more "capable" than ASD people.... I've had one woman in a leading position in a key Vic. autism-supporting organisation make some very ableist dismissive remarks to me, not specifically about her impression of me but in regard to "Aspergers" in general, and I thought, that's fine for me, I know what's what, but I thought that's a worry what messages she and others could be giving to young aspies (even young *adult* aspies), i.e. the message they could be getting, leading them to believe in lower expectations of themselves!" - telling them they are disabled.*

This lack of community understanding, education, inclusion, and paucity of specialised supports can have devastating results and contribute to isolation, unemployment, anxiety, depression and suicide. Aspergers are often the target of bullying due to societal misunderstanding and lack of acceptance of differences as children and in adulthood which creates a life time of stress and trauma.

This lack of education and understanding fosters a **lack of respect** for Asperger individuals who are seen as 'abnormal' resulting in mistreatment and even failure to provide treatment. This is especially true in the Mental Health system where an Aspergers individual's own expert voice and their parent/carer's expert knowledge are often ignored, dismissed, and invalidated.

Our submission focuses on three groups: children, adults (especially women) and the elderly.

Adults: The issues around gaining an adult diagnosis and specialised therapeutic and personal supports contribute to a mental health pathway for Aspergers adults and especially women who are most often diagnosed much later in life.

Suspected Aspergers individuals cannot access the right supports without a diagnosis. Diagnoses are very expensive and there are few clinicians who are trained to accurately diagnose Aspergers in adults and particularly in women. This difficulty in obtaining a diagnosis results in the individual being traumatised and frequently misunderstood by those around them when a diagnosis could change their outcomes in life. Autism diagnostic tools and supports are inadequate and inappropriate for a large percentage of Asperger population. Diagnostic and assessment tools are predicated on a deficit model and have been primarily created for children and are predominantly male normed. This is totally inadequate for the adult and female population.

Women are often misdiagnosed as they are more capable at socially masking and trying to fit which contributes to significant mental health issues if not supported, and diagnosis doesn't happen early enough. Women do not fit into the current diagnostic criteria and need to be diagnosed by an expert professional in Autism, with an indepth knowledge of that individual, so making diagnosis even more expensive and unattainable.

It is frequently reported to us by our members that many adults and especially women:

- Cannot access a diagnosis due to lack of skilled professionals: especially adult women who need specifically skilled professionals
- Diagnosis is too expensive and time consuming process and has no government funding support.
- Misdiagnosed and told they don't have Aspergers as they don't fit diagnostic criteria which are designed for children and males
- Women mainly diagnosed with other disorders and mistreated by professionals as well as family and partners which create serious mental health issues
- ADHD is often missed as a co-morbid diagnosis with dyslexia, dyspraxia and other complex neurological issues

Catkin: *"In my experience psychologists have been useless and just tell you to be positive and never help you solve any of your problems. They get paid thousands of dollars and achieve very little. Most of them probably do their jobs for status and the money. Don't get me started on how useless psychiatrists are."*

Asperger in survey: *"I am not mentally ill. Inappropriate terminology I'm finding offensive. The world doesn't need more conformity"*

A key priority is better diagnostic tools and awareness for adults and especially for Aspergers women so they receive support and create self-understanding much earlier that prevents serious mental health pathways. Asperger mothers who have Aspergers children reportedly find this especially difficult as described in this recent article: https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/dec/26/autism-hidden-pool-of-undiagnosed-mothers-with-condition-emerging?CMP=share_btn_fb&fbclid=IwAR0MaNT8itw-TH76zI0bMIB5QAS5K-Z2Slo_BBGsPeAvApwBH2kIXr1wg8g

AV Partner's Group attendee: *"Life was more difficult before we knew what our partner's condition (Aspergers) was – many of us enduring 20 and 30 years of irrational and destabilising behaviour – which leads to questioning oneself as to what we have done wrong. There must be an alarming number of partners who haven't realised the condition that has destroyed their lives... causing fear and hopelessness. I hope the action you are taking leads to more awareness and more diagnosis. We saw many counsellors over 15 years without Aspergers being considered as a reason for the difficulties at home.... "*

AV Aspergers woman - Young adulthood: *"Unable to be helped adequately by professionals (being undiagnosed). As mentioned in the focus group, became depressed, presumably partly due to thinking that I must or should be depressed. Getting things done (re household tasks) eventually got far worse over time (can't pinpoint from when), due to not*

knowing how to encourage myself in the face of the world's perception of such extreme "not getting things done".... didn't realise until the year before last that it would have been partly the being unable to encourage myself that led to my getting worse. Lack of being able to get things done has taken over my whole adult life, to this day."

As the Inquiry into Autism Services concluded we need more professionals including GPs, psychologists and psychiatrists – and school staff - who understand Aspergers and are capable of realising the neurology and facilitating diagnosis as well as providing individualised support options. This is especially for understanding and identifying the characteristics in women.

Easier access to diagnosis for adults was already accepted as a recommendation by the Inquiry into Autism Services Victoria in 2017 but no change has happened.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- the cost of diagnosis be made more affordable and with a Medicare rebate for the general Asperger population
- diagnostic tools and assessment reflect the gender and age diverse Asperger population
- appropriate and accurate training, PD and education of mental health professionals and therapists which focuses on a non-pathologising and strengths-based approach is developed and undertaken
- Improve adult access to specialist support services

Parent in survey: "Better and earlier access to mental health services as we were repeatedly turned away from Emergency Hospital departments after numerous suicide attempts without treatment and was only provided access after 4 months when my daughter had escalated into psychosis. It was awful to watch her suffer. We wouldn't treat animals in this way! Attempts"

Children: In our experience, teachers are not trained or supported to manage the specific needs of Aspergers children in school environments. This leads to high anxiety for the child and teacher. Teachers often take a deficit approach to the child and underestimate their abilities due to perceived challenges in the child's behaviour and resulting areas of academic deficit when these kids are high IQ. Schools are essentially a social environment which is a key challenge for our Aspergers but also a key place to build their inclusion and build their communication skills if supported the right way. Having Aspergers, and those with learning differences, and adapting for Aspergers needs have been proven to assist the learning of all students.

Schools Education – The current curriculum is debilitating for many of our Aspergers children, expecting them to fit into a system that does not accommodate neurological difference and Asperger's characteristics. – blaming and pathologising the students if they can't fit in. Teachers need improved training to understand that Aspergers is not a deficit, and how to accommodate difference in learners to support highly capable Asperger students with both academic and social education.

AV has developed and provides training to school personnel to assist them to understand and appropriately and successfully support their Aspergers students. Following our presentations, we have often seen an improvement in their inclusion and support in their environments as well as improved teacher understanding. Aspergers Victoria is currently exploring the idea of providing accredited training and professional development courses for teachers.

In addition the structure of the education curriculum in Victoria is inappropriate for the needs of Asperger students. The chronologically determined progression in learning does not suit the Asperger child who is frequently less emotionally and socially developed than their peers but academically capable. This lag in social and emotional maturity results in many Asperger students not reaching their academic potential in the current school system. It is extremely alarming that number of children with Aspergers who develop school anxiety, trauma and end up dropping out of school, and from there we see and recent research shows they follow a mental health pathway of isolation and experience severe and debilitating anxiety and depression.

Poor school experiences are devastating for parents and supporters who also suffer mental health issues and loss of employment as a result of having to care for a traumatised child excluded from an inappropriate system. Parents who have a child with learning differences in the School system repeatedly share with us and in our parent peer groups about the high anxiety and trauma they themselves experience dealing with the current school system, teachers who don't understand

their child and out of date behaviour approaches that impact their entire family. They are often dismissed and marginalised by the school authorities.

It is imperative that in order to reduce the ongoing likelihood of increasing serious mental health issues we need:

- Asperger-specific education and training of education personnel/Teachers: PD and education include in depth and accurate information about Aspergers abilities (not deficit focus) as well as provide constructive, positive teaching and behaviour management strategies relating to children with a neurotypical difference (not disability). University/Tertiary education faculties must review their curricula to embed this training throughout the teaching degrees they offer. This is imperative in order to minimise the damage done by the current education system to the mental health of many of our Aspie students.
- The structure of the education curriculum in Victoria and progression through the school years is not determined and limited by the individual student's chronological age.
- The curriculum is more accurately reflects the diversity and difference of the Asperger students and teachers are encouraged and supported to build more flexibility in how they approach the curriculum to ensure engagement and adaptation of learning needs of Asperger students so they reach their full academic potential and inclusion in the system.
- Investment capable wellbeing support representative for each school that is trained to support students with hidden learning differences and social challenges.
- Early intervention strategy of learning self-regulation and stress management techniques by both the teacher and the Asperger student could avoid or at least limit the negative behaviours and meltdowns in the first place leading to a calmer school environment for both the student, their class room peers and teachers and reducing the risk of serious mental health issues arising as a consequence of the traumatic situation.
- Specialised training to build capabilities in managing social challenges is critical for Asperger individuals of all ages to increase their social skill understanding which results in improved selfesteem and community inclusion while conversely reducing the risk of escalating anxiety and depression leading to serious mental health issues. Aspergers Victoria run the Social Skills Toolkit program which is derived from the evidence-based PEERS Training program to assist Aspergers individuals to understand and manage their personal and work social environments . We also run the PEM Emotional Awareness workshops which provide emotional awareness and insight leading to the ability to self-regulation and builds social confidence and inclusion thereby reducing anxiety and depression and the chance of the slide into serious mental health issues. This has a long term improvement on their ability to manage school and other social situations.

Parents in our survey: "Flexible school options, online school and tafe for year 8 kids who can't get out of the house due to anxiety but are smart and capable of learning. Allow kids to do part time school and include online curriculum for them to have working from home days"

"School teachers need to get off their pedestal and stop shaming parents about their child's behaviour "

"FUNDING FOR AIDES TO MANAGE STRESS OF SCHOOL, not saying it's Dept of Ed issue, mental health is being destroyed so early, carers depression, hard to work"

Schools & Funding: It is near impossible for an Asperger child to qualify for government funding or a classroom aide unless the child demonstrate serious problem/risky behaviours or serious language issues (Aspergers often have strong language), which is only usually when the child has reached extreme and debilitating levels of stress and anxiety. Alternatively, many Asperger children who are compliant may be silently struggling with coping with sensory issues relating to the physical school environment and with the pace of the lessons and educational requirements. These children will slip under the radar until the stress level reach epic proportions and the mental health damage is done. The Aspergers children who are compliant are not necessarily thriving and receive minimal support.

Aspergers (average to high IQ) does not equal 'coping' and 'coping' isn't the same as thriving and reaching their true potential. In the current education system, with less flexibility in the curriculum Aspergers student's learning styles and anxiety needs are not accommodated. Many Aspergers develop school refusal anxiety and resulting maladaptive and negative behaviours, often unable to return to school and become socially isolated from peers. Inclusion in schools is supposed to be mandatory but there are still schools which will essentially force the Aspergers students to leave or refuse to accept them for enrolment.

Aspergers Victoria provide a specialised advocacy and liaison service to parents and schools to assist them to negotiate and create a safe and flexible environment and inclusive approach by the school which is conducive to the Aspergers student remaining in the school. When we support and advocate for our Aspergers students we see a significant improvement in the mental health of not only the student, but the parent, the teaching staff and the other students in the class.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- Victorian DET Schools funding allow for funding for behavioural and social supports for Aspergers without severity of behaviour requirements or language issues in line with other Australian states
- DET and Schools include evidence-based social and emotional learning and stress management in their curriculum.
- Improved communication avenues and management for parents to seek support in the education system and recognition and respect of their role.
- Specialised advocacy services should be provided to assist parents and schools to jointly create a safe, calm and inclusive school for the Asperger student.

Education of the community to accept and integrate people with a hidden difference or different neurology (not a disability) is a high priority for people in the Aspergers community. Asperger individuals often are cognitively able but socially challenged. Often described as quirky, 'Aspies' bring a refreshing perspective to home, school and work. We find with training and awareness building of those around the Asperger to understand how they think and why they behave in certain ways as well as what helps them, can dramatically improve the support and outcomes for that individual.

Aspergers Victoria as a not-for-profit, totally volunteer run organisation who has received minimal funding from government and other sources can pride itself on developing and providing specialised education and support services to the Asperger community.

Aspergers Victoria would recommend that

- Such services and Aspergers Victoria need to be funded further to be developed and extended to educate not only the professional services, therapeutic personal who are in direct contact with Aspergers individuals but also to the community in general.
- We do not support funding of broad advertising campaigns which do not impact perceptions or understanding of Aspergers

Peer Support: For 28 years our peer support groups have embraced a strengths based approach to provide many in our community with a sense of belonging, inclusion and support to assist them to appreciate their strengths and develop a pride in being Aspie. Individuals come to these groups because they are socially isolated and in poor mental health. For many the support groups create an invaluable network of support that is missing in their lives. Such groups create an environment where people feel valued and accepted and connected to a 'tribe' These groups are invaluable in improving the mental health of the Aspie individual. Aspergers Victoria's peer groups are lead by those with lived experience of Aspergers who can personally relate to the members life experiences. The groups provided by Aspergers Victoria span the age range of 13 to old age and include groups for teens, young adults, older adults, partner, parents & carers (including grandparents) females, girls. The demand for these has increased exponentially and is now supported by our wonderful Programs Manager who is a qualified social worker and counsellor.

Employment: The employment rate for individuals with autism is lower than all other categories of people with disability and without disability. Many Asperger individuals who are very capable are unable to find and/or sustain employment. This leads to economic deprivation, social isolation and dependency on the welfare system leading to an exacerbation in levels of anxiety, stress and depression and ultimately very poor mental health outcomes.

Pre-employment Training – it is important to provide Asperger specific and targeted education and support to not only the job seeker but also the employer and the employment services to ensure the ongoing success of the employment placement. Aspergers Victoria's World of Work program has been training businesses, government departments, employers and their employees in understanding Aspergers and we have already seen a significant improvement in their understanding, inclusion and support for Aspie individuals in those trained environments. It is obvious that when understanding improves better outcomes are achieved for our Aspergers employees. We have worked with HR and managers to improve inclusive practices that are predicated on a strengths based understanding Aspergers. Employers soon realise that employing people with neurodifferences like Aspergers leads to improved team culture, valued innovation and cohesive workforce. To achieve stable, valued and appropriate employment in an environment that is not only respectful of but values difference ensures that positive mental health is achieved and maintained.

'[We need] employment training. [Aspergers] is not a disability. The employment environment [is the problem]' (Asperger's Victoria member)

Employment coaching –

It has been identified that recruitment and employment systems tend to eliminate those with differences - where a simple change of mindset by employers to realise the benefits of difference and diversity can make to the work environment. Research from Curtin University in Western Australia has documented that embracing different minds and approaches in the work environment lead to increased productivity and very positive outcomes for employers (<https://carg.curtin.edu.au/2018/07/20/strength-based-approach-autism/>).

At Aspergers Victoria through our World of Work on-the-job coaching, we have been supporting a large number of Aspergers employees in their work environments with coaching of both the employee and employer and other staff members which has helped the Aspie employee maintain their employment and create a significant improvement in the employees mental health. By also educating and supporting the employer a more stable work environment is created which is of benefit to the mental health of all the employees in the business. Thus a wider benefit to the total workforce is achieved.

To improve mental health outcomes and employment, Aspergers Victoria recommends :

- Provide Aspergers with funded specialised pre-employment support so Aspergers Victoria can increase our services
- More education of businesses and government departments about the often minor adjustments to effectively include the communication and other requirements of each Aspergers individual
- Provide on-the-job support via strategies to improve the mental health outcomes of Asperger individuals at work.

Aged care issue- Aspergers is a very recent diagnosis (40 years) and many older people who are now entering aged care have not had the opportunity to be identified as having Aspergers characteristics or receive a diagnosis. Entering the aged care system for many Asperger individuals is often extremely traumatic as they are misunderstood and mishandled by staff confuse Aspergers with other neurological conditions such as **the more familiar dementia**. The aged care system has minimal understanding of Aspergers traits and the elder Aspie's behaviour is often put down to being difficult and the individual misses out on being provided with the right supports and is at risk of serious mental health issues.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that :

- It is vitally important that training for those working with the elderly includes understanding neurodiversity and how to include the adjustments and communication approaches, as well as respect for differences.

Respite care : Many of the carers in our community need more respite options especially for those caring for adult children. Carers need opportunities to recharge and recoup their resilience. There are very limited options for carers to access respite options in the local community.

Our understanding is that once people become eligible for an old age pension, their disability funding is reduced or removed. Advancing age does not remove the need for financial and other supports for people with Aspergers.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- Attention needs to be given to how funding is packaged for the ageing Asperger's community.

Public Transport: For many in our Aspergers community, public transport causes extreme stress and anxiety. Sensory issues and over-crowdedness preclude a large percentage of Aspies from using public transport and thereby restricting their social and employment opportunities. Many Asperger individuals remain very physically as well as socially isolated with the added risk of developing serious mental health issues

Drug & alcohol abuse: Aspergers individuals, as with the non-Aspergers community, can have addictive tendencies and when coupled with the trauma of the impact of childhood bullying or anxiety and depression drugs and alcohol are often perceived as an escape.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- Provide as early as possible, opportunity for the Asperger adult to obtain a diagnosis which would more likely reduce the incidence and level of drug and alcohol addiction.
- Better trained and understanding of Aspergers in drug & alcohol support services would decrease the risk of developing serious mental health issues. .

Government estimates of the incidence of autism in the population: currently there are minimal avenues for obtaining estimates of the incidence of autism in the population which makes it difficult to effectively advocate for the needs of our community. The census does not provide this information, nor do other measures such as employment statistics

2. What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent mental illness and to support people to get early treatment and support?

Children with Aspergers can be linked in with a wide range of health professionals who are trained and choose to focus on working specifically with children on the Autism spectrum. However this is not the case for adults and women in particular.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- More specialised services targeted at Aspergers adults and women is needed and should be created and funded including Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists and others who specialise in working with people with Aspergers.

No funding: The value of early Intervention for children with Aspergers and Autism is recognised and supported under the NDIS and other state government initiatives. However, many teens and adults with Aspergers are considered too capable despite their social challenges and don't qualify for NDIS or school support funding.

NDIS is totally inaccessible as an adult without a diagnosis. For those who don't qualify for disability funding there are no other preventative fallback options for their mental health support except for the Better Access Plan of 10 session which is totally insufficient. Increased opportunities to access funding for psychology, occupational therapy, speech therapy or employment coaching especially for adults can change outcomes for our Aspergers and allay the slide into serious mental health issues. It is only when the Asperger individuals mental health hits crisis point and their lives are in total disarray that they become eligible for NDIS. Surely this is a ludicrous situation and funding should be accessible much earlier on to prevent a crisis in mental health occurring.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- The costs of diagnosis must be covered by Medicare to make this more accessible and
- Access to adequate funding should be available early for all ages before a crisis mental health state is reached.

Individual centred approach – We need best practice treatment and care models that are safe and person-centred and focus on identifying and understanding the particular characteristics of the specific Asperger individual that impact the

persons lived environment. As Tony Attwood is frequently quoted as saying “if you have seen one Asperger individual, you have seen one Asperger individual!

There are many significant people in children’s lives including teachers, sports coaches, health professionals and others. Many of these people consider themselves to be experts and are often well-intentioned but fail to respect the individual and their supporters. They may be experts in their field or practice but the experts on each individual person/child are themselves, and their parents, and this must be understood to ensure a team approach to supporting the Asperger child/teen/adult.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that

- best practice that the mental health system should adopt is the philosophy that the primary expert is the person with ASD and their carers. The system must give them a priority voice and not devalue and dismiss them because they behave differently.

Parent in survey: “Most important is the MH system understanding Aspergers. [REDACTED] still refuses to accept my other child - daughter - has been diagnosed with Aspergers. I had it diagnosed elsewhere.”

Schools funding conditions: Inclusivity is an important catch phrase of mental health, education and employment services. However, many institutions fail to fully implement inclusivity in a truly meaningful and effective manner for Aspergers individuals. DET school funding should encourage the achievement of a truly inclusive school for all children which would achieve an environment of mental health success, particularly for those students with hidden differences and social challenges.

Aspergers Victoria recommends that:

- Funding as outlined above in 1 and
- A social curriculum around social & emotional learning for all students and stress management techniques should be mandatory in the education and even employment environments. This would not only improve Asperger individuals mental health situation and prevent the slide into more serious mental health conditions but be of benefit to the wider population. Students would be better prepared to successfully engage in their future employment as stated by the Foundation of Young Australians.

Advocacy: Aspergers Victoria prides themselves on being interpreters in supporting Aspergers individuals to negotiate and manage the wider world - a go between for them and the system that frequently fails to understand Aspergers. AV’s understanding is derived from lived experience which is an imperative prerequisite for learning to speak Aspie and then being able to translate Asperger needs and requirements to a system that really fails to comprehend the intricacies and differences.

We have found the following assists our community with their mental health prevention.

- Training in everyday living skills:
- Self Reg and other stress management approaches
- PEM drama techniques with specialised Aspergers support
- Access to mediation when needed
- Funding to support access to prevention services

The State Disability Plan sets out our priorities and actions for achieving inclusion under four key pillars – however we are not seeing this for hidden differences which then become disabilities through mental health issues:

- inclusive communities
- health, housing and wellbeing
- fairness and safety
- contributing lives

There has been mention of a **State Autism Plan** coming soon however we are concerned this will again homogenise Autism needs and not specifically address the needs of our capable Asperger community. Aspergers Victoria is on the Autism Advisory Group for the State government and will actively and loudly promote the cause of Asperger individuals.

3. What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent suicide?

Autism is now being identified and services being provided particularly in the early intervention arena. However, Aspergers is not a well understood and catered for. In particular, the misunderstanding of the wide range of manifestations of anxiety and depression in Asperger individuals. Anxiety and depression looks different for each child and may be perceived as a 'behaviour' problem if there is a lack of education and understanding.

It is important to appreciate that maladaptive behaviours in children are signs that the child feels out of control and is lacking skills to cope with their environment. Anxiety and depression may be a result of the skill deficit not being appropriately addressed. Lack of understanding and support to develop good social skills frequently results in serious mental health issues and social isolation.

In addition, 'Executive function [challenges] can be misinterpreted as depression' (AV member). Executive function issues can include sensory overload and slow processing speed, which are often misinterpreted as laziness.

Training about neurodiversity should be embedded in the education of teachers and health professionals to identify early signs of these stress behaviours and prevent harmful behaviours that lead to serious mental health issues and even suicidal ideation. Several people in our community have reported children as young as five years old talking about harming or killing themselves in preference to remaining in mainstream school.

Broad community understanding and acceptance is vital. People with Aspergers are often talented in one or more areas but these talents may be masked by a lack of social skills that prevent them from succeeding in the area of interest. Lack of understanding and acceptance leads to social isolation, anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts. It may also lead to socially unacceptable behaviours that could easily be prevented if the person with Asperger's feels safe and supported and has access to appropriate programs that teach social skills.

Improved stress education for schools for both students and teachers. This could include the evidence based Self Reg program used in Canadian schools.

4. What makes it hard for people to experience good mental health and what can be done to improve this? This may include how people find, access and experience mental health treatment and support and how services link with each other.

Training:

- Professionals including mental health professionals need training to understand Aspergers needs and credence should be the Asperger individuals views and opinions. Listening to and valuing the views and wants of the Asperger individual is vital for successful mental health outcomes. Professionals must not dismiss the person especially due to a diagnosis.
- Employers and their staff also need to understand inclusion.
- Teachers must understand how to best manage and be flexible for their Aspergers students.

Access to diagnosis: especially as an adult. This is especially true for girls and women with Asperger's who present with different traits to boys and men. Access to diagnosis is challenging due to the cost but is even more challenging as the diagnostic tools are designed with children in mind.

Support: Access to preventative support options specific to their needs

Acceptance: Not being dismissed and marginalised due to being different

Support for parents and carers Make sure parents and carers are supported and have a voice. The combination of appointments, assessments, opinions (sometimes conflicting), financial burden, stigma and family pressure can be overwhelming. Some wait months for appointments due to demand as well as delays caused by the cost of testing. An early diagnosis doesn't define the child but it means parents can start to implement strategies early to give the child the best chance of achieving a positive and healthy mental state.

Accessible support services for all ages, Elderly people with Aspergers must have access to advocates who understand their needs both as a person with Aspergers and a person who may be developing other issues associated with ageing including physical health challenges. Consideration must also be given to mental health matters arising from social isolation and dementia.

Parent in survey recommends: "mobile mental health crisis team to provide in home mental health support "

5. What are the drivers behind some communities in Victoria experiencing poorer mental health outcomes and what needs to be done to address this?

Across the lifespan, people with Aspergers may experience poor mental health outcomes, not because of their neurodiversity, but because of anxiety and other mental health issues that develop due to:

- Lack of understanding and lack of inclusion by the wider community. This can lead to their exclusion of those who are perceived as behaving differently including employment practices.
- Lack of accommodating environments that suit Aspergers, especially at work, school, public transport.
- Post traumatic experiences resulting from an inhospitable social environments resulting in negative lived experiences.
- Social isolation due to lack of the right supports to maintain, build and encourage the social and other capabilities of Asperger individuals

There are few to no supports in remote and rural communities. Aspergers Victoria has a limited reach due to limited funding and reliance on volunteers, most of whom have caring responsibilities of their own, or Aspergers. We would like to see our programs extended more broadly, either by us, or in alliance with other qualified support groups.

■ *"And why is it SO difficult to get a diagnosis as an adult in Victoria these days - mostly not covered by Medicare, so if you're old on an Age Pension like me, or had a miserable employment record and are now on Newstart or Disability, how on earth can you afford to get a diagnosis, so you might be able to get support or help?. Specially if you're not "bad" or "sick" or "disabled" enough to be believed, let alone even be considered for something under NDIS. It's a joke these days, and a very bad one, as well."*

■ *"Indeed it does. And while I'm not getting into the discussion about whether ASD is a disability or a mental health condition or just a neuro difference, the fact is that here, now, you have to go along with the medical model to get ANYTHING from anyone in the way of support or recognition or help etc etc. So for the time being, we're stuck with it. The original article is spot-on - we are hearing via the Royal Commission about people being refused help, support or treatment because they were deemed to not be sick enough (which is an appalling situation anyway), and adult Aspies or those who have ASD often will be in that category - because we have masked or otherwise managed to struggle along enough to not suicide over the years since we should have been diagnosed in the 1980s or 90s or 2000s, then we are seen as coping, or not being "sick" enough to require help or support. Hence the difficulties of getting diagnosed for a start, and then getting help / support, even if you do manage to get a diagnosis. It stinks.*

Had one when I was in Melb, for depression. Couldn't find a psychiatrist there who would take a new patient and bulk bill. Now live in large country centre. No bulk-billing psychs here. Also have to find new GP, as last one retired last month. Was on the waiting list for a shrink (they won't take new patients requiring bulk-billing, unless one they already have leaves or dies), been there for 18 months, nother 6-12 months to go, and then he retired too! And you can't get a mental health plan to get an ASD diagnosis - only for existing conditions, eg the depression 7/or anxiety which goes along with it. Thanks for the suggestions, but BTDT, and it doesn't actually work that way, whatever the publicity and paperwork might say. It's the getting the formal diagnosis which s the problem, as that procedure is not covered, except for the 1st appointment, by Medicare, or a Mental Health plan, or anything else, unless you can somehow manage to get it via NDIS, which isn't available to anyone over Age-Pension age anyway! catch 22."

6. What are the needs of family members and carers and what can be done better to support them?

It is important that family members and carers are linked in with support groups and other people with like lived experience. An Aspergers diagnosis and its corresponding social skills challenges can result in social isolation both for the Asperger and their carer/s. A general lack of understanding contributes to miscommunication and it is not uncommon for people to withdraw from their established social networks. It can be a heavy burden for the carer to

take on the role of educating friends and family. For some time caring for someone with autism has been proven to cause trauma and stress, without suitable support and understanding to the level of a combat soldier (www.disabilitycoop.com/2009/11/10/autism-moms-stress/6121/)

Appropriate respite care is needed so caregivers can focus on their own mental health. Respite should be provided in conjunction with a qualified person who can support and amplify the enriching experiences. This should not be a hospitalisation, which would be counter-productive for the person needing care, and stressful for the caregiver.

Respect the individual Asperger, and if they wish to include or even abdicate responsibility and decision making to carers. Their carer as also the expert in the room. This is hugely lacking in education settings where parent shaming is prevalent and teachers feel entitled to be trusted and respected as the professional who has been trained to teach children. Teachers have a particular scope of practice, and their training does not adequately provide for teaching children with Aspergers.

Consideration needs to be given to the various family needs. For example, you may have a neurotypical parent with an atypical child, or vice versa. You may have an atypical child and an atypical parent. The needs of the siblings is also another specific challenge which needs addressing.

7. What can be done to attract, retain and better support the mental health workforce, including peer support workers?

Effective education across the general community should be a high priority. All professions dealing with Aspergers community, not just those deemed to be part of the 'mental health workforce', should be trained to be aware of the needs and how to support Aspergers – this includes General Practitioner and medical. This is particularly relevant for professionals in positions of authority and where a clear power imbalance exists between professional and community member, by qualification or authority, e.g. police officers.

Incentives to encourage people to undertake early training in the needs of Aspergers aspects of autism so they really understand it – not just a few hours training that are not valued or properly tested or assessed. Embedding this training in curriculum as a standard is important and is preferred to having students wait to specialise as postgraduates. For example, training should be embedded into undergraduate teaching, nursing, medical and allied health curricula so that beginning practitioners are not only trained, but well supported to meet the needs of students.

Forensic mental health and justice system, including police officers MUST have Aspergers/Autism understanding and acceptance embedded in their training. This training should apply to anyone in a position of authority who has the power to impose penalties on individuals e.g. public transport officers who issue fines. People on the autism spectrum communicate differently to neurotypical people. They often use literal language, which can cause communication confusion when they don't respond as anticipated to common social questions.

Stress Management training and techniques as part of professional training curriculum & annual registration: this could include techniques such as Self Reg used in Canada.

8. What are the opportunities in the Victorian community for people living with mental illness to improve their social and economic participation, and what needs to be done to realise these opportunities?

Aspergers Victoria provide a range of services which focus on improving the mental health, social and economic participation of the Asperger community. Our peers groups provide a haven and support our Asperger individuals to be able to feel safe and able to just be themselves and have fun. They are a lifeline in reducing anxiety and depression and improving an individuals mental health condition.

At AV we have prioritised developing the best employment supports for Aspergers. We currently offer programs proven to help employment outcomes including:

- Specialised pre-employment support including enhancing social understanding, understanding the requirements of the world of work and personal skill development.
- Employment coaching for the Asperger for job seeking and maintaining work roles

- Employer training and coaching of managers and the rest of that team
- Jobseekers drop in centre where Aspergers can come when they are facing employment issues
- HR advice in ensuring inclusive practices for our community
- Programs and workshops with particular emphasis on support Aspergers with managing social and work situations (Social Skills Toolkit based on the PEERS program), emotional understanding (PEM) and self regulation.

Aspergers Victoria is a volunteer organisation with limited resources. However, we have developed a number of successful programs to support our community and provide social skills training. We would like to see our programs, or other successful programs become broadly available.

In additions, support and training for the broader community that not only increases awareness and understanding but is strengths focused and highlights the positive attributes of people with Asperger's and the value they bring to the classroom (primary to tertiary), workplace and community.

9. Thinking about what Victoria's mental health system should ideally look like, tell us what areas and reform ideas you would like the Royal Commission to prioritise for change?

Better, earlier diagnosis, in particular for girls and women who present differently to boys and men in their Asperger's traits.

Because much of the focus for Asperger's and Autism support is focused on early intervention, those diagnosed as adults, or later in life, are not linked in with appropriate support. The diagnostic tools used by health professionals are usually focused on children and therefore not appropriate for adults. Required services specific to adults include psychologists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists among others.

The high cost of assessment to obtain a diagnosis is prohibitive for many Asperger individuals who are then denied serves because they can't access support without a diagnosis. Assessments need to be affordable and timely to prevent delayed diagnosis and support.

Consideration must be given to those diagnosed, self diagnosed and undiagnosed Aspergers individuals, who are now entering aged care services. The aged care workforce must have training to understand the communication needs of this sub-section of the aged care community. This is a new area and should be accounted for in curricula for those training to work in the aged care sector.

Disability financial support must be allowed to continue for those who under the current system would transition to an aged pension. Needs may remain, or change, at this point as other aspects of ageing are combined with the already existing needs due to an Asperger's diagnosis.

10. What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victoria's mental health system and support improvements to last?

It is important that Aspergers Victoria be consulted with regard to understanding Aspergers and developing programs and training as we are the only organisation that is specifically dedicated to understanding and representing Asperger individuals. We are an organisation that is for Aspergers and by Aspergers.

A best practice treatment and care model is needed that includes an individual-centred approach and encompasses appreciative enquiry where everyone has an equal voice. This should be adopted in schools, hospitals, clinics and anywhere that people access services.

Clear, plain English (and translations where required) are needed to ensure people can find services and applications processes must be streamlined and accessible, not filled with jargon and obstacles.

Advocates for those who experience social anxiety and communication challenges are needed across the range of health and mental health services. Advocates can help navigate a range of social and professional situations to ensure health

and mental health needs are being met. This must be done with respect for the people with Asperger's who are commonly cognitively highly able, although socially challenged.

Training should extend to all those employed in health and mental health services. Consider the scenario where a patient is referred to a doctor with a high level of Aspergers awareness and training, but the appointment doesn't go ahead because the receptionist isn't trained to communicate with autistics and the person leaves because she can't articulate her needs.

'[We] are disabled by the system, not empowered. We need an aspie "interpreter"' (Asperger's Victoria member)

11. Is there anything else you would like to share with the Royal Commission?

In 2017, the Parliament of Victoria Family and Community Development Committee undertook and prepared a final report on their Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Aspergers forms part of the Autism spectrum and we are interested in seeing the Inquiry's 101 recommendations implemented by the government. It is our view that education of health and mental health professionals as well as education of the broad community is fundamental to the implementing the recommendations.

The cost of diagnostic assessments delays diagnosis and intervention currently with no or minimal rebates. Specific funding is needed to improve adult diagnosis, especially for women, including consideration to medicare cover. With this there should be at least initial funding for supports for that newly diagnosed person to access supports, without being classified as disabled or losing existing supports.

Proper certification is needed for ASD 'specialists' – including the value of lived experience. Just having an interest and some experience is not enough – respect and understanding is critical.

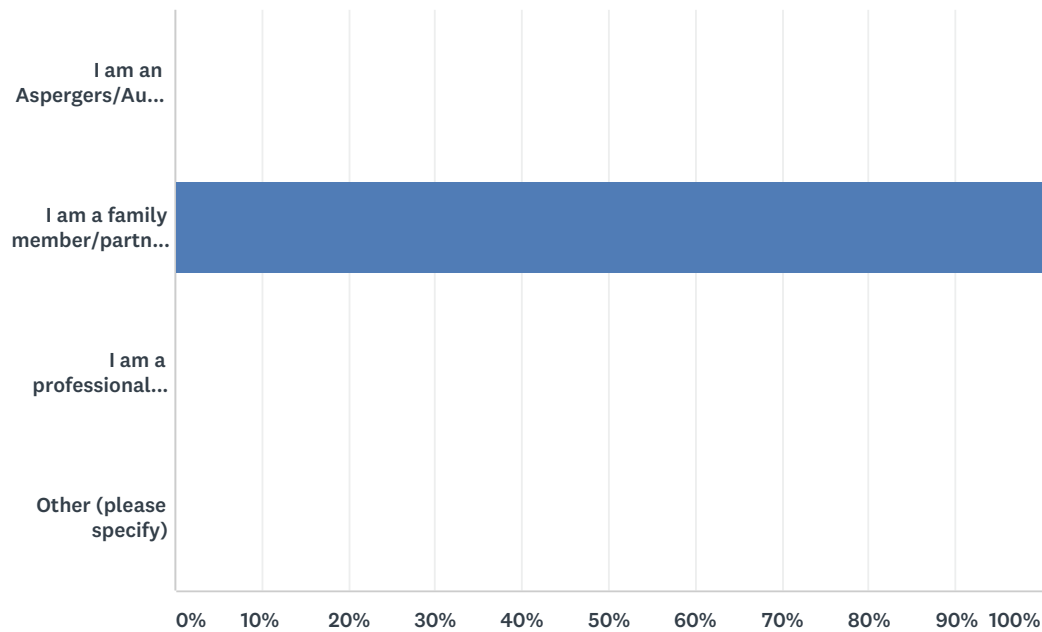
Asperger's are expected to adapt to societal norms. The community as a whole including government and employers needs to be educated in the benefits of more flexible and lean in to value diversity and the strengths of atypical thinkers.

Other quotes:	<i>"I'm living a very difficult life due to my husband's Aspergers. I recently started attending the AV Partners forum. It has been a relief to hear that others experience similar situations as myself and to exchange tips to handle situations and the associated stress. I believe that there is an epidemic requiring more awareness. There are about 20 people attending the partners forum. And so many men in particular turn to alcohol as they struggle to relate to people --- which just makes it worse..."</i>

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q1 What is your relationship with Aspergers/Autism?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0



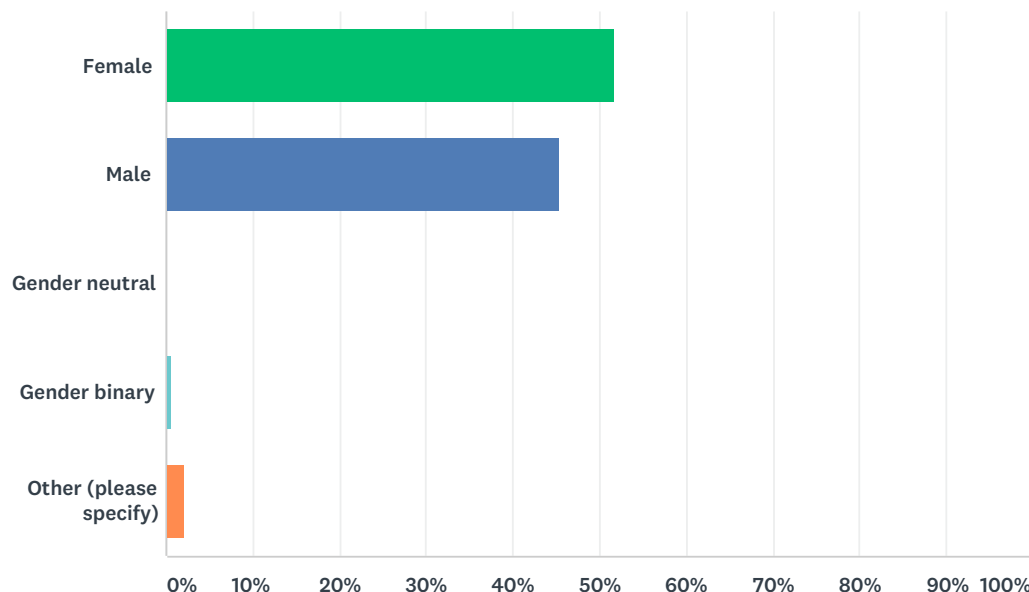
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
I am an Aspergers/Autistic individual.		0.00%	0
I am a family member/partner/carers of someone who identifies as an Aspergers/Autistic individual.		100.00%	141
I am a professional supporting Aspergers/Autistic individuals.		0.00%	0
Other (please specify)		0.00%	0
TOTAL			141

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q2 What is your gender identity? OR If you are the member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, what is their gender identity?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0



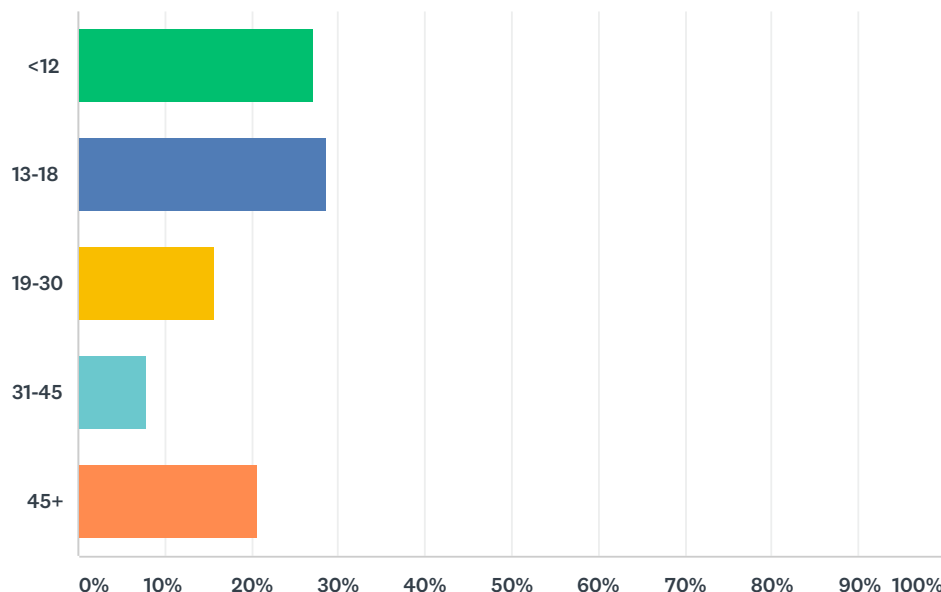
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	51.77%	73
Male	45.39%	64
Gender neutral	0.00%	0
Gender binary	0.71%	1
Other (please specify)	2.13%	3
TOTAL		141

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I have a male and female 2 teenagers	6/26/2019 10:16 PM
2	3 aspie kids, 2 girls and 1 boy	6/26/2019 7:52 PM
3	female/male/confused	6/26/2019 4:26 PM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q3 What is your age? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, what is their age?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 1

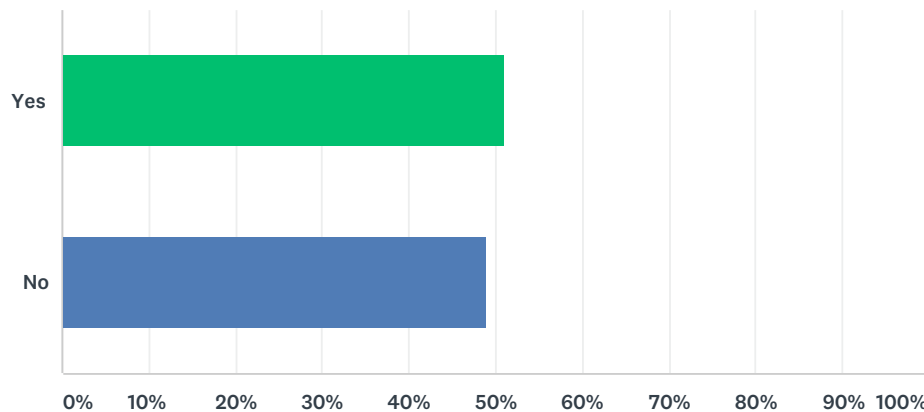


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
<12	27.14%	38
13-18	28.57%	40
19-30	15.71%	22
31-45	7.86%	11
45+	20.71%	29
TOTAL		140

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q4 Have you applied for NDIS funding? OR If you are the member/partner/carers of an Aspergers/autistic individual, have you applied for NDIS funding on their behalf?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0

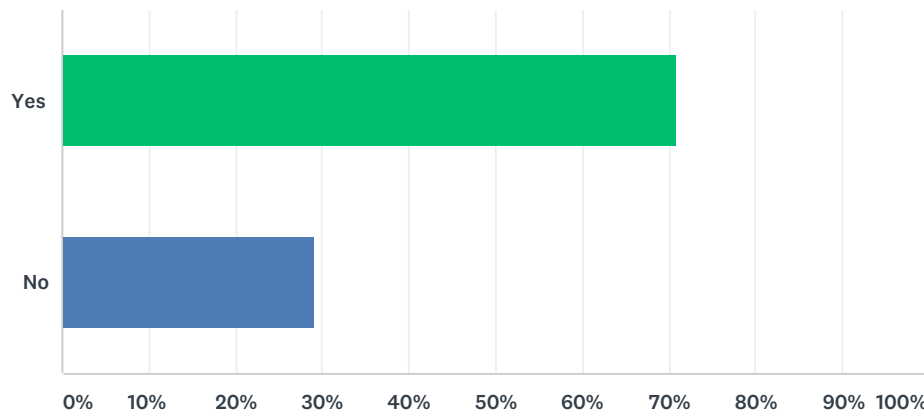


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51.06%	72
No	48.94%	69
TOTAL		141

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q5 Have you received your NDIS funding? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, have you received NDIS funding on their behalf?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 69

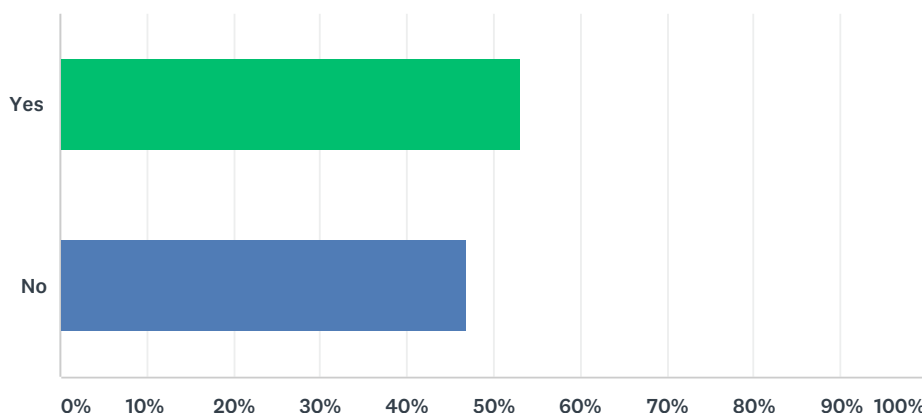


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	70.83%	51
No	29.17%	21
TOTAL		72

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q6 Is your NDIS funding sufficient and appropriate for your needs? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, do you believe the funding is sufficient and appropriate for their needs?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 92

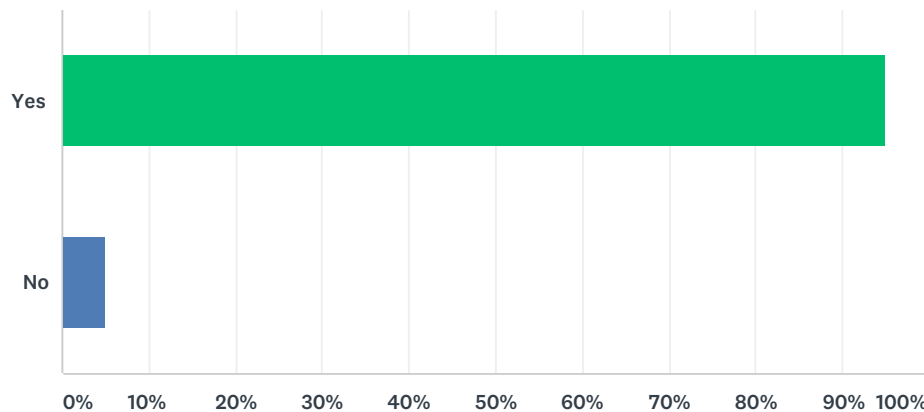


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		53.06%	26
No		46.94%	23
TOTAL			49

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q7 Have you accessed mental health services in Victoria?(Mental Health services can include accessing a GP, hospital services, psychologists, psychiatrists, peer support groups)

Answered: 139 Skipped: 2

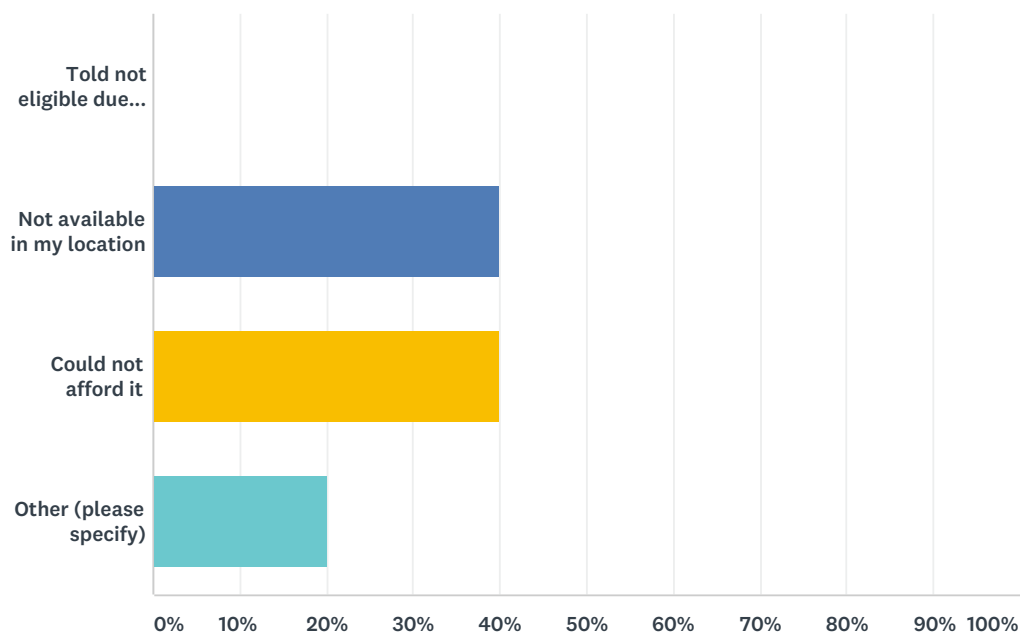


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.96%	132
No	5.04%	7
TOTAL		139

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q8 If you could NOT access the service, what was the reason?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 136



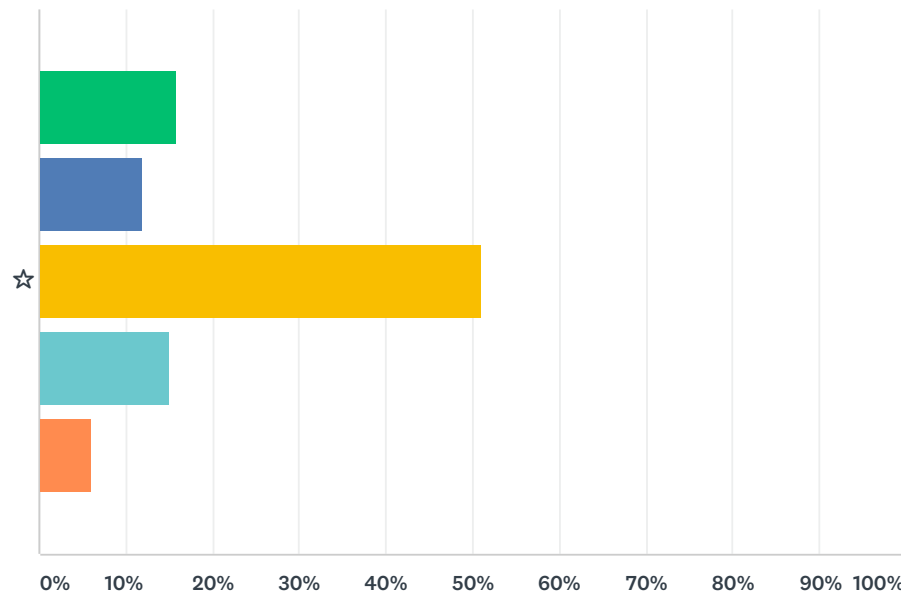
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Told not eligible due to Aspergers diagnosis	0.00%	0
Not available in my location	40.00%	2
Could not afford it	40.00%	2
Other (please specify)	20.00%	1
TOTAL		5

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	my son hasnt tried yet but he wants to	6/26/2019 3:03 PM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q9 If you have accessed the mental health services, to what extent did the system understand your needs?

Answered: 100 Skipped: 41



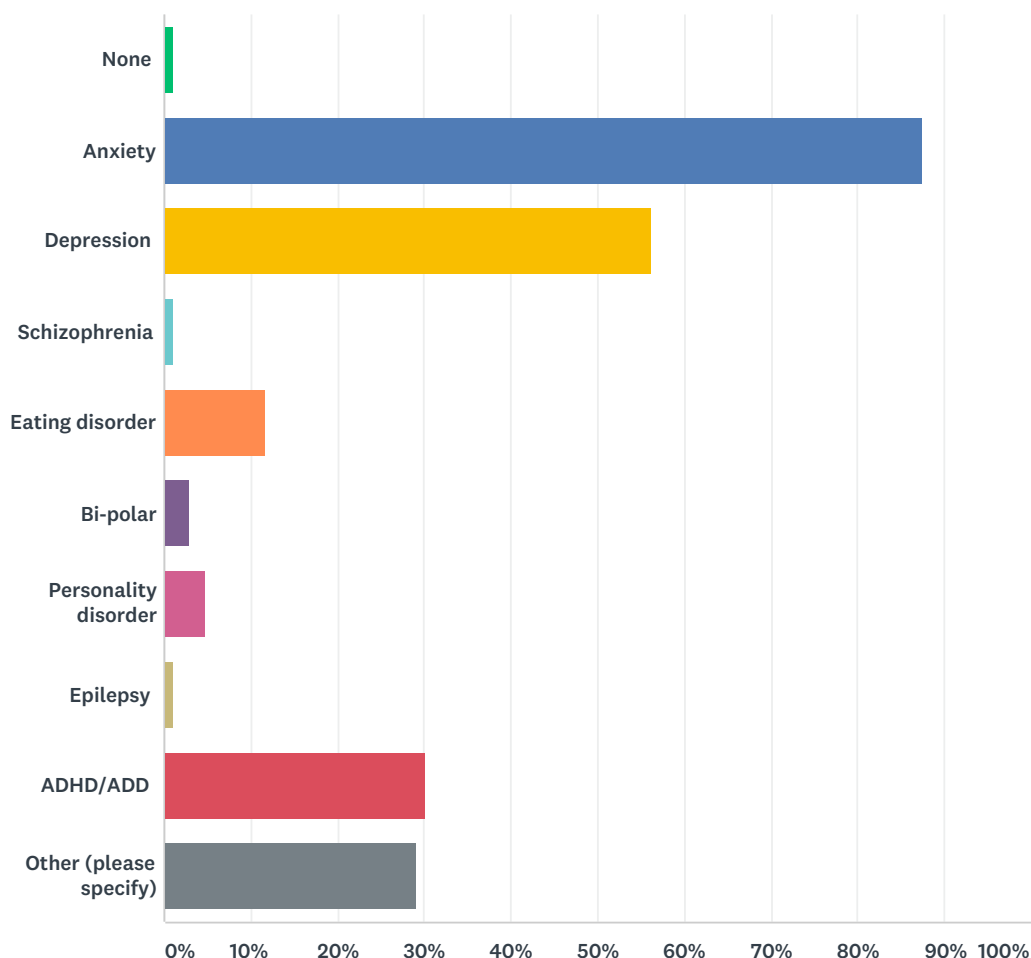
Did not understand my needs (no label)
Somewhat understood my needs (no label) Understood all my needs

	DID NOT UNDERSTAND MY NEEDS	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT UNDERSTOOD MY NEEDS	(NO LABEL)	UNDERSTOOD ALL MY NEEDS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	16.00%	12.00%	51.00%	15.00%	6.00%	100	2.83
	16	12	51	15	6		

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q10 As an Aspergers/austistic individual, which mental health condition(s) have you accessed support for OR if you are a family member/parent/carer representing an Aspergers/autistic individual, which mental health condition(s) have you accessed support for? (Please check any that apply)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
None	0.97% 1
Anxiety	87.38% 90
Depression	56.31% 58
Schizophrenia	0.97% 1
Eating disorder	11.65% 12
Bi-polar	2.91% 3
Personality disorder	4.85% 5
Epilepsy	0.97% 1

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

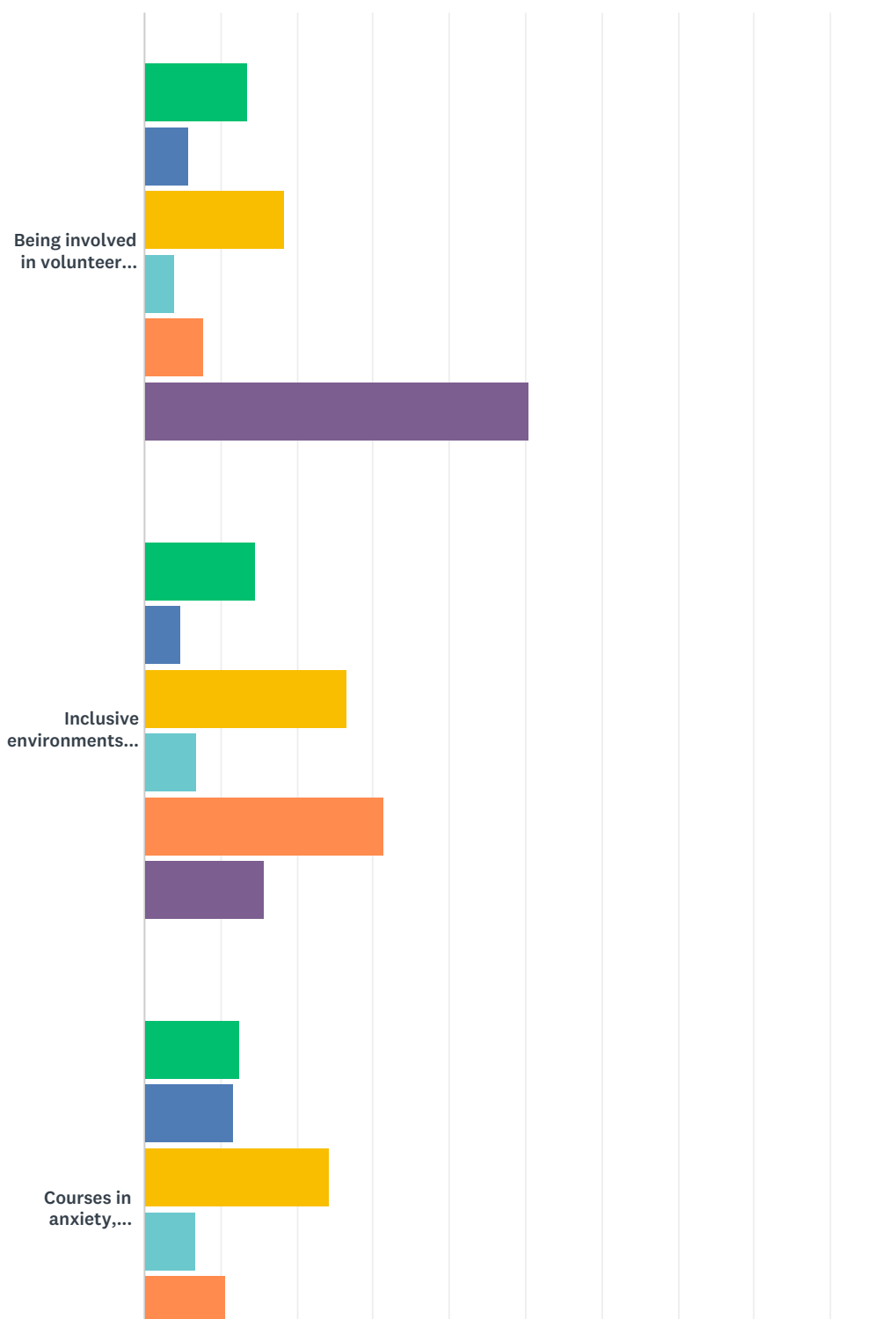
ADHD/ADD	30.10%	31
Other (please specify)	29.13%	30
Total Respondents: 103		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Self-harming, social skills	7/1/2019 4:28 AM
2	school attendance difficulties	6/30/2019 8:27 PM
3	Asd diagnosis	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
4	Aspergers diagnosis	6/29/2019 8:02 PM
5	Trauma disorder	6/29/2019 9:03 AM
6	OCD	6/28/2019 8:23 PM
7	ASD	6/28/2019 5:49 PM
8	Drug and alcohol addiction	6/27/2019 10:16 PM
9	ODD	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
10	In the past - self harm	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
11	attachment disorder	6/27/2019 8:53 AM
12	Suicide ideation	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
13	OCD	6/27/2019 8:15 AM
14	irrational thoughts - anti psychotics	6/27/2019 5:50 AM
15	Autism	6/27/2019 2:51 AM
16	OCD, tourettes	6/27/2019 12:48 AM
17	Drug addiction	6/26/2019 10:25 PM
18	Psychosis	6/26/2019 7:41 PM
19	ASD	6/26/2019 7:35 PM
20	ASD	6/26/2019 7:14 PM
21	School refusal	6/26/2019 7:00 PM
22	ocd	6/26/2019 6:33 PM
23	Anger	6/26/2019 6:26 PM
24	Anger of child and parent, diagnosis of Autism, behavioural concerns	6/26/2019 5:24 PM
25	ASD sensory processing disorder	6/26/2019 4:48 PM
26	gender dysphoria	6/26/2019 4:36 PM
27	Behaviour disorder	6/26/2019 4:14 PM
28	Aquired brain injury	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
29	ASD, family anxiety due to ASD individual	6/26/2019 3:40 PM
30	will try to access support for depression and anxiety	6/26/2019 3:28 PM

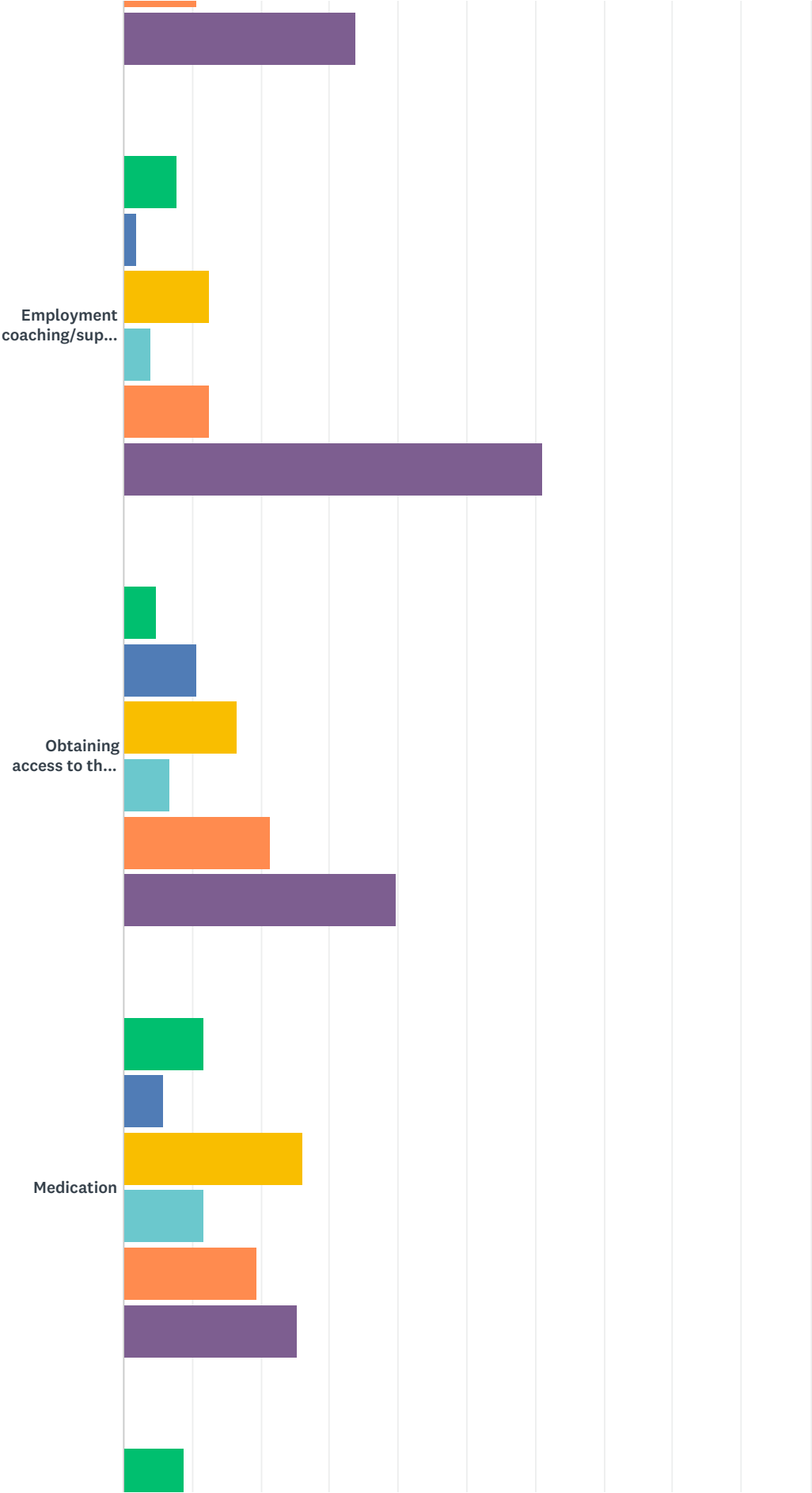
Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q11 As an Aspergers/autistic individual, which supports have been helpful to improve your mental health outcomes OR if you are a family member/parent/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, which supports have been helpful to improve mental health outcomes? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

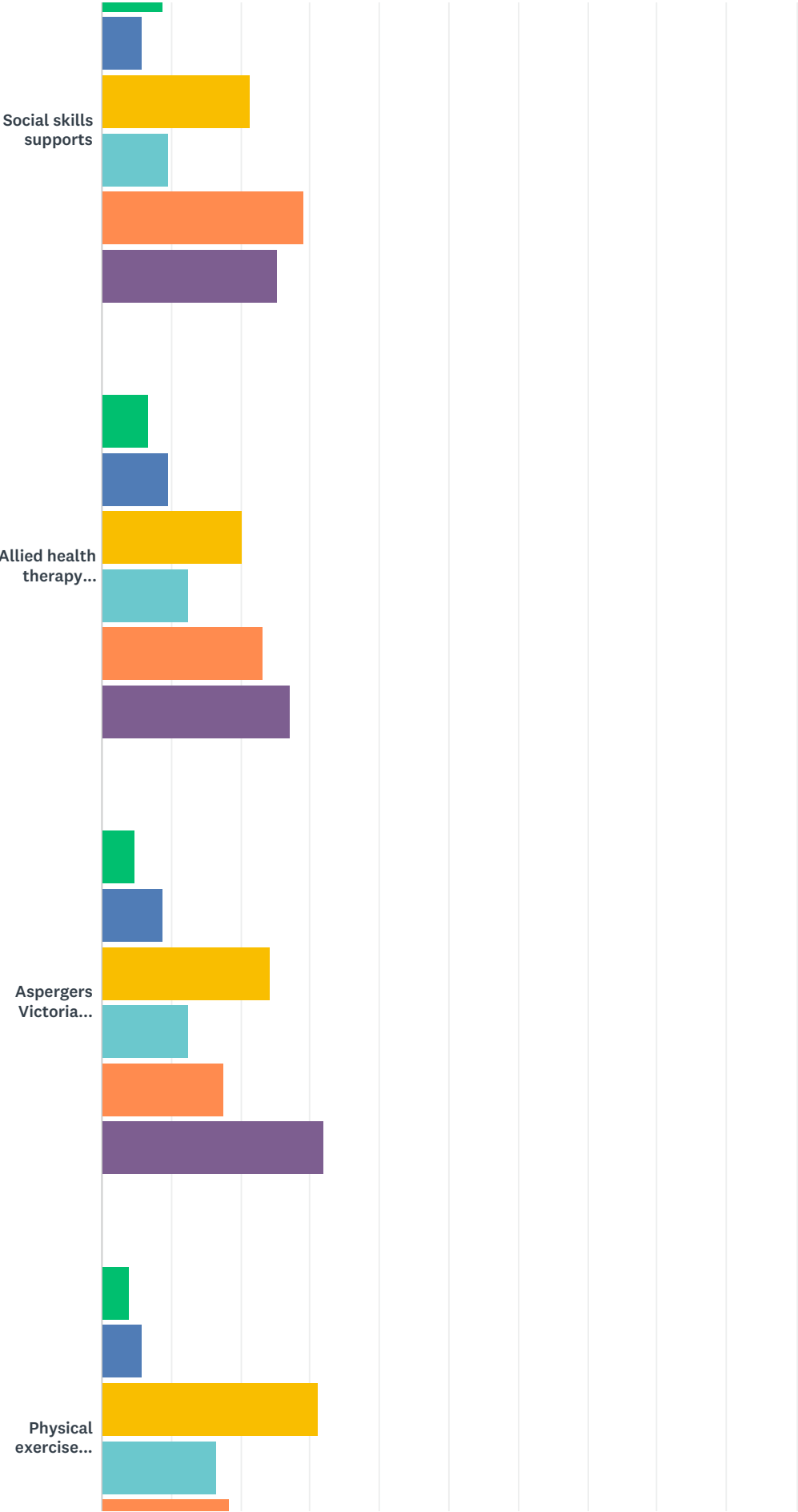
Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



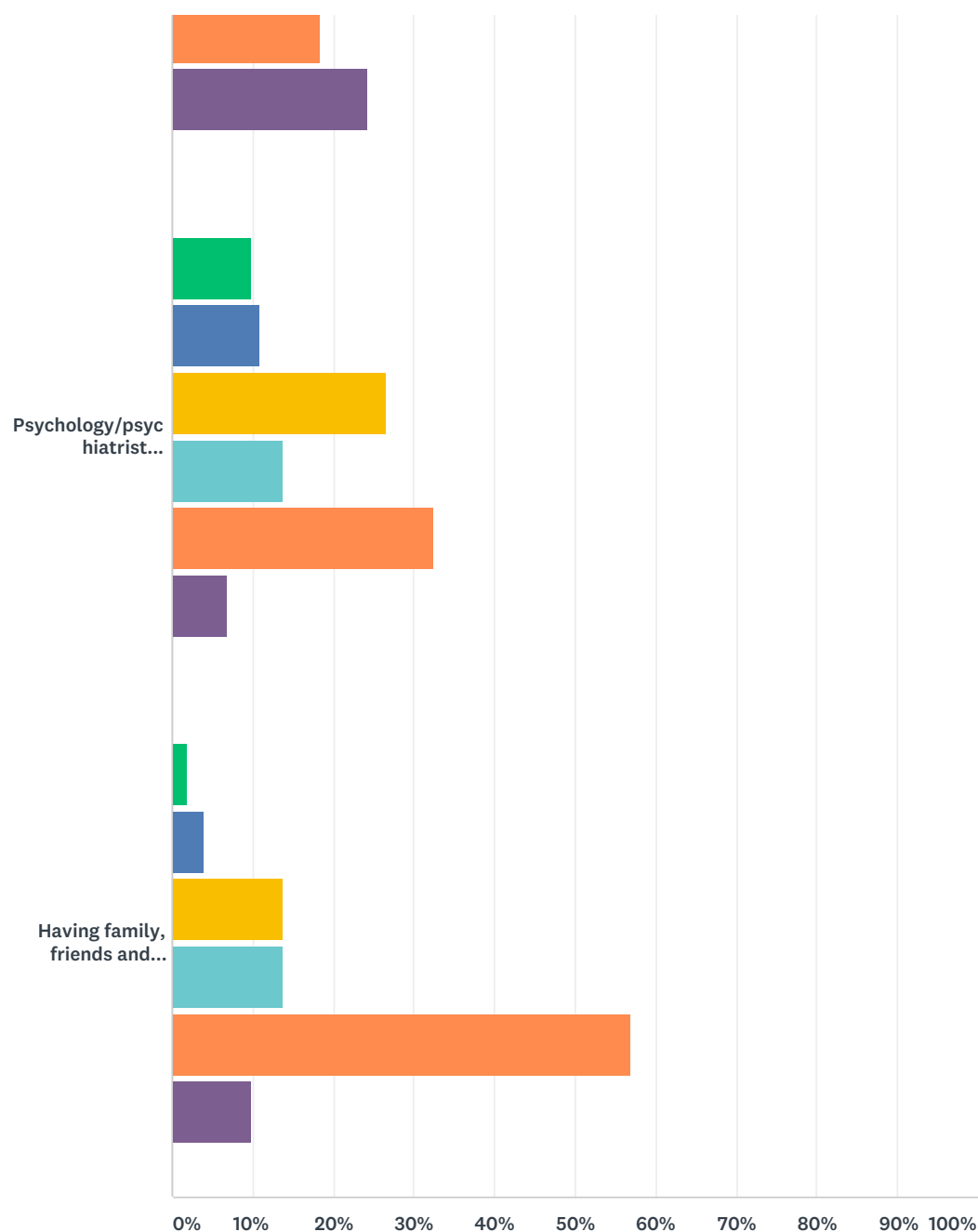
Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



■ Not at all helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Very helpful
 ■ N/A

	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Being involved in volunteer activities	13.59% 14	5.83% 6	18.45% 19	3.88% 4	7.77% 8	50.49% 52	103	2.73
Inclusive environments at work and school	14.71% 15	4.90% 5	26.47% 27	6.86% 7	31.37% 32	15.69% 16	102	3.42
Courses in anxiety, depression, stress management	12.62% 13	11.65% 12	24.27% 25	6.80% 7	10.68% 11	33.98% 35	103	2.87

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Employment coaching/support	7.77% 8	1.94% 2	12.62% 13	3.88% 4	12.62% 13	61.17% 63	103	3.30
Obtaining access to the Better Mental Health program	4.85% 5	10.68% 11	16.50% 17	6.80% 7	21.36% 22	39.81% 41	103	3.48
Medication	11.65% 12	5.83% 6	26.21% 27	11.65% 12	19.42% 20	25.24% 26	103	3.29
Social skills supports	8.74% 9	5.83% 6	21.36% 22	9.71% 10	29.13% 30	25.24% 26	103	3.60
Allied health therapy services (Occupational therapy, speech therapy)	6.80% 7	9.71% 10	20.39% 21	12.62% 13	23.30% 24	27.18% 28	103	3.49
Aspergers Victoria membership	4.85% 5	8.74% 9	24.27% 25	12.62% 13	17.48% 18	32.04% 33	103	3.43
Physical exercise including yoga, walking, gym	3.88% 4	5.83% 6	31.07% 32	16.50% 17	18.45% 19	24.27% 25	103	3.53
Psychology/psychiatrist sessions	9.80% 10	10.78% 11	26.47% 27	13.73% 14	32.35% 33	6.86% 7	102	3.52
Having family, friends and community who understand me	1.96% 2	3.92% 4	13.73% 14	13.73% 14	56.86% 58	9.80% 10	102	4.33

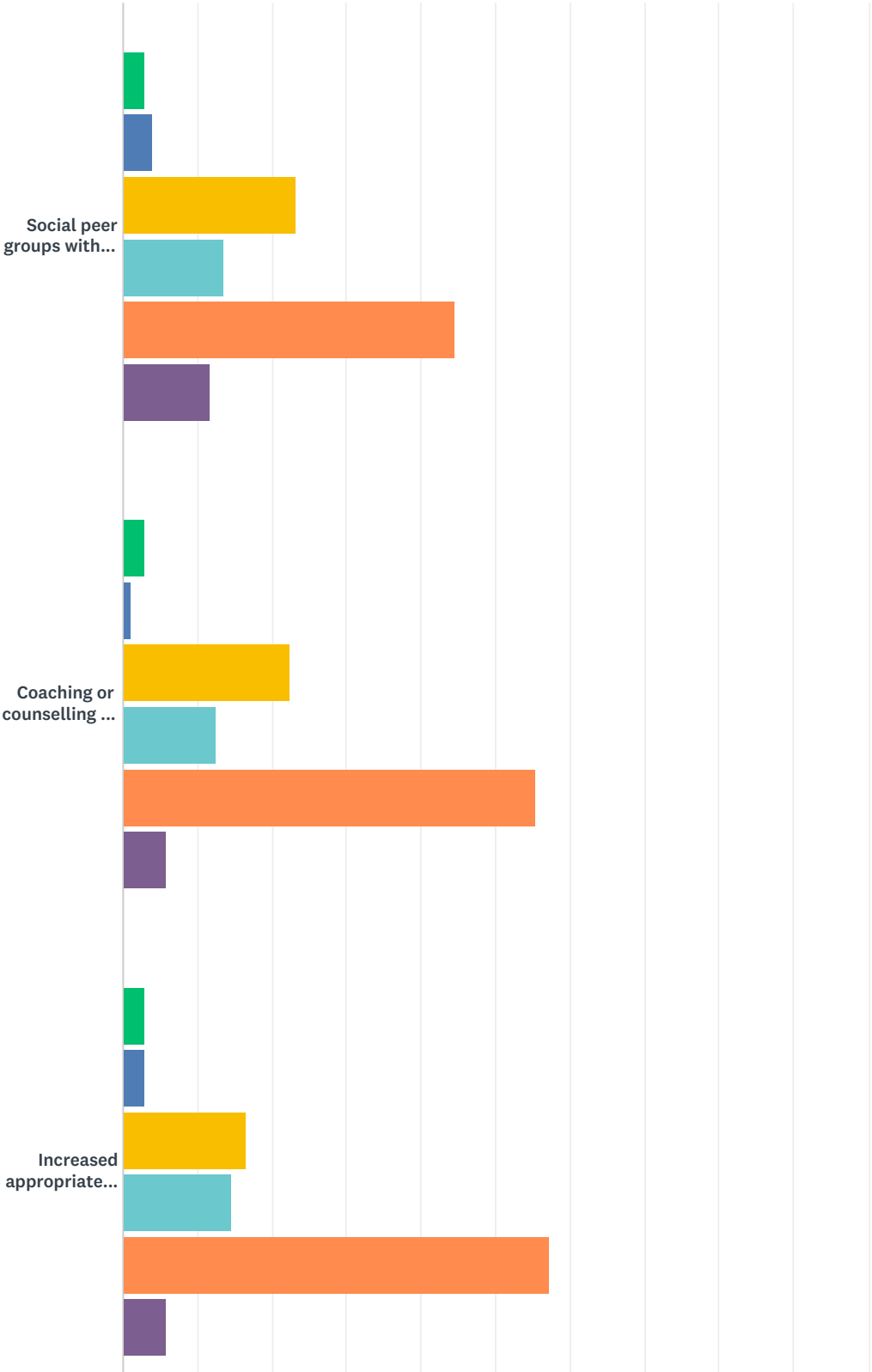
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Paediatrician	7/1/2019 7:48 AM
2	Feel exploited. Thousands of dollars on appointments and my daughter remains depressed, refuses school and doctors almost delight in the money they can make from us	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
3	Extra-curricular Drama classes have been very helpful	6/29/2019 8:02 PM
4	Need support at school! Nothing else matters!	6/29/2019 6:42 PM
5	Having a pet dog	6/29/2019 6:40 PM
6	Lack of support from school severely damaging and no support from employment services	6/29/2019 7:12 AM
7	If we had access to the above supports they would have been helpful	6/28/2019 8:11 AM
8	Most of this have not been available especially the last one	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
9	several of these we have not tried because we are already spending \$500-1000 each month with no govt assistance	6/27/2019 1:48 PM
10	Hospitals don't treat her properly. Or take her chronic pain seriously because of her personality dis/aspergers	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
11	animal assisted therapy	6/27/2019 9:08 AM
12	██████ has been dreadful. Doesn't understand Aspergers at all and assessed the behaviour as 'making it all up' as he couldn't explain it	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
13	employment best, but if not well supported has huge negative impact on mental health	6/27/2019 5:50 AM
14	the school is key - having on-board principal, assistant principal and teachers. Also, finding really talented psychologists. Plus, it was our daughter's psychiatrist who first diagnosed our daughter with ASD, even though she had been seeing a psychologist for ADHD for years.	6/27/2019 12:48 AM
15	Access to supported independent accommodation thru EACH, and the Youth Foyer in Glen Waverly. Access to mentor thru Whitelion.	6/26/2019 7:41 PM
16	Acupuncture	6/26/2019 4:45 PM
17	lack of services, and also lack of mental health doctors trained to treat dual disabilities and complex medications	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
18	extra curriculum activities that support ASD individuals eg. coding clubs, special needs swimming lessons	6/26/2019 3:40 PM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

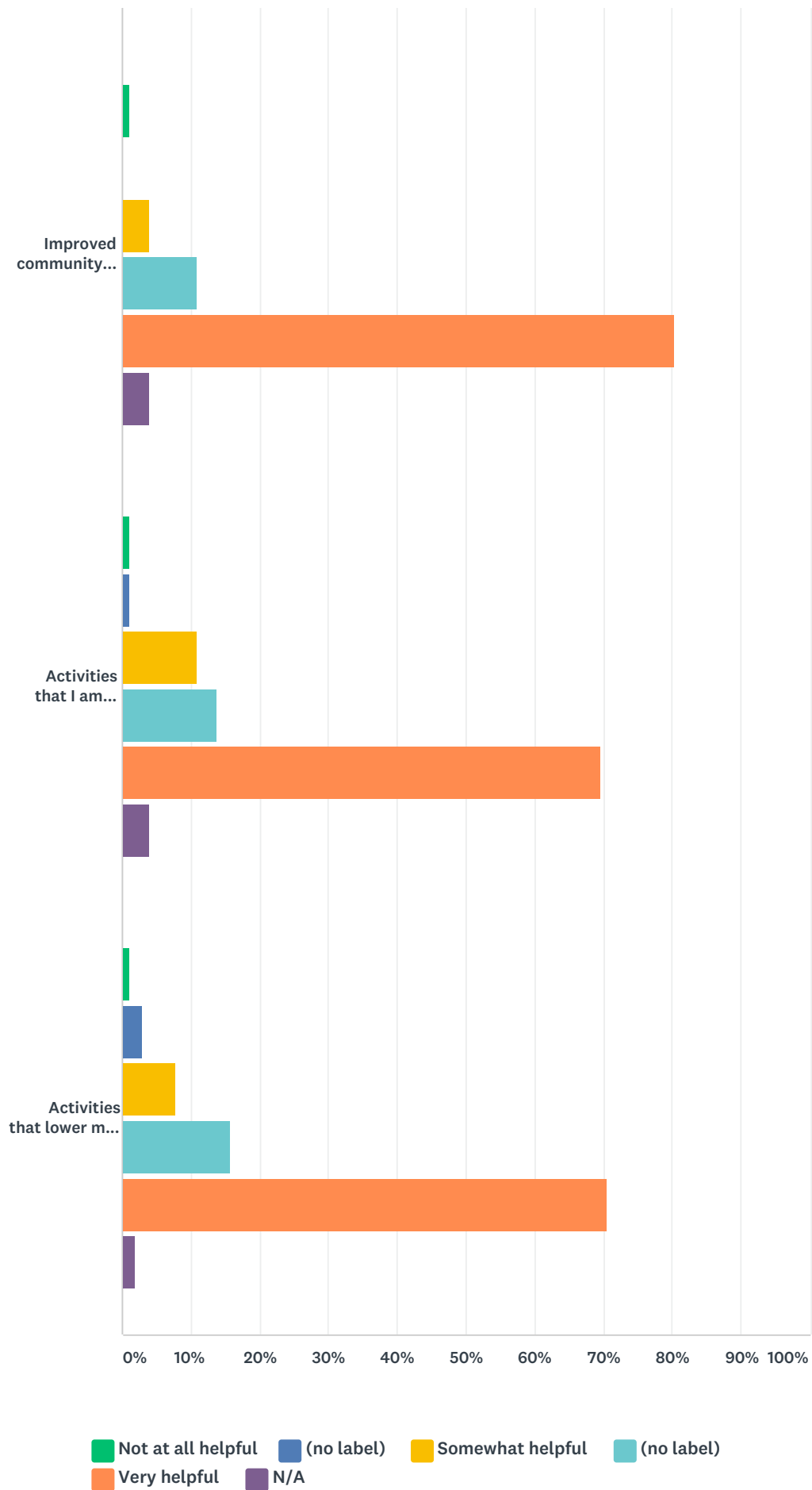
19	My son refuses to attend any sessions or when he has agreed to work with a health service, he fails to attend and they advise they cannot spend more time working with him.	6/26/2019 12:48 PM
20	We live in a rural area and many of these suggested supports to not exist	6/26/2019 11:09 AM

Q12 For those living with mental illness, what opportunities could help improve your social participation? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



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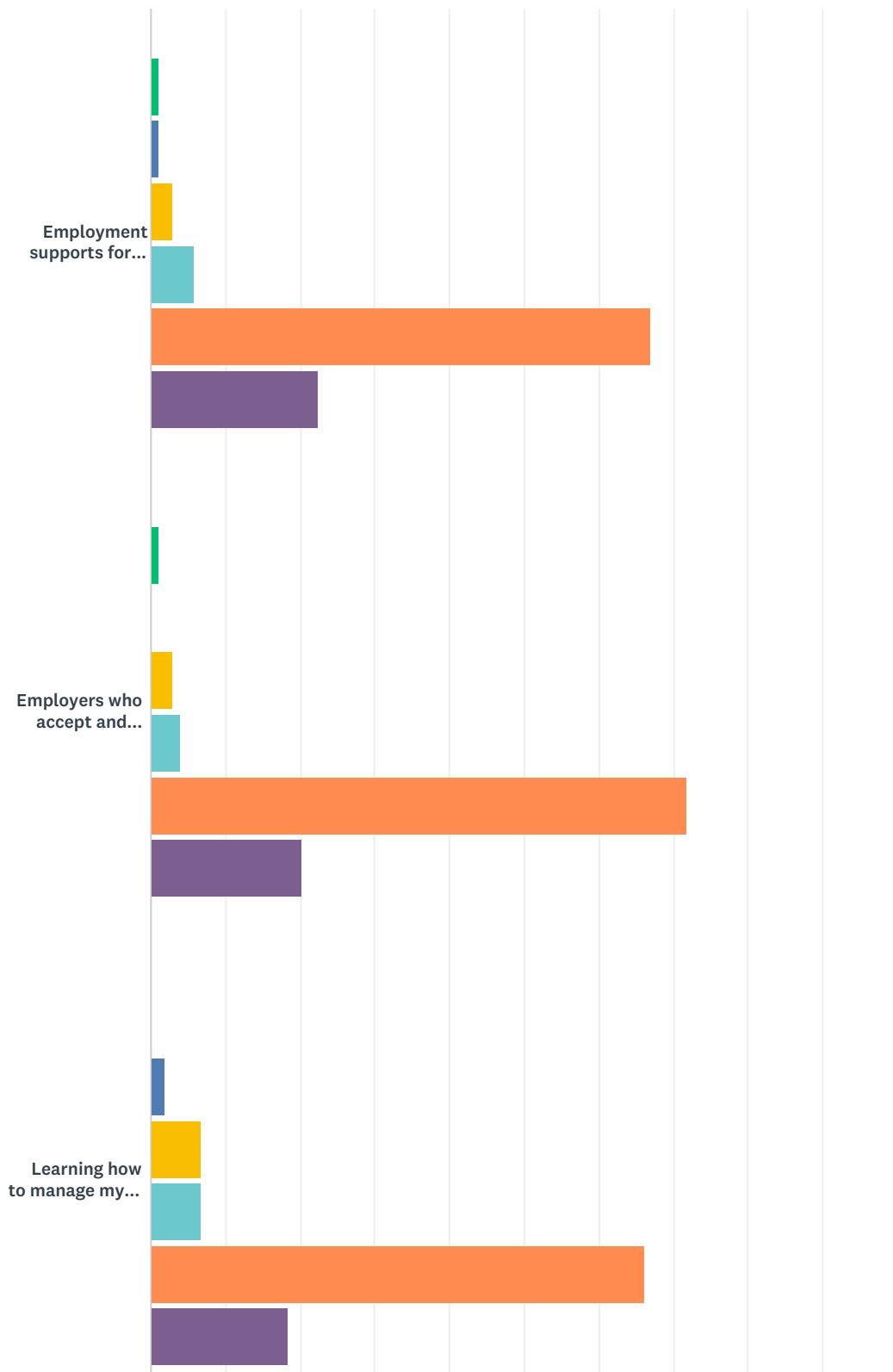
	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Social peer groups with lived experience of Aspergers/autism	2.91% 3	3.88% 4	23.30% 24	13.59% 14	44.66% 46	11.65% 12	103	4.05
Coaching or counselling in social interaction	2.91% 3	0.97% 1	22.33% 23	12.62% 13	55.34% 57	5.83% 6	103	4.24
Increased appropriate social opportunities	2.91% 3	2.91% 3	16.50% 17	14.56% 15	57.28% 59	5.83% 6	103	4.28
Improved community understanding and support of my needs	0.98% 1	0.00% 0	3.92% 4	10.78% 11	80.39% 82	3.92% 4	102	4.77
Activities that I am interested in available in my community	0.98% 1	0.98% 1	10.78% 11	13.73% 14	69.61% 71	3.92% 4	102	4.56
Activities that lower my stress levels	0.98% 1	2.94% 3	7.84% 8	15.69% 16	70.59% 72	1.96% 2	102	4.55

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):	DATE
1	school is where they meet most of their friends so an accepting and supportive school and peers is essential to social	7/1/2019 7:35 AM
2	Helping teen girls who are the invisible victims of asd - all male oriented	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
3	Activities that don't cost a fortune or are covered by NDIS	6/29/2019 6:40 PM
4	In particular's, schools that support Aspies vs seeing them as problematic. Our experience is a school being totally unhelpful until in the end you take the child out as they are actually being dangerous to the childs wellbeing and making them feel like a victim.	6/27/2019 6:16 PM
5	I am parent who needs a friend who gets it	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
6	One on one support to go out. Groups are a bit hard.	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
7	activities listed as N/A because have not yet accessed or only just commenced	6/27/2019 5:50 AM
8	Need to be able to find appropriate activities and services near us - very hard to find!	6/27/2019 12:48 AM
9	Mentor programmes. Camp programmes	6/26/2019 7:41 PM
10	Modifications to school program to accomodate needs	6/26/2019 4:45 PM
11	mental health supports for teens with duel disabilities	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
12	all would be very helpful	6/26/2019 3:40 PM

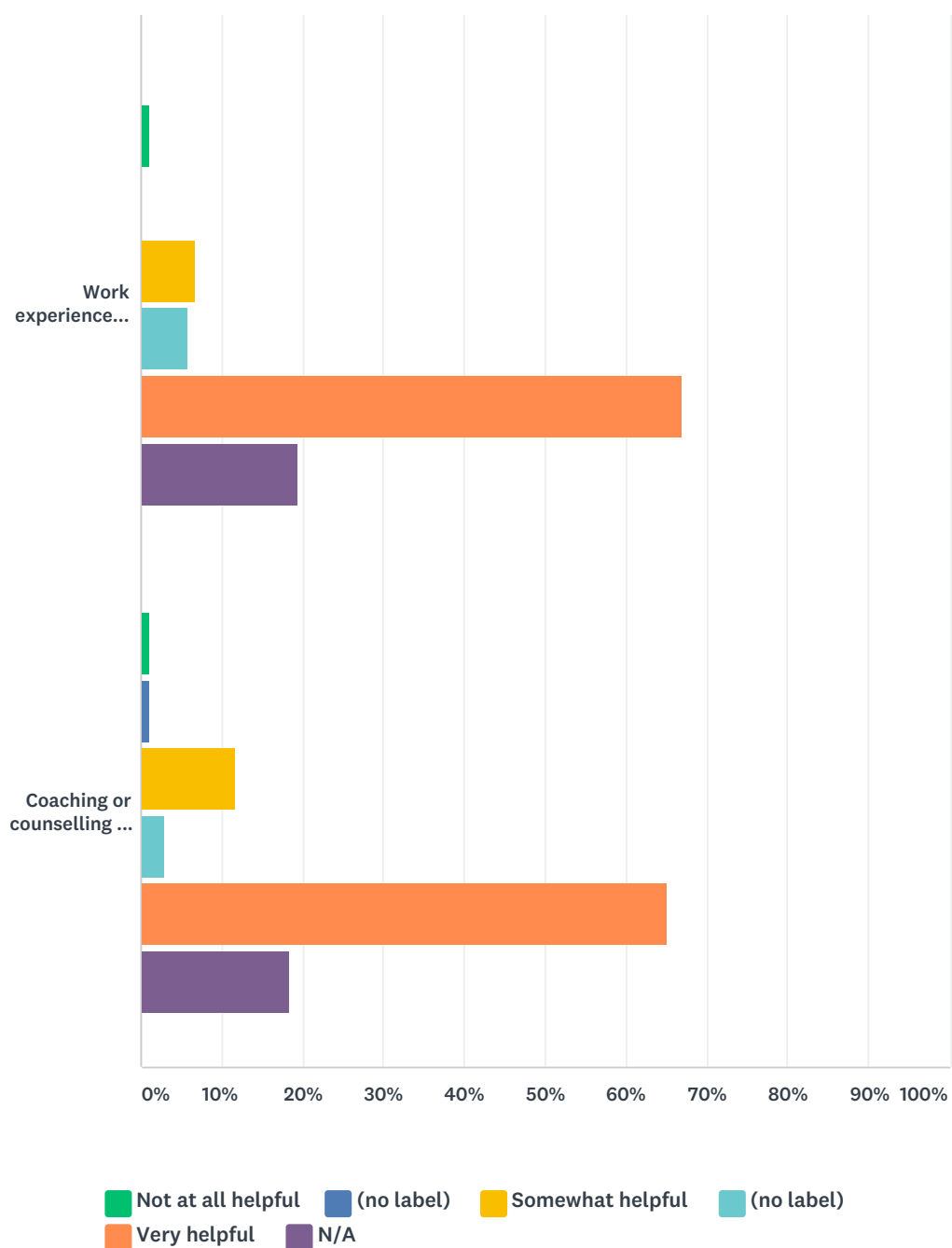
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Q13 For those living with mental illness, what opportunities could help to improve economic participation? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



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	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Employment supports for Aspergers	0.97% 1	0.97% 1	2.91% 3	5.83% 6	66.99% 69	22.33% 23	103	4.76
Employers who accept and understand my needs	0.97% 1	0.00% 0	2.91% 3	3.88% 4	71.84% 74	20.39% 21	103	4.83
Learning how to manage my social environment at work	0.00% 0	1.94% 2	6.80% 7	6.80% 7	66.02% 68	18.45% 19	103	4.68
Work experience opportunities	0.97% 1	0.00% 0	6.80% 7	5.83% 6	66.99% 69	19.42% 20	103	4.71
Coaching or counselling in understanding the world of work	0.97% 1	0.97% 1	11.65% 12	2.91% 3	65.05% 67	18.45% 19	103	4.60

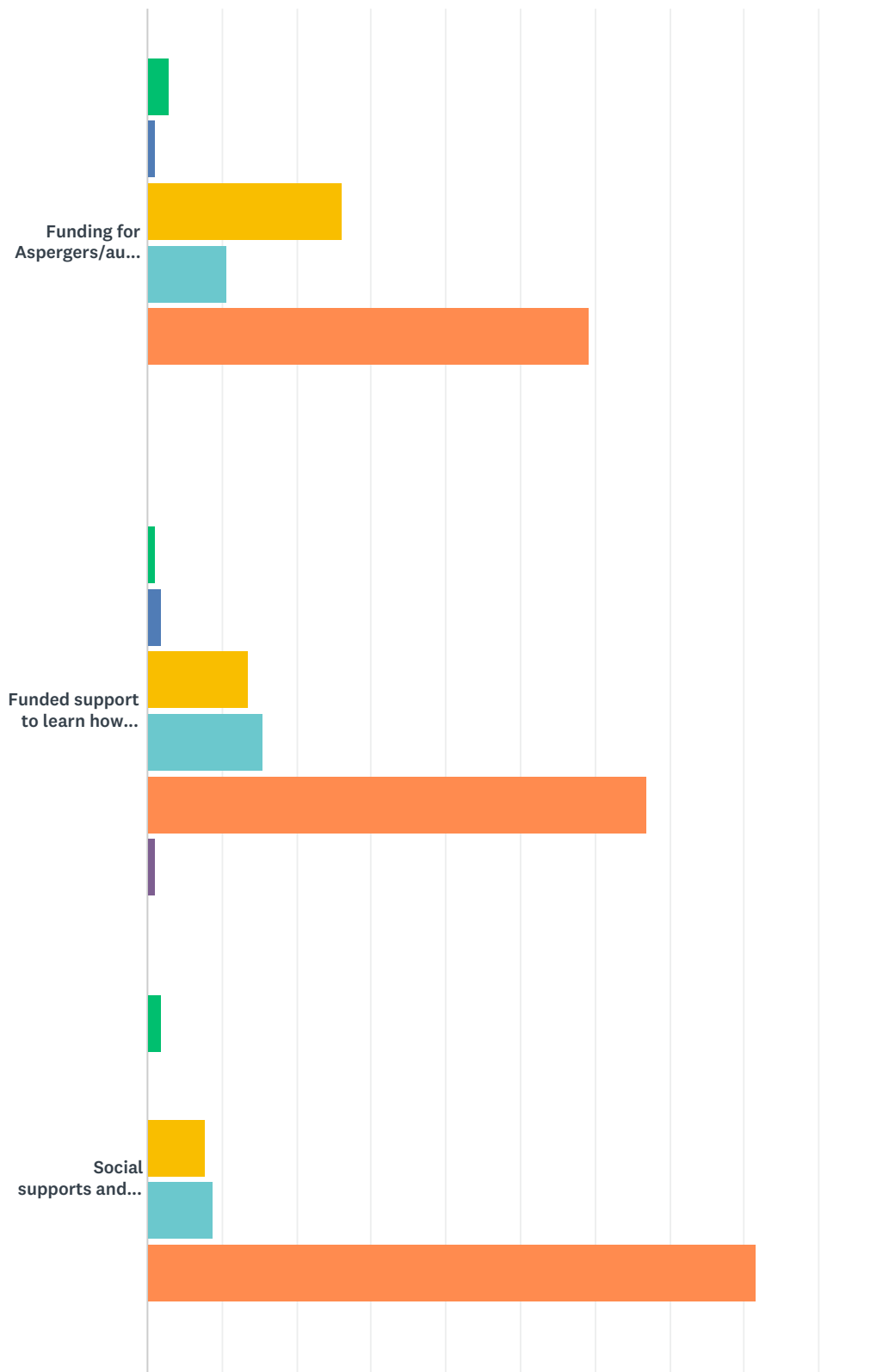
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#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):	DATE
1	My child is 9 years old so not applicable yet	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
2	Had own dog grooming business. working with others too hard	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
3	all very helpful	6/26/2019 3:40 PM

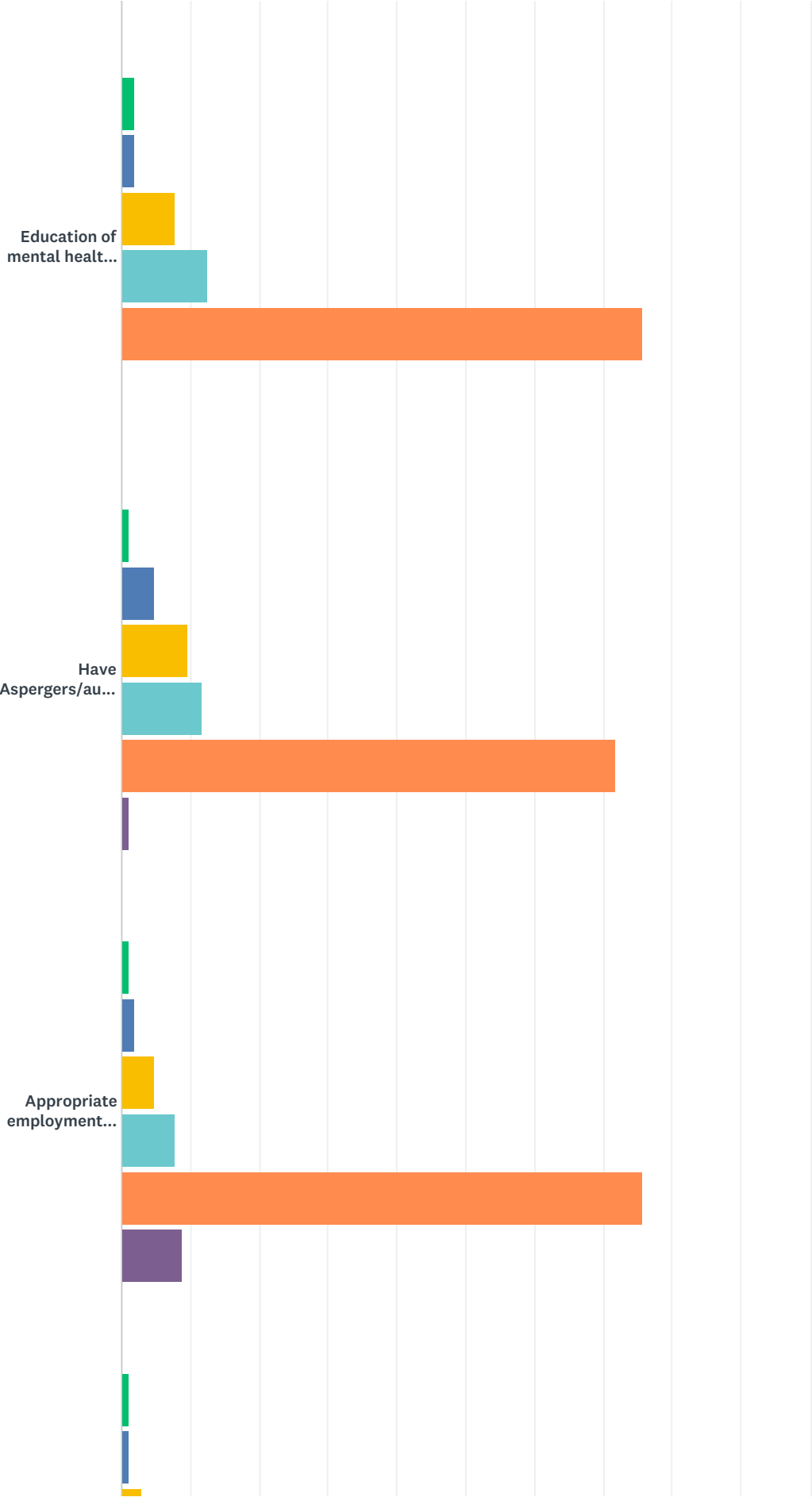
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Q14 What can be done better to prevent mental illness in Aspergers/autistic individuals? (Please rank from least preventative to most preventative)

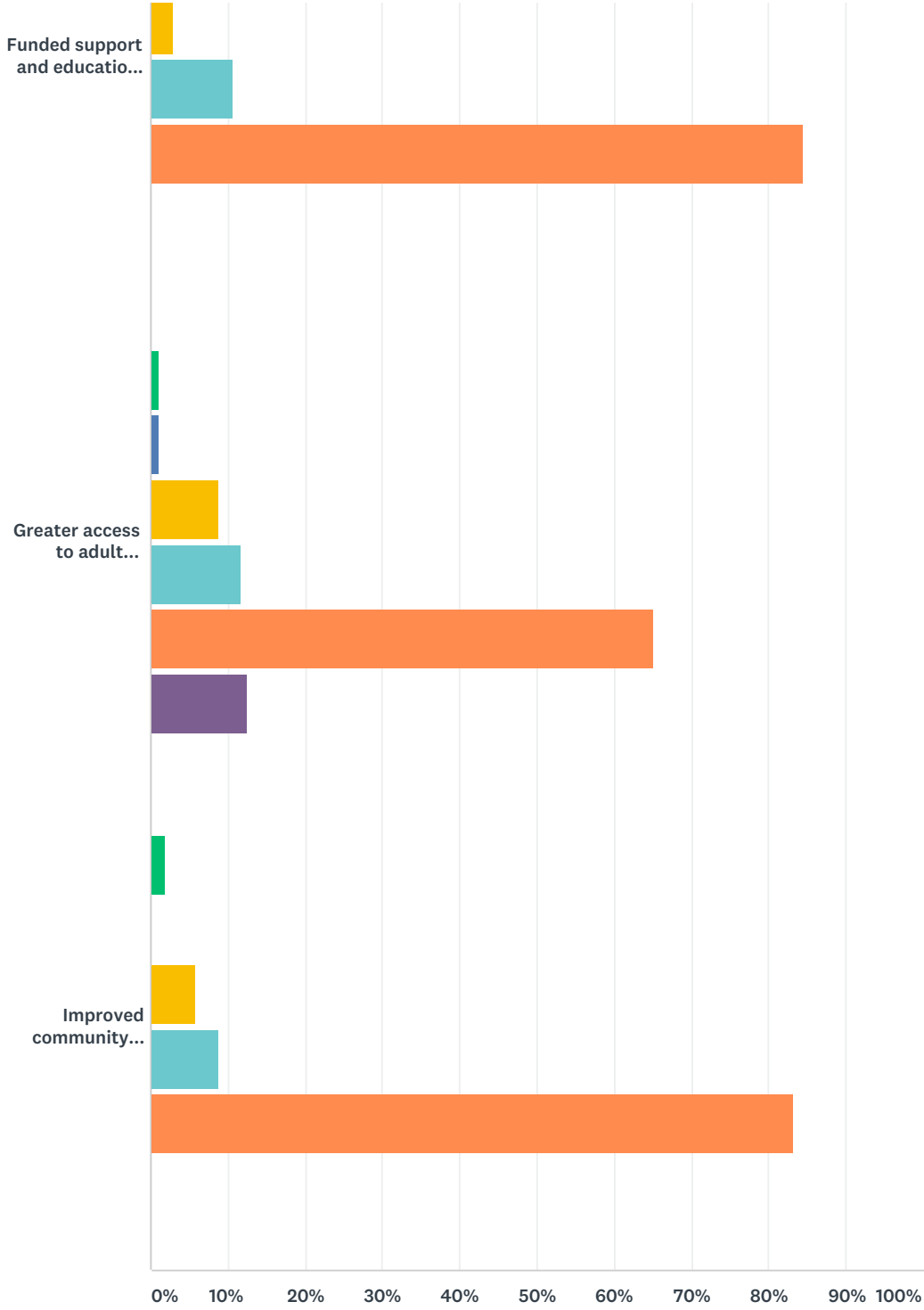
Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



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Will not help to prevent mental illness (no label)
Will somewhat help to prevent mental illness (no label)
Will strongly help to prevent mental illness N/A

	WILL NOT HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	(NO LABEL)	WILL SOMEWHAT HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	(NO LABEL)	WILL STRONGLY HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
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Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Funding for Aspergers/autism diagnosis for all ages	2.91% 3	0.97% 1	26.21% 27	10.68% 11	59.22% 61	0.00% 0	103	4.22
Funded support to learn how to reduce stress and anxiety	0.97% 1	1.94% 2	13.59% 14	15.53% 16	66.99% 69	0.97% 1	103	4.47
Social supports and educational opportunities	1.94% 2	0.00% 0	7.77% 8	8.74% 9	81.55% 84	0.00% 0	103	4.68
Education of mental health services in supporting Aspergers	1.94% 2	1.94% 2	7.77% 8	12.62% 13	75.73% 78	0.00% 0	103	4.58
Have Aspergers/autism specialists available to help in the hospital and medical system to support Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.97% 1	4.85% 5	9.71% 10	11.65% 12	71.84% 74	0.97% 1	103	4.50
Appropriate employment support in the workplace	0.97% 1	1.94% 2	4.85% 5	7.77% 8	75.73% 78	8.74% 9	103	4.70
Funded support and education for families/partners/carers in best way to support Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.97% 1	0.97% 1	2.91% 3	10.68% 11	84.47% 87	0.00% 0	103	4.77
Greater access to adult therapy services (OT, speech, psychiatric)	0.97% 1	0.97% 1	8.74% 9	11.65% 12	65.05% 67	12.62% 13	103	4.59
Improved community understanding of my needs with Aspergers	1.96% 2	0.00% 0	5.88% 6	8.82% 9	83.33% 85	0.00% 0	102	4.72

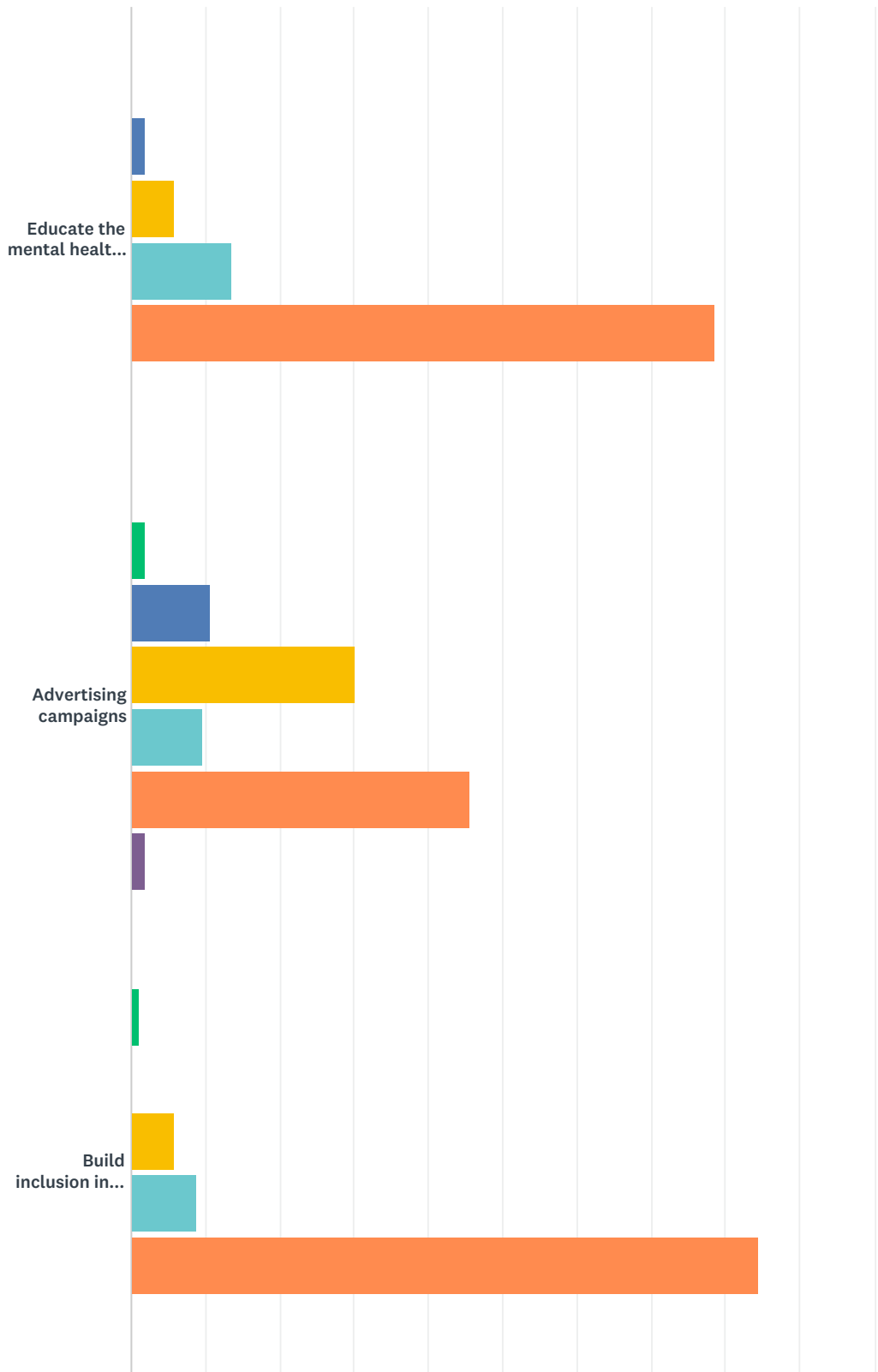
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Fubded support to schools and teachers to accept and utilise the strengths of kids with asd. Very very important that they can be in a good circumstance so that anxiety etc is as low as possible to enable learning.	6/30/2019 6:59 PM
2	Flexible school options, online school and tafe for year 8 kids who can't get out of the house due to anxiety but are smart and capable of learning. Allow kids to do part time school and include online curriculum for them to have working from home days	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
3	FUNDING FOR AIDES TO MANAGE STRESS OF SCHOOL, not saying it's Dept of Ed issue, mental health is being destroyed so early, carers depression, hard to work	6/29/2019 6:42 PM
4	All School/kinder teachers trained in asd	6/28/2019 8:11 AM
5	School teachers need to get off their pedestal and stop shaming parents about their child's behaviour	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
6	It is hard to find specialists that understand Aspergers,not advertised	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
7	Most important is the MH system understanding Aspergers. CYMHS still refuses to accept my other child - daughter - has been diagnosed with Aspergers. I had it diagnosed elsewhere	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
8	Better and earlier access to mental health services as we were repeatedly turned away from Emergency Hospital departments after numerous suicide attempts without treatment and was only provided access after 4 months when my daughter had escalated into psychosis. It was awful to watch her suffer. We wouldn't treat animals in this way! attempts	6/26/2019 7:41 PM
9	Asd specific therapies for adults not just generalist	6/26/2019 7:35 PM
10	Better funded support in mainstream schools to support my learning needs.	6/26/2019 4:45 PM
11	mobile mental health crisis team to provide in home mental health support	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
12	all are needed	6/26/2019 3:40 PM

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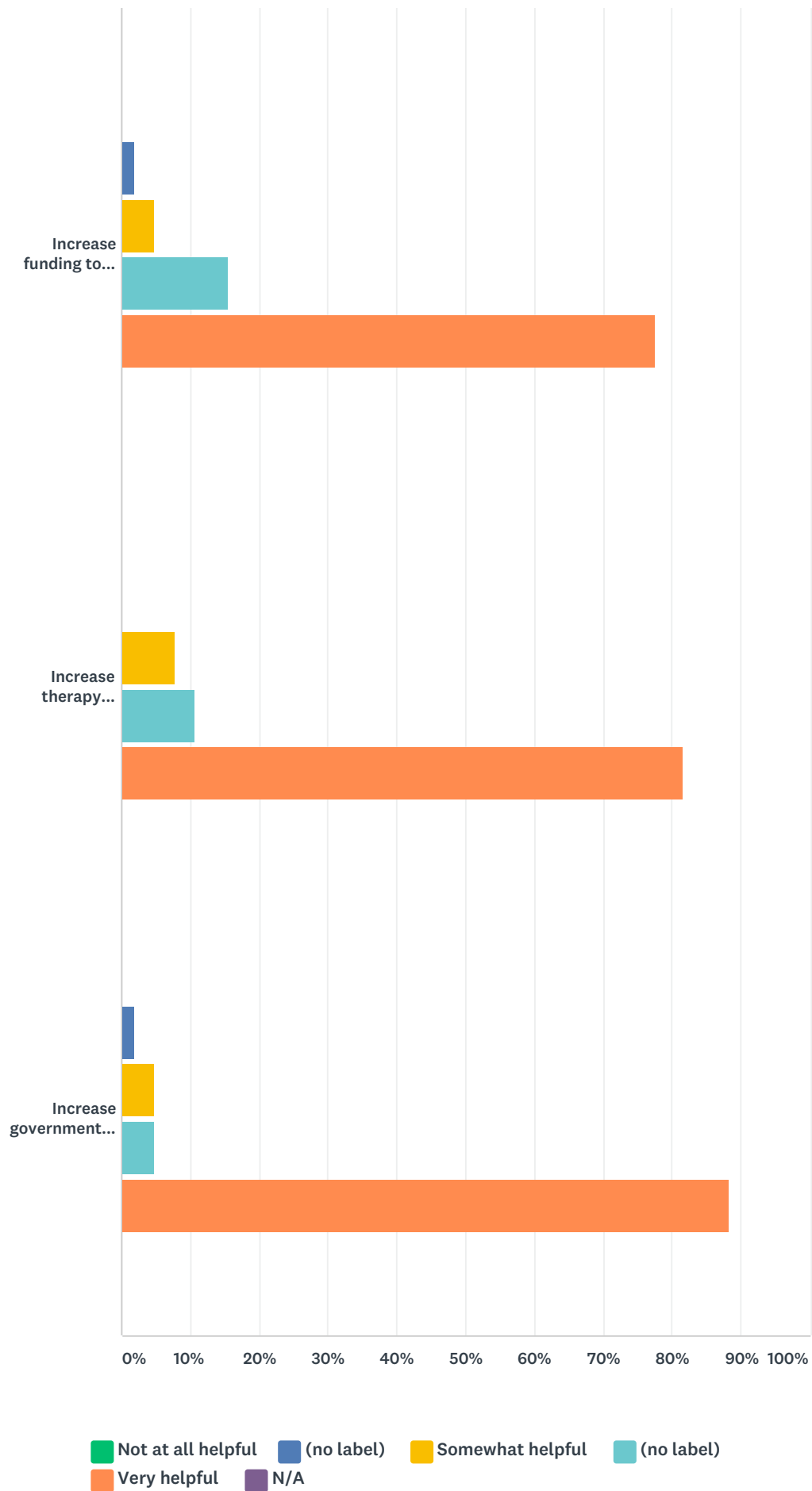
13	These may not help prevent mental illness but could definitely help address the severity and potential recovery time. Increased education and awareness could also help by making sure mental health problems are identified, and therefore addressed, as early as possible.	6/26/2019 3:20 PM
14	I don't believe you can "prevent" mental illness in Asperger's. You need to be aware and able to treat the mental illness in the individual.	6/26/2019 12:48 PM

Q15 What can be done to improve the Victorian community’s understanding of mental illness? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



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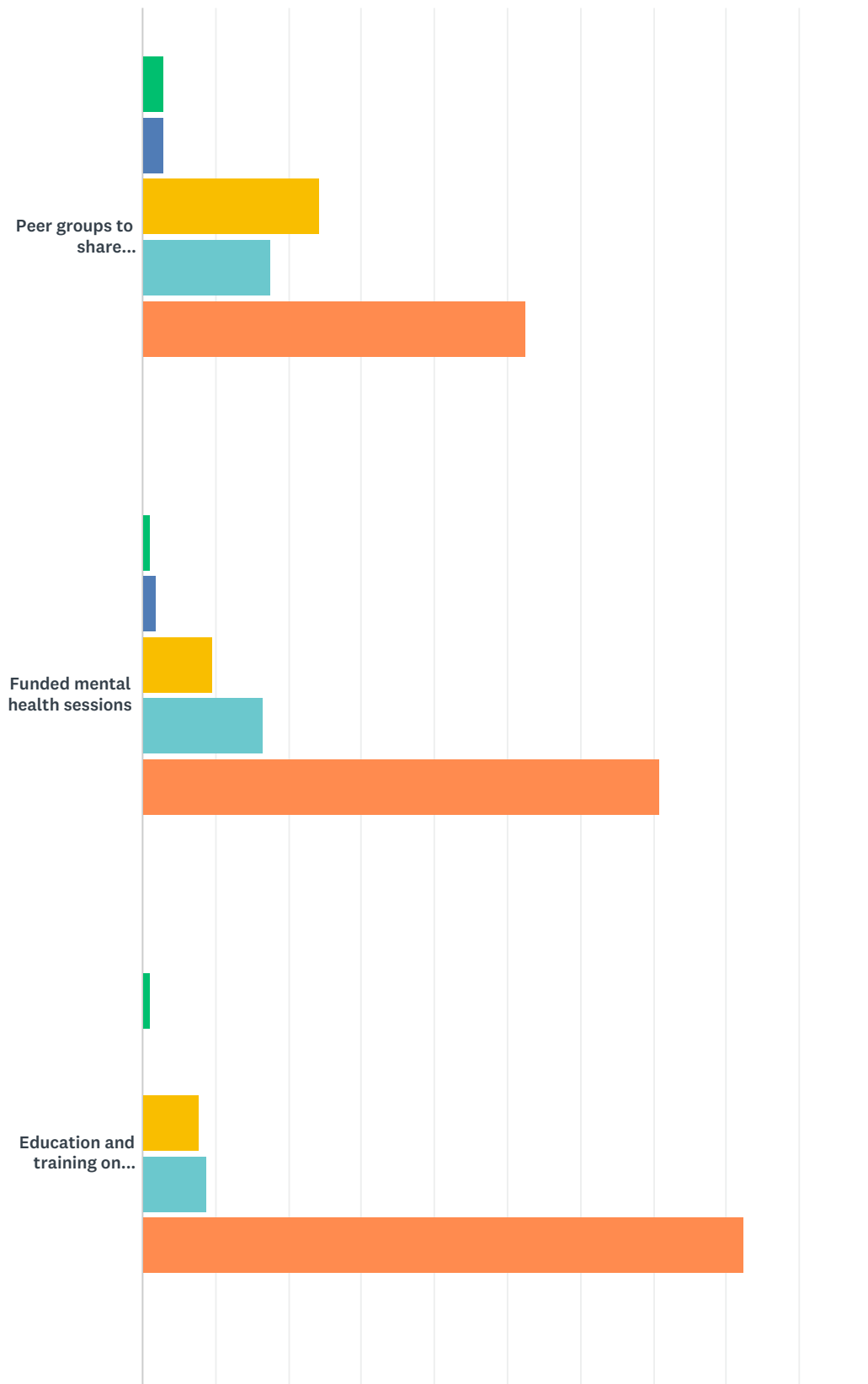
	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Educate the mental health workforce about the strengths and challenges of Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.00% 0	1.94% 2	5.83% 6	13.59% 14	78.64% 81	0.00% 0	103	4.69
Advertising campaigns	1.94% 2	10.68% 11	30.10% 31	9.71% 10	45.63% 47	1.94% 2	103	3.88
Build inclusion into education and employment systems	0.97% 1	0.00% 0	5.83% 6	8.74% 9	84.47% 87	0.00% 0	103	4.76
Increase funding to health services so they build capacity to support autistics and their families	0.00% 0	1.94% 2	4.85% 5	15.53% 16	77.67% 80	0.00% 0	103	4.69
Increase therapy sessions available to Aspergers/autistic individuals under the Better Access Mental Health Plan	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.77% 8	10.68% 11	81.55% 84	0.00% 0	103	4.74
Increase government funding to support bulk billing and affordable gap payments of medical, therapy and counselling services	0.00% 0	1.94% 2	4.85% 5	4.85% 5	88.35% 91	0.00% 0	103	4.80

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Stop ndis exploitation- not every asd person identifies as disabled	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
2	Appointments are SO HARD for a young child with such challenges, the adults around need to change and learn about him, need support staff at school to keep them calm not tell child he's the problem	6/29/2019 6:42 PM
3	Would like to study on their speciality but cannot attend exams or classrooms. Gain recognition on their practical knowledge	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
4	Post suicidal episode with teenage Aspergers son - we are now being ping pong'ed between MH and Disability sectors, neither of them helping us now	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
5	Teach in schools - acceptance and inclusion and disability awareness training including specifically about asd. Ensure schools are mandated to have flexible teaching approaches to adapt for the learning needs/environment of asd kids. Training and support available for anxiety and to deal with school refusal. Aloe access to special educational needs schools to kids with Aspergers often too 'high functioning' To access	6/26/2019 7:35 PM
6	WE have had to go private at \$300 per session	6/26/2019 4:45 PM
7	to have a national mental health framework for those with autism and developmental and intellectual disabilities	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
8	all is needed!!!	6/26/2019 3:40 PM
9	Any advertising and/or education programs need to be careful not to stereotype or generalise. More sessions available under the Better Access Mental Health Plan would be invaluable - 10 sessions a year is barely enough to address general, ongoing challenges, let alone any major issues or crises.	6/26/2019 3:20 PM

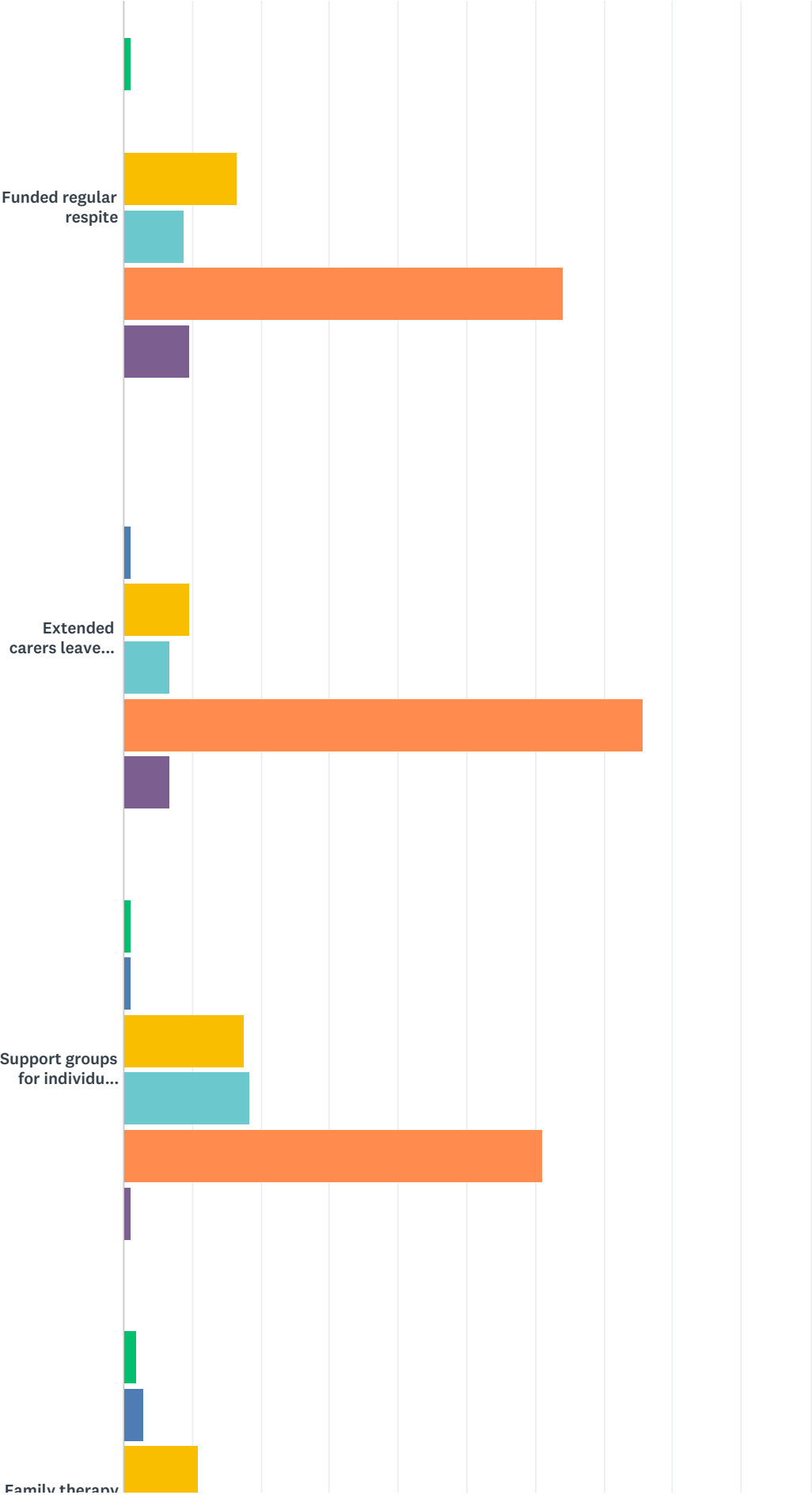
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Q16 What is needed to support carers of someone struggling with mental health and Aspergers? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

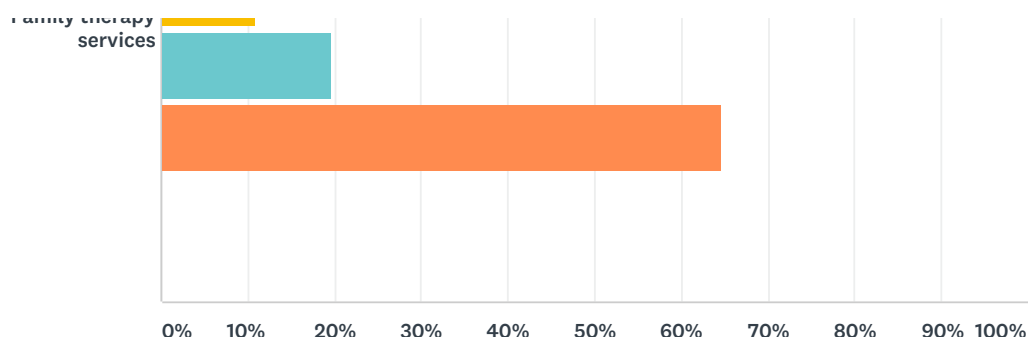
Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



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■ Not at all helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ (no label)

■ Very helpful
 ■ N/A

	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Peer groups to share experience and knowledge	2.91% 3	2.91% 3	24.27% 25	17.48% 18	52.43% 54	0.00% 0	103	4.14
Funded mental health sessions	0.97% 1	1.94% 2	9.71% 10	16.50% 17	70.87% 73	0.00% 0	103	4.54
Education and training on specific ways to support Aspergers/autistic individuals with mental health issues	0.97% 1	0.00% 0	7.77% 8	8.74% 9	82.52% 85	0.00% 0	103	4.72
Funded regular respite	0.97% 1	0.00% 0	16.50% 17	8.74% 9	64.08% 66	9.71% 10	103	4.49
Extended carers leave at work	0.00% 0	0.97% 1	9.71% 10	6.80% 7	75.73% 78	6.80% 7	103	4.69
Support groups for individual families	0.97% 1	0.97% 1	17.48% 18	18.45% 19	61.17% 63	0.97% 1	103	4.39
Family therapy services	1.96% 2	2.94% 3	10.78% 11	19.61% 20	64.71% 66	0.00% 0	102	4.42

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Definitely extended carers leave at work. I have lost 2 jobs now as balancing work and 2 aspergers/adhd children, refusing school and poor attendance due to bullying and social challenges.	7/1/2019 6:38 AM
2	Local services - nothing really in our local area	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
3	If my child can get through school - I can do the rest. If he can't get through school without me or someone who can do the 'horse whispering', nothing matters because we won't get that far. I can't leave him anywhere for counselling for me so that's a waste. Sensory rooms in govt schools and money for aides. Real money. It's not inclusion without real support!	6/29/2019 6:42 PM
4	We are the ones who need respite care!	6/29/2019 8:17 AM
5	Carer support at home as asperger individual does not like new environments	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
6	Support full stop by any service would be helpful - mental health and now NDIS have reduced funding in yearly review as teenager, suicidal and with anxiety has not been going to school - so not accessing services - so reduced funding - in time of greatest need	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
7	all of this! please! right now, we have almost none of this!	6/27/2019 12:48 AM
8	Support on alternative education facilities and programs	6/26/2019 7:00 PM
9	Support to navigate the system and find the right services	6/26/2019 4:45 PM

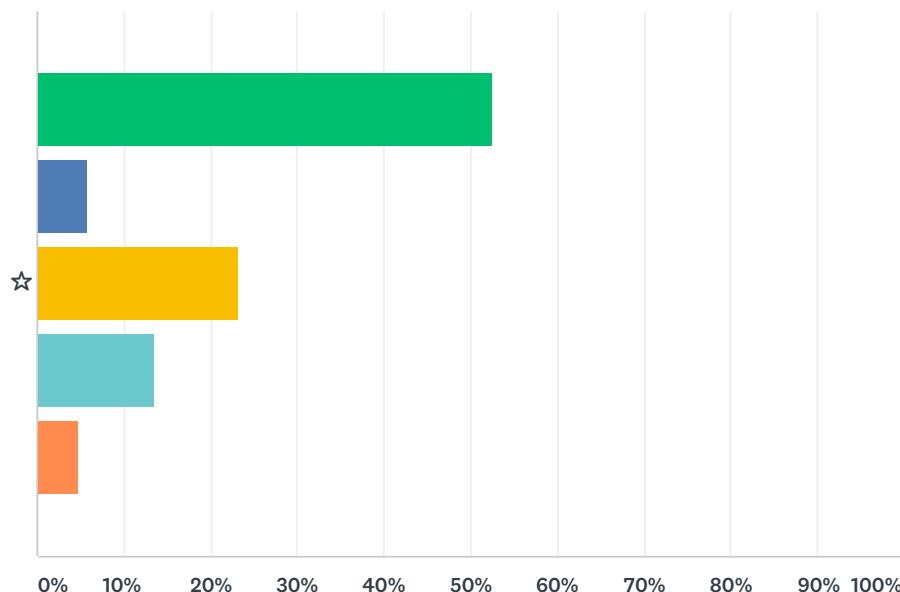
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10	funding to train support workers in Autism, and challenging behaviours, Funding to train medical and educational staff in Aspergers and challenging behaviours. Dr's to be trained in Autisum and managing complex medications including behaviour medications	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
11	we need this all !	6/26/2019 3:40 PM
12	My son was diagnosed at 24 years age. He "slipped" through without any support other than his mother who tried to get school, psychologists to understand and assist. Not easy to answer these questions as the Asperger world is very different now. He has missed out and is locked into his behaviour patterns.	6/26/2019 12:48 PM
13	I had to take Leave Without Pay and use the remainder of my Long Service leave to care for my suicidal son after his school could not guarantee his safety	6/26/2019 11:09 AM

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Q17 Has Aspergers Victoria assisted you (or someone you know) with mental health issues?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 38



■ Minimally assisted
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat assisted
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Greatly assisted

	MINIMALLY ASSISTED	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT ASSISTED	(NO LABEL)	GREATLY ASSISTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	52.43%	5.83%	23.30%	13.59%	4.85%	103	2.13
	54	6	24	14	5		

#	HOW (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	We never asked them for help, just sourced help for ourselves. I'm sure they would have helped if we had asked.	7/1/2019 7:48 AM
2	I only just heard about Aspergers Victoria from my sons psychologist. I hadn't heard of them before this.	7/1/2019 6:38 AM
3	This question is not correctly phrased...it is Y/N. It should have a secondary answer to How has AV...	7/1/2019 12:57 AM
4	Giving me support and information with bullying at my sons high school	6/30/2019 7:25 PM
5	Tips received in emails	6/30/2019 9:15 AM
6	I have not reached out but may have in our early days.	6/29/2019 8:43 AM
7	being part of the group and them knowing how we cope/don't cope	6/29/2019 8:17 AM
8	Online education resource	6/27/2019 10:16 PM
9	No	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
10	not at all	6/27/2019 9:48 AM
11	Aspergers Victoria Partners Group gave me the opportunity to discuss family issues in an open and warm environment	6/27/2019 8:53 AM

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12	Didn't know they could	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
13	new members	6/27/2019 5:50 AM
14	Information, referrals	6/27/2019 4:36 AM
15	I have called and asked for advice but as far as getting help for a drug affected Asperger it's not possible	6/26/2019 10:25 PM
16	Provided my daughter with social opportunities thru their Teen Support Group.	6/26/2019 7:41 PM
17	Through information mainly on Facebook	6/26/2019 7:35 PM
18	Provided information to help our family. Although I would love for the to broaden their range of training session to outer parts of Melbourne eg northern suburbs whittlesea	6/26/2019 7:14 PM
19	Providing access to carer support groups	6/26/2019 7:00 PM
20	allowing social settings	6/26/2019 6:33 PM
21	referrals to other organisations	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
22	not applicable as went through GP	6/26/2019 3:40 PM
23	My son has enjoyed many of the sessions we have attended over the past few years and it has enabled him to reach out & make friends at school as he realised that he could make friends so the issues weren't with him, but rather other people.	6/26/2019 3:21 PM
24	Information and resources. I haven't contacted AV with any specific requests.	6/26/2019 3:20 PM
25	As Mother/Carer I have attended an Aspergers Victoria Seminar in Melbourne, but as AV is not located close to where I live it makes it harder to attend more seminars/information sessions	6/26/2019 3:16 PM
26	To have someone to talk with / information	6/26/2019 2:35 PM
27	Support group for parents of someone with Aspergers	6/26/2019 2:26 PM
28	When I joined Aspergers Vic. there was no assistance other than support groups with parents of young children	6/26/2019 12:48 PM

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Q18 What else would you suggest for the Commission?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 38

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	My main issue as a carer of 2 boys with Aspergers is that funding stopped at 7 and only the boys get a health care card which they can't use until they are old enough to pay their own bills. I will pay for both my boys to attend private paed and psych appointments regularly but a health care card for carers would help greatly with the ongoing and expensive cost of these appointments.	7/1/2019 7:48 AM
2	a focus on teens, because they are not children and not adults. A suicidal 17 yo with Autism gets worse with 8 hour delays in an emergency ward waiting for the cat team with crying babies, vomiting kids and seeing the kids with sporting injuries seeing doctors quicker. We had to restrain my child to keep them there are promises of help went over an 8 hour period with the CAT team not turning up, in the adults ward etc. Emergency is not a good place for people with autism and having not escape from the noise, lights, smells made it awful. My child said they would never tell it was bad again because they would not go back there. Loss of faith and trust.	7/1/2019 7:35 AM
3	More support for individuals and their families is always going to improve outcome for individuals. Funding in early childhood is fantastic but children continue to struggle all through school. Social skills concepts need to be incorporated into the school curriculum for ALL children. This will help to create a more understanding, accepting community. Children will have a greater sense of belonging and school communities will be more inclusive.	7/1/2019 6:38 AM
4	.	7/1/2019 4:28 AM
5	To help the individual you must help the community and to help the community you must help the individual.	7/1/2019 12:57 AM
6	Look at divorce rates for families with autistic kids. It's extremely stressful...need respite and family therapy. Support for siblings also needed	6/30/2019 8:34 PM
7	There is inadequate support and inadequate understanding for inclusive education, dealing with bullying issues and dealing with anxiety issues that resulted in school attendance difficulties. Accomodations at the public high school my son went to was standard and ineffective to address years of school difficulties arising from bullying issues from both students and staff (punitive approach to behaviour problems)	6/30/2019 8:27 PM
8	not sure	6/30/2019 8:25 PM
9	My son is suffering from low self esteem, anxiety and depression and often talks about ending his life due to feeling he does not belong in "todays world" he is very confused with his own emotions let alone those of someone elses. I have felt for some time now that there needs to be more support for his mental health, and those (such as I) need to be supported with knowing we are giving the best possible care. I feel that support is not in the right place for some people with Aspergers. They appear to be lost in the system. I also feel many people don't fully understand Aspergers or see it as a disability as such. I have had many teachers and people say it is just a social thing or they are just quirky and that it is nothing to worry about. They don't seem to understand it is so much more than that, and very much impacts their lives mentally, physically and much more. I have had to fight for my son in all though is education and have found it so mentally and physically draining, as teachers, co ordinators and even principals in main stream don't seem to be educated in these areas. My son ended up leaving due to us not being heard or helped. The school even asked us to leave and find some where else for him. Very disappointed in the education department in main stream schools.	6/30/2019 7:25 PM
10	Work with the educatiin department to increase support to schools and teachers. They need more understanding and resources to understand the best learning environment for individuals, and be resourced enough to carry it out, so that all are offered education in a way that in effective by managing anxities and building self esteem by supporting strengths. Anxiety builds more anxiety and problems if the setting for all that time spent at school doesn't work for the child. More models of schooling should be offered-smaller classes, more nature based, more flexible etc	6/30/2019 6:59 PM

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11	Please have gender appropriate diagnosis and support for girls. My daughter only diagnosed at 13 and no help available to her - low self esteem, cutting, eating disorder discrimination, school needs to be part time to allow working from home days. Thinking girls - no one would know my daughter is asd. She masks so well but behind closed doors she is a mess.	6/30/2019 4:08 PM
12	NDIS - behavioural plans and intervention should be allowed to be self managed. This would give participants more flexibility in selection of treating therapist and less delay.	6/30/2019 2:07 PM
13	Easy access to professional supports to teach the person with the condition how to function effectively in society and give them the skills they need. Also give Teachers the support and skills they need to assist students with the condition. Make the Mental Health First Aid course more accessible to the general public and include more skills to enable more people to be able to communicate effectively with people on the spectrum.	6/30/2019 9:15 AM
14	families need help with what to do & where to go. starting from getting assessed, to finding specialists & especially ndis-extremely long & frustrating process & every family is different. the most help I received was from friends experience & facebook which is great but shows there is massive holes in the system.	6/30/2019 7:52 AM
15	The process needs to be streamlined more.	6/30/2019 5:59 AM
16	No further comment	6/29/2019 8:02 PM
17	Additional funding to provide support for AS	6/29/2019 7:01 PM
18	Commit to working with primary schools, start from early on, help kids to navigate things in a difficult, busy day in a big classroom, give them someone to count on - to find them if they run away scared, help them with personal tasks, do the 'on the spot' OT/psych talking/activities...that works, not more appointments, more exposure, more 'there's something wrong with you'	6/29/2019 6:42 PM
19	There is a significant lack of understanding in the education system about Aspergers, ASD and mental health. The university education for teachers needs to be completely overhauled to include more on it, more funding for PD for current teachers and significant more government funding easily available for aides. This is a whole community effort to assist all people to achieve their potential and the lack of the above and especially government funding of aides impacts too much on everyone	6/29/2019 6:40 PM
20	The whole mental health system needs to be revamped. I have already lost one child to suicide and can't bare the thought of losing my son as well.	6/29/2019 3:43 PM
21	.	6/29/2019 12:50 PM
22	N/a	6/29/2019 11:32 AM
23	It is critical to have an early diagnosis and then get appropriate support. Also schools must be aware, implement and adhere to support plans. Teachers need to be trained in autism support and schools need to have specific policies in place to support autism and mental health issues.	6/29/2019 9:20 AM
24	The current Education; Medical; Employment System does not have adequate support for Autism. The commission should take all the surveys data on board and make some significant improvements in supporting people who live with Autism.	6/29/2019 9:03 AM
25	NA	6/29/2019 8:43 AM
26	Teach government workers about autism and its abilities! Not just disabilities.	6/29/2019 8:17 AM
27	Employment means purpose and connection yet young people cannot access work experience or vcal work placements! We need supports for 'employment capacity building' and opportunities to start in years 11 and 12 as well as tafe and beyond. Only those who attend special schools receive this dedicated attention. Unfair! For a quality mainstream schools should be given specialist teachers in this area to support these students	6/29/2019 7:45 AM
28	More support and training for all workers working with children of all ages to understand challenging behaviour. More support for family living with adults with Aspergers Clearer information about what services adults are entitled to for ongoing support in their lives. We have no idea where to go to get support	6/29/2019 7:12 AM
29	More school supports, in class but also social skills groups/classes for aspie children. If we support our children in schools more we can establish & build more robust fundamental life skills.this is vital for Aspie children	6/28/2019 8:23 PM
30	Na	6/28/2019 5:49 PM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

31	Needs to be acknowledgement of the high co-morbidity of anxiety and depression and other mental health issues for young people with HFA - they constitute a particularly vulnerable group whose needs are not being met at present in their schools or health services as HFA individuals without speech issues are not eligible for supports at school etc.	6/28/2019 1:21 PM
32	My grandson of 25 took his life this year. He had struggled with ASD throughout his school years and beyond even though he had support from a psychologist and psychiatrist. Despite family support, he faced much rejection and isolation from the world around him. This must change for others walking the same road!	6/28/2019 1:07 PM
33	Make public access to mental health support available to everyone with short wait lists. Train emergency services eg police in how to deal with children with asd	6/28/2019 8:11 AM
34	Understanding and inclusion for people who have high functioning Autism	6/28/2019 2:52 AM
35	Access to supports for all diagnosis in the DsM not just for the severe. Help in all government schools with inclusion and social programs. Funding for life long achievements so adult children can be supported into independence. Get rid of the term high functioning autism as it helps no one	6/27/2019 10:16 PM
36	Improved education/support for mental health practitioners. From our experience, we had to see multiple practitioners before we found one who truly understood depression and anxiety in someone on the spectrum. Several practitioners caused further harm due to their lack of understanding of my son's needs and the way he functions as a result of being an Aspie. It's critical that practitioners understand that treating anxiety and depression in people with autism is NOT the same as treating those conditions in neurotypicals.	6/27/2019 9:01 PM
37	Rank schools on their inclusion levels for Aspies kids. Speaking to people, you quickly pick up there are schools that work with the kids and schools that just want them to leave. It would be good for the Education Department to call out who is who.	6/27/2019 6:16 PM
38	Normalise neurodiversity	6/27/2019 5:32 PM
39	Funding to support ways into employment. Very high unemployment of Aspergers boys especially.	6/27/2019 3:31 PM
40	Funding is needed for children who are on the spectrum but high functioning. High IQ does not mean they don't need help. With help these kids represent some of our best potential for innovation and academic achievement.	6/27/2019 2:47 PM
41	Change age restrictions for mental health services from 15 to a minimum of 18	6/27/2019 2:40 PM
42	pressure on NDIS to better support people with ADS and their carers	6/27/2019 1:48 PM
43	Highly sensitive individuals have trouble with noise etc.when they go out/hospitals. Hospitals don't give food that the person is comfortable with, this adds to their stress. The sensitive individual is very sensitive to medications. Therefore have side effects. Would like to be able to take companion animals into public places to reduce stress. Areas to go when they need time out.	6/27/2019 12:54 PM
44	Educators need to be educated. When I told them I thought my daughter had Aspergers' -she was diagnosed with depression and anxiety- the acting principal said "Really? I didn't think girls got Aspergers' " And while they claimed to understand, they weren't willing to make any changes or compromises, hence my daughter leaving school early with minimal education. She's now on disability support pension.	6/27/2019 12:40 PM
45	Have a separate and supportive autistic class stream for public schools - prevent bullying at school - train teachers to teach to autistics learning (Eg, with poor executive functioning). Be proactive in diagnosis in early years. Take away the stigma of being autistic.	6/27/2019 11:44 AM
46	Better understanding of the individual needs of support as no two people are the same, it is not a case of one size fits all.	6/27/2019 9:48 AM
47	Broadening scope of NDIS for mental health diagnosis	6/27/2019 9:15 AM
48	Improving access to NDIS for people with asperger's syndrome. Remove Aspergers from the ASD diagnosis in the DSM 5 as it was before. There was a greater understanding when it was on it's own.	6/27/2019 9:08 AM
49	Awareness of how wide spread the impact on spouses, children, inlaws and friends of people with aspergers or attachment disorder. Our family is trapped in a cycle of family dysfunction.	6/27/2019 8:53 AM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

50	Mental health system does not understand Aspergers AT ALL. Because my 17yo suicidal son could not explain his anxiety and depression, he was seen as making it up. So they withdrew support. Has gone from Year 11 and very social to not getting outside front door and so far missed whole term of Year 11. Dreadful dreadful management.	6/27/2019 8:19 AM
51	Schooling has been the biggest issue for us. There are very limited safe environments in publicly funded schools. My son has been bullied whenever in a mainstream school. I have heard this from so many parents. Better training for teachers, better education for fellow students about aspies. And safe schooling options for aspies - whether they be aspie specific schools or aspie streams. Thanks for the great work!	6/27/2019 8:15 AM
52	People living on the Spectrum are special folk who can offer much to our society. Helping them helps us all.	6/27/2019 7:44 AM
53	na	6/27/2019 6:08 AM
54	Important to improve community understanding and tolerance of diversity for all, including aspergers. Education, training, workshops can never adequately cover 'type' as all are so very different and individual unlike other diagnosed conditions. Employment best for our son if employers AND coworkers aware and 'on board' - organisational culture must support diversity. Thank you from exhausted and exasperated parent.	6/27/2019 5:50 AM
55	More funding More support	6/27/2019 5:31 AM
56	Education of the community is critical - most people have no understanding or appreciation of what aspergers is let alone how to accommodate the unique characteristics of aspergerians and this lack of understanding contributes to feelings of inadequacy and failure and spirals into anxiety and depression.	6/27/2019 4:36 AM
57	Education and understanding. People with autism bring brilliance to a very ordinary world if only people could recognise difference.	6/27/2019 2:51 AM
58	n/a	6/27/2019 12:48 AM
59	Much more understanding in hospital settings public or private	6/26/2019 10:25 PM
60	There are so many complex layers for people on the spectrum. They require enormous support to feel they are valued, participating, able members of our society.	6/26/2019 9:22 PM
61	More funding in schools to support aspie kids in the classroom	6/26/2019 9:02 PM
62	There is very little support for someone diagnosed as a teenager, most social skills programs are for younger kids. The Vic state school system is well-meaning but a very inadequate learning environment for a kid with both ASD and AHD, very little flexibility in the learning environment, and a kid can remain friendless, isolated or bullied with little the school can do to change this.	6/26/2019 8:56 PM
63	Access to mental health services is poor in regional Victoria. You are limited by both lack of services or limited availability of services locally and by long distances needed to travel to access services. We have been involved in [REDACTED] and whilst it is a great service, unless your child is in acute need (ie. has attempted suicide) you are an extremely low priority due to inadequate resourcing. Basically you wait until your child has attempted suicide, hope they survive and then you can have a rapid response. In no way is this the fault of their staff but rather comes down to lack of funding and resourcing. It may be too late by the time you get an appointment. Not everyone has the finances to pay privately. Another issue is many psychologists I have contacted are just so busy that they have closed their books to new clients. not what yo want to hear when you are desperate. Maybe there needs to be more attention at a uni level to increase graduate numbers in the mental health specialist areas? And for better access to psychologists through schools? With regards to living in regional Victoria, having a child on the spectrum is a challenging situation. Most therapies, including OT, speech therapy etc, are not readily available locally. And if they are available, they are generalist practitioners, due to the community nature of their work, not highly specialised in asd specifically. I suspect that we may not be in the difficult situation we are in now with our son, who is 14 years old, if we had been able to access services locally at a younger age.	6/26/2019 8:29 PM
64	Reduce funding for Headspace as it has limited capacity to assist. Increase funding to hospital emergency departments and psychiatric services.Provision for separate spaces for those in crisis in Emergency Departments. Better and more individualised services. Psychiatrists should recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach does not work.	6/26/2019 7:41 PM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

65	Definitely more focus on carers and employers supporting carers. And more focus on education system as outlined above. Ensure autistic people are consulted about services and training offered.	6/26/2019 7:35 PM
66	More support for family and also training and education of people girls in particular as they are so often missed with a diagnoses and it's too late. Early intervention is vital especially for girls in primary and secondary school is vital. More education so people of people to accept what Aspergers is?	6/26/2019 7:14 PM
67	Long waiting times to see private and public mental health services and assessments need to be improved by increasing resources. Quicker action in assessing clients. Provision of support for carers incorporating holistic advice regarding AS Individuals particularly children ie. listing various services supplied by OTs, speech therapists, psychologist, etc. More support and resources for all types of educational institutions to support AS children in their care - private and government funded schools as well as community or special schools. Recognition of self-diagnosed cases by carer (where patient refused professional diagnosis) to enable access to mental health and AS services. More affordable services provided by clinics offering in-house support and counselling. Increased opportunities/places in school refusal trial programs such as RCH Victoria.	6/26/2019 7:00 PM
68	Public school emphasis on inclusion with both parents and children in school community	6/26/2019 6:46 PM
69	More funding at a school level to deal with these issues and allow schools to assist and intervene when required	6/26/2019 6:33 PM
70	Help for families navigating NDIS	6/26/2019 6:26 PM
71	More school support and education about autism for the teachers	6/26/2019 6:24 PM
72	High priority and support for mothers and partners of individuals with Aspergers/Autism. Any support should always keep in mind that a family is a system. The mental illness of one family member affects the mental well being of the other members of the family.	6/26/2019 6:03 PM
73	IMprove centrelink services	6/26/2019 5:57 PM
74	There is much work to be done in the education system regarding supporting autistic children. Funding for extra support such as aides and support staff is desperately needed to allow these children to access their education in the mainstream system. Teachers and staff in general need increased education and awareness about the complex and unique needs of these children, to allow them to respond appropriately and empathetically as they interact with them. Please, please, please enable these children to access this funding and support that they need so desperately in the mainstream system. It is not a level playing field at the moment, and many of them are unable to cope without that support, and suffer serious mental health consequences as a result. My son is currently one of these children, having transitioned to year 7, without funded support, due to a failure of his Primary school principal to have his PSD funding reviewed. He has collapsed (mentally) with severe anxiety and panic attacks, and has been unable to attend school this term. This is totally unacceptable that in a society such as ours, we allow this to happen to these fantastic children and adults, who have so much to offer the wider community.	6/26/2019 5:54 PM
75	Health practitioners are not very experienced at understanding autism and strategies to assist	6/26/2019 5:24 PM
76	Education campaigns at schools TV etc	6/26/2019 5:23 PM
77	Dual enrolment for asd kids mainstream and asd school	6/26/2019 5:05 PM
78	Make it easier to access services and funding. We waited 3 years for a social group. People continually pulled out because of the large costs. There are minimal services available to teens. Early diagnosis is not always accessible. Schools are reluctant to assist and parents are left wondering and having to chase specialists privately. Teens have minimal access to school counsellors and desperately need mentoring groups such as Aspergers Victoria and ICAN network to implement mentoring in high schools to support this teens who are struggling, especially in catholic high schools.	6/26/2019 4:48 PM
79	Better options for anxious and depressed aspies in Education. Specialist school for these children who cannot cope with mainstream and are too bright for a special needs autistic school.	6/26/2019 4:46 PM
80	Not sure	6/26/2019 4:45 PM
81	Fund research into ROGD (rapid onset gender dysphoria) in teenagers with aspergers.	6/26/2019 4:36 PM
82	Support for Carers	6/26/2019 4:14 PM
83	Nil	6/26/2019 4:05 PM

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84	Greater support options and treatment for families in crisis presenting to emergency departments, and a mental health framework for emergency treatment for those with dual disabilities and mental health issues.	6/26/2019 3:45 PM
85	Support for jobs in Secondary school and finding affected children an opportunity to get some job experience without having to go through the harsh job interview sessions that are so difficult for Autism affected individuals.	6/26/2019 3:42 PM
86	Please support the ASD individual more and their families. This would make life more peaceful for all.	6/26/2019 3:40 PM
87	greater community awareness programmes and better education for teachers on how to support children on the spectrum	6/26/2019 3:28 PM
88	I indicated that I felt nothing would help to prevent mental illness in people with Aspergers as I believe that anxiety is part & parcel of the diagnosis and not a separate disorder but there are certainly things that government & society can do to ensure the anxiety levels are kept low and do not morph into more challenging mental health issues, including decent funded support for parents & families.	6/26/2019 3:21 PM
89	Anxiety for someone with Aspergers is on a completely different scale from 'regular' anxiety, and needs to be accepted and addressed accordingly (eg at school, in the workplace).	6/26/2019 3:20 PM
90	The Government should have more meetings with Parents/Carers to get a better understanding of what is ACTUALLY needed for a Carer everyday to cope with changing situations of their Asperger. Consistent support systems for the ongoing mental health of the person and stronger links to Service Providers that have been trained to understand a person with Aspergers. In conclusion if Governments a giving out money they need to show us what specialist training is being done to support the Service Providers giving the care as well as more staff in our Hospitals trained to deal with situations that may arise.	6/26/2019 3:16 PM
91	My son is school age and the education system is so difficult for them and creates very complex issues. The school system does not support their needs. The teachers are not trained in ASD and have no idea how to deal with and don't really understand nor have time or energy to deal with it effectively. The school system is like expecting squares to fit into circles, and teachers then gets frustrated and tries to force them to fit, which only causes more stress and pain for kids on the spectrum and their families. Providing some kind of structures play at lunchtime, when ASD have most difficulties (either get bullied or end up sitting on their own with nothing to do) would also be of great help.	6/26/2019 3:11 PM
92	There no supports for children and their carers under 12 in [REDACTED]	6/26/2019 2:57 PM
93	...	6/26/2019 2:49 PM
94	Nothing else to add	6/26/2019 2:46 PM
95	Train early learning staff and teachers to assist parents to seek diagnosis from health care professionals. Early diagnosis and support results in significant improvements in mental health and social skills.	6/26/2019 2:41 PM
96	Funding to continue for children with autism when they reach high school . (Which can be the hardest time for these children) For the government to understand that autism doesn't end when your child turns 16. They are not an adult . For autistic children(age 16) not to put in adult psychiatric hospitals	6/26/2019 2:35 PM
97	NA	6/26/2019 2:33 PM
98	There's a greater need for alternative schools to accommodate ASD students who feel overwhelmed by 5 day/week and 8:30-3:30 model	6/26/2019 2:32 PM
99	Make the testing for Aspergers/Autism consistent across the country of Australia. Decide if Aspergers/Autism is a disability and be consistent with that across all government departments in Australia. Have funding for families come from one place and make it black and white - if you have Aspergers/Autism then you get the funding. Its currently continually changing and its very difficult for families who are already having so much trouble at home and are time poor.	6/26/2019 2:26 PM
100	Listen to us!!	6/26/2019 12:50 PM

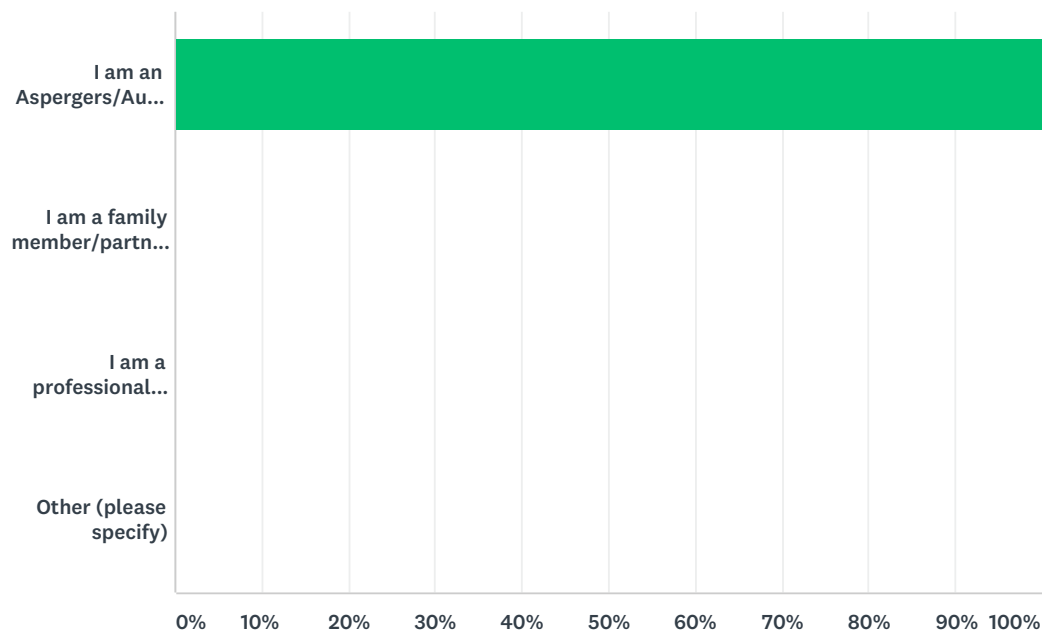
Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

101	Don't get me started! My son is 48 and slipped through the cracks. I had to educate GP about Aspergers 15 years ago. There needs to be monitoring of adult Aspergers as they can become a danger or themselves and community. It can be terrifying at times, when my 48 year old son calls me to tell me how "upset" he got and has been evicted from theatres, stores. Threatened by tradesmen when he complains about noise in his apartment block. The justice system incarcerates many people impacted by Aspergers. Why are you using the term "Aspergers" when it is no longer used?	6/26/2019 12:48 PM
102	Make any new supports accessible to those living in rural areas	6/26/2019 11:09 AM
103	Fgh	6/25/2019 9:18 AM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q1 What is your relationship with Aspergers/Autism?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 0



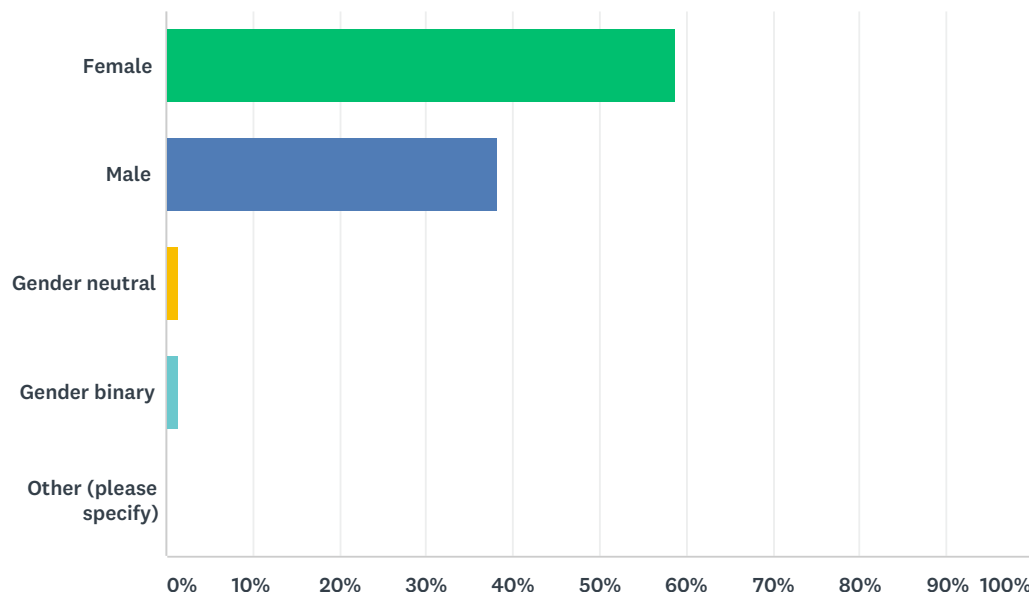
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
I am an Aspergers/Autistic individual.		100.00%	68
I am a family member/partner/carers of someone who identifies as an Aspergers/Autistic individual.		0.00%	0
I am a professional supporting Aspergers/Autistic individuals.		0.00%	0
Other (please specify)		0.00%	0
TOTAL			68

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

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Q2 What is your gender identity? OR If you are the member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, what is their gender identity?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 0



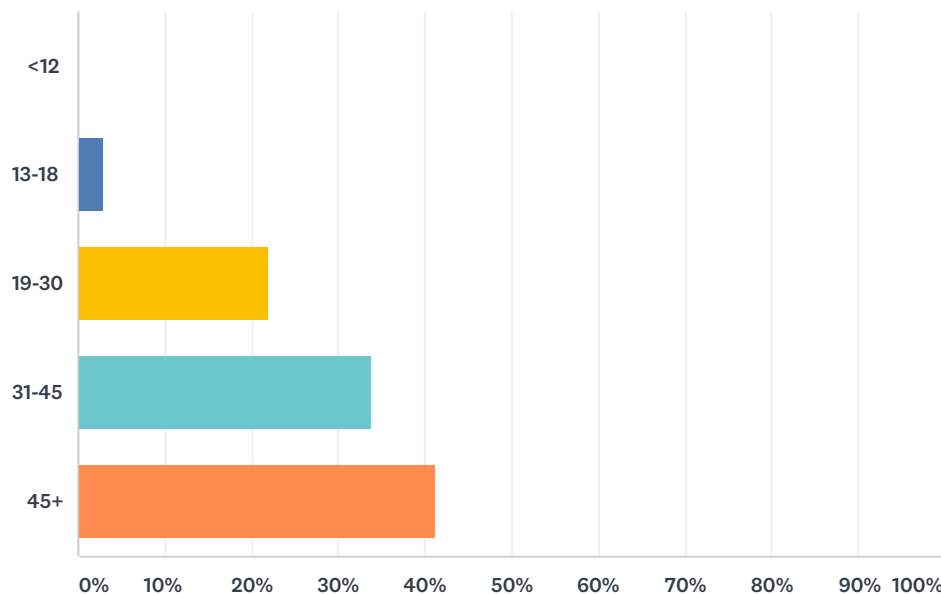
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	58.82%	40
Male	38.24%	26
Gender neutral	1.47%	1
Gender binary	1.47%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		68

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q3 What is your age? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, what is their age?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 0

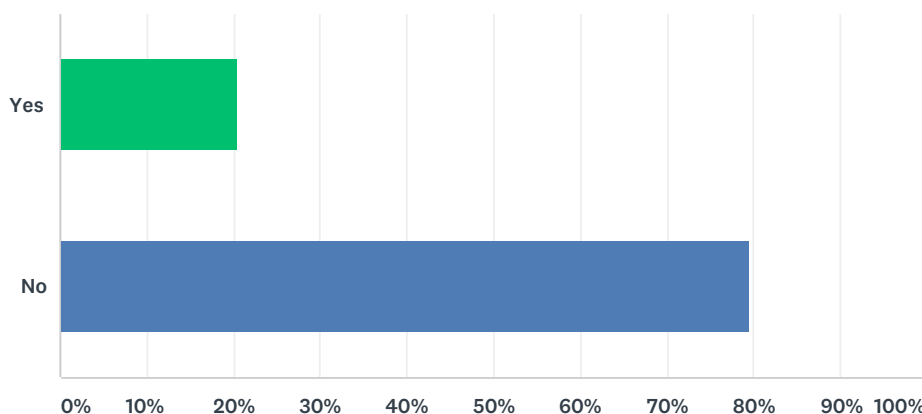


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
<12	0.00%	0
13-18	2.94%	2
19-30	22.06%	15
31-45	33.82%	23
45+	41.18%	28
TOTAL		68

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q4 Have you applied for NDIS funding? OR If you are the member/partner/carers of an Aspergers/autistic individual, have you applied for NDIS funding on their behalf?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 0

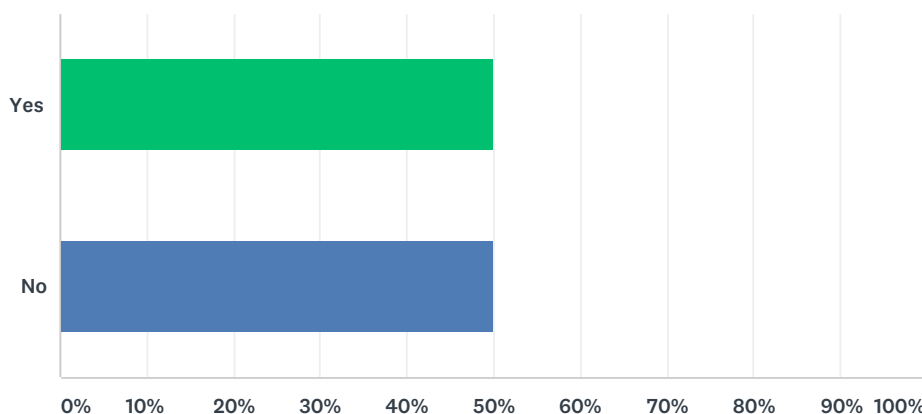


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	20.59%	14
No	79.41%	54
TOTAL		68

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q5 Have you received your NDIS funding? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, have you received NDIS funding on their behalf?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 54

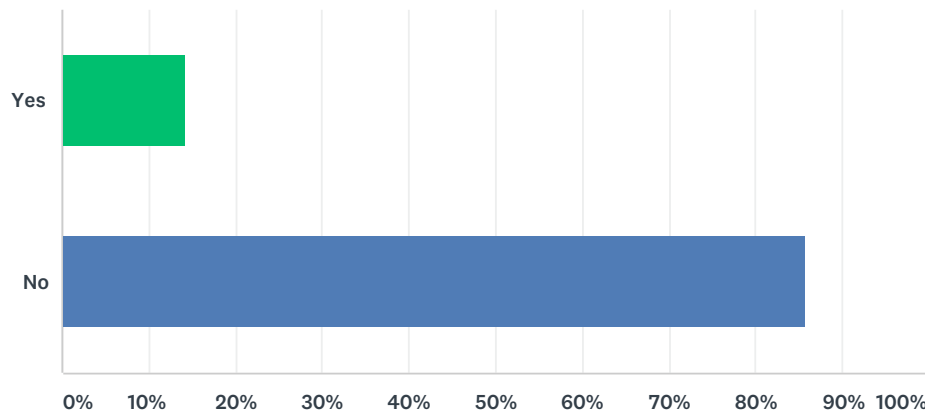


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	50.00%	7
No	50.00%	7
TOTAL		14

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q6 Is your NDIS funding sufficient and appropriate for your needs? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, do you believe the funding is sufficient and appropriate for their needs?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 61

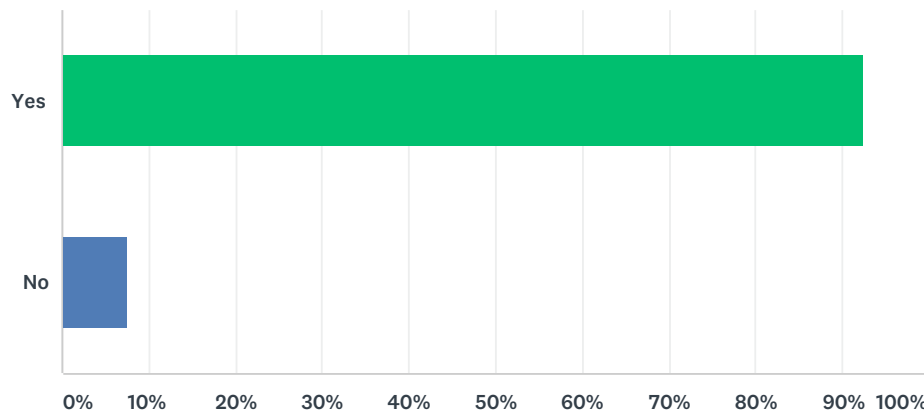


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	14.29%	1
No	85.71%	6
TOTAL		7

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q7 Have you accessed mental health services in Victoria?(Mental Health services can include accessing a GP, hospital services, psychologists, psychiatrists, peer support groups)

Answered: 66 Skipped: 2

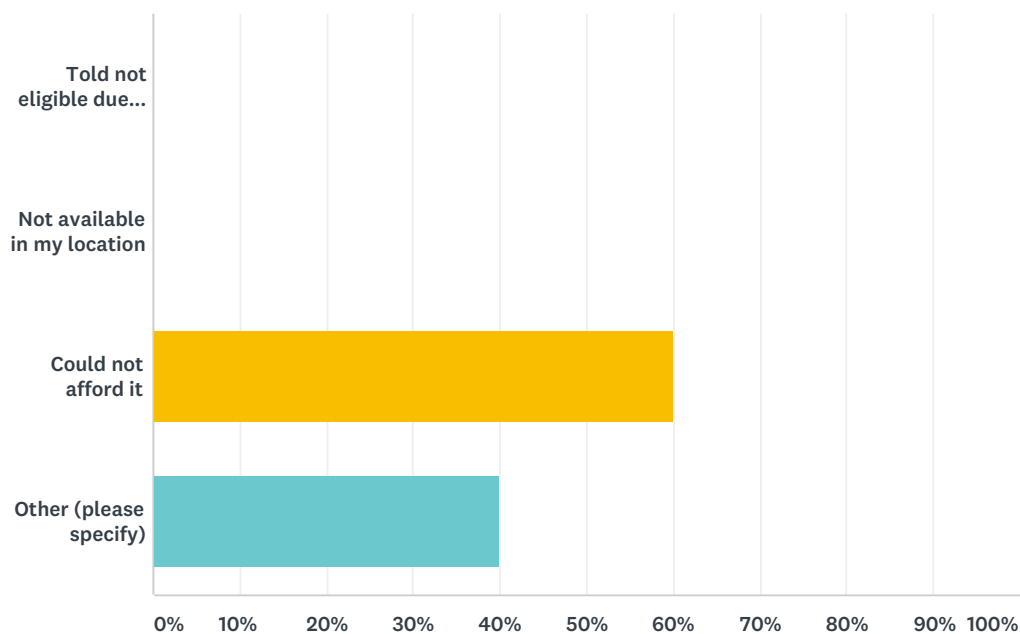


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	92.42%	61
No	7.58%	5
TOTAL		66

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q8 If you could NOT access the service, what was the reason?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 63



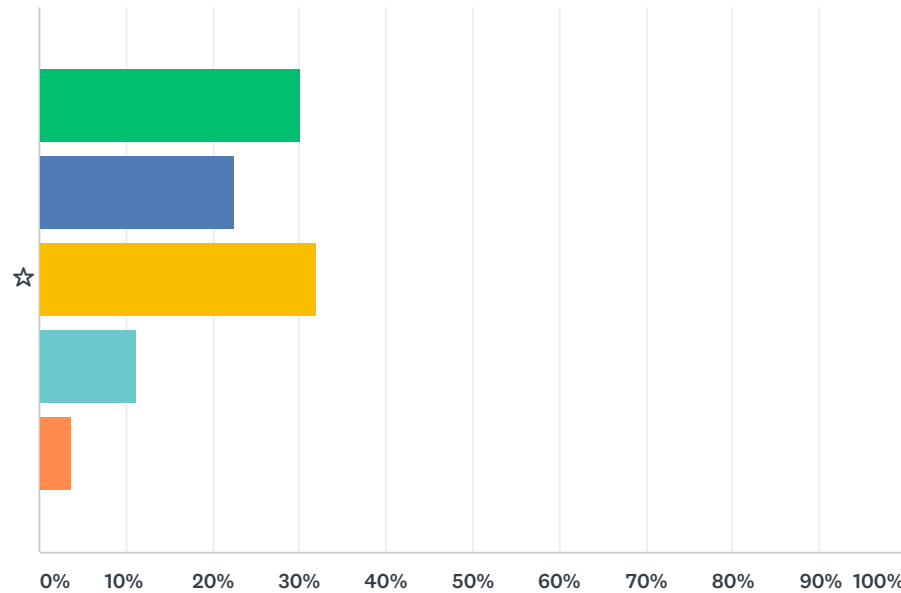
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Told not eligible due to Aspergers diagnosis	0.00%	0
Not available in my location	0.00%	0
Could not afford it	60.00%	3
Other (please specify)	40.00%	2
TOTAL		5

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Literally just moved here.	7/1/2019 10:32 AM
2	No benefit	6/26/2019 5:00 PM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q9 If you have accessed the mental health services, to what extent did the system understand your needs?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 15



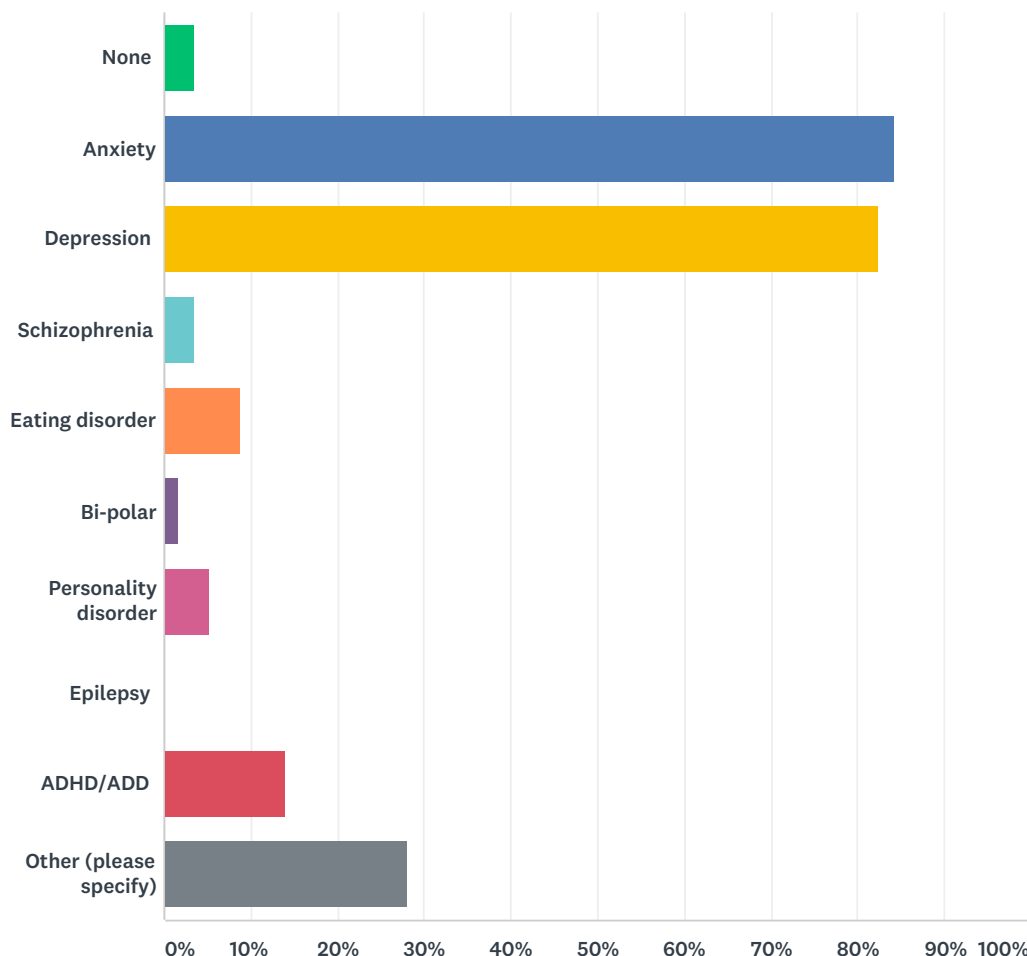
■ Did not understand my needs
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat understood my needs
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Understood all my needs

	DID NOT UNDERSTAND MY NEEDS	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT UNDERSTOOD MY NEEDS	(NO LABEL)	UNDERSTOOD ALL MY NEEDS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	30.19%	22.64%	32.08%	11.32%	3.77%	53	2.36
	16	12	17	6	2		

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q10 As an Aspergers/austistic individual, which mental health condition(s) have you accessed support for OR if you are a family member/parent/carer representing an Aspergers/autistic individual, which mental health condition(s) have you accessed support for? (Please check any that apply)

Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	3.51%	2
Anxiety	84.21%	48
Depression	82.46%	47
Schizophrenia	3.51%	2
Eating disorder	8.77%	5
Bi-polar	1.75%	1
Personality disorder	5.26%	3
Epilepsy	0.00%	0

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

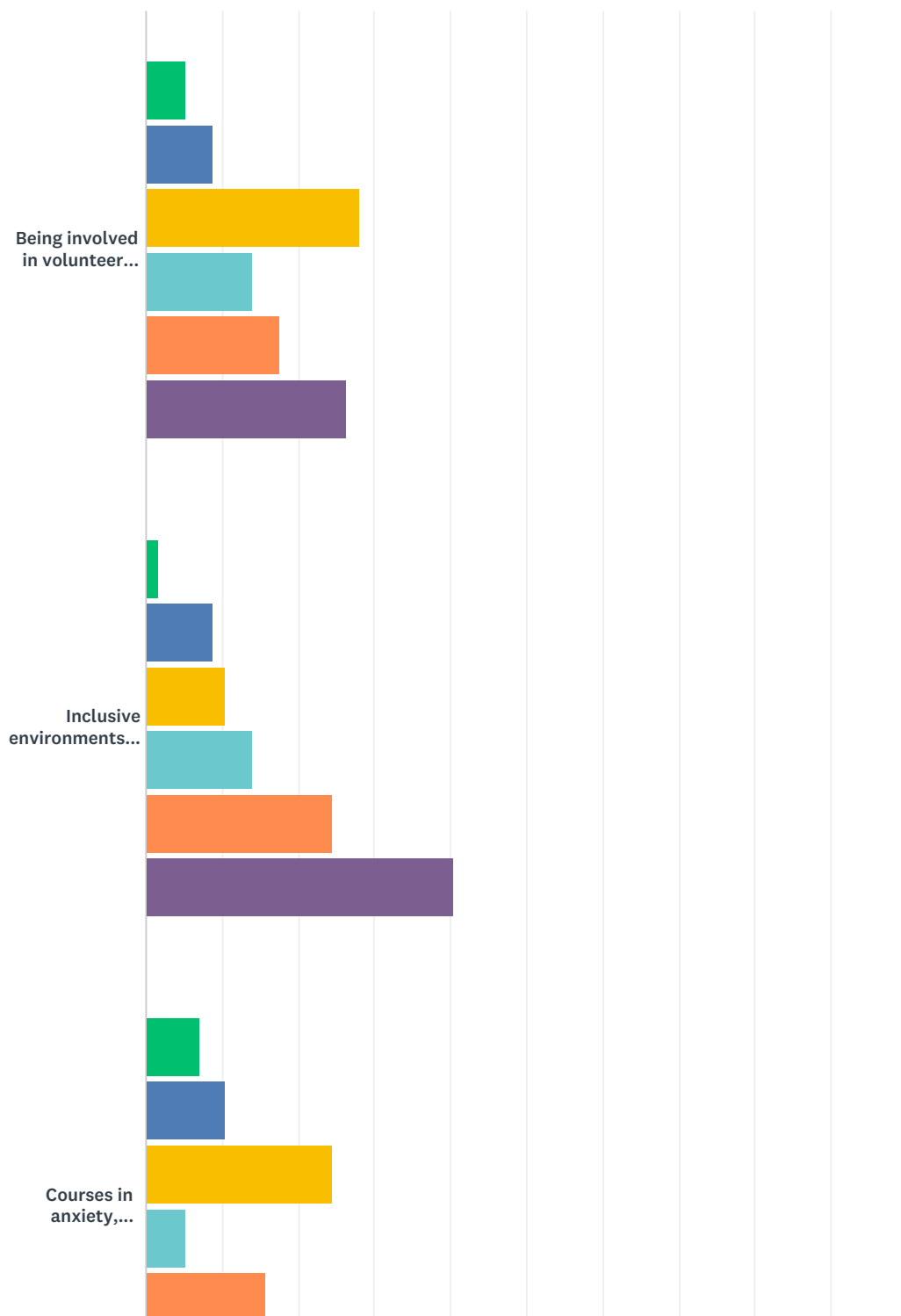
ADHD/ADD	14.04%	8
Other (please specify)	28.07%	16
Total Respondents: 57		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	suspected own diagnosis of ASD, sought help to figure it out for sure.	7/1/2019 5:43 AM
2	OCPD	6/30/2019 8:14 AM
3	Ocd	6/29/2019 10:11 AM
4	Panic disorder, Agoraphobia, OCD	6/29/2019 8:25 AM
5	C-PTSD	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
6	OCD	6/28/2019 3:27 PM
7	Stress	6/28/2019 1:54 PM
8	Social Avoidance	6/27/2019 8:39 PM
9	PTSD	6/27/2019 6:03 PM
10	PTSD, drug induced psychosis.	6/27/2019 12:56 PM
11	And a dozen other things various psychs, shrinks & GPs have misdiagnosed me with over the years. I got a diagnosis 2 years ago (not a full one - try doing that at 70 on an Old Age Pension), having self-diagnosed, and in the 55 years prior, NO-ONE had EVER mentioned ASD or Aspergers, in spite of having 2 "gifted" etc children, and an "interesting" family history.	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
12	Pre-Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD), Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD)	6/27/2019 10:07 AM
13	Diagnosis	6/27/2019 6:02 AM
14	Erotomania, Paranoia and Psychosis	6/26/2019 7:40 PM
15	OCD & hoarding.	6/26/2019 7:21 PM
16	Counselling, Autism diagnosis	6/26/2019 6:02 PM

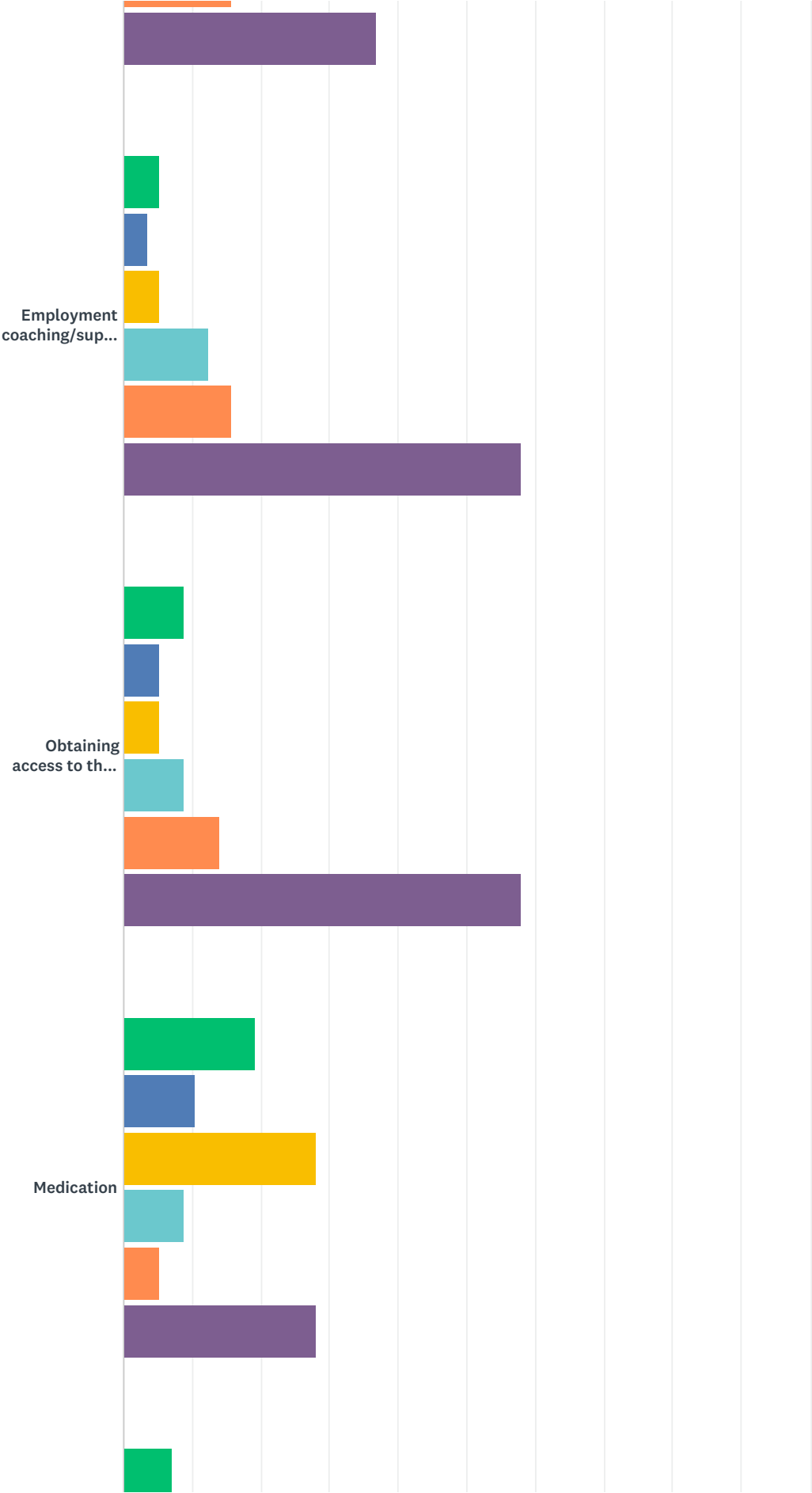
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Q11 As an Aspergers/autistic individual, which supports have been helpful to improve your mental health outcomes OR if you are a family member/parent/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, which supports have been helpful to improve mental health outcomes? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

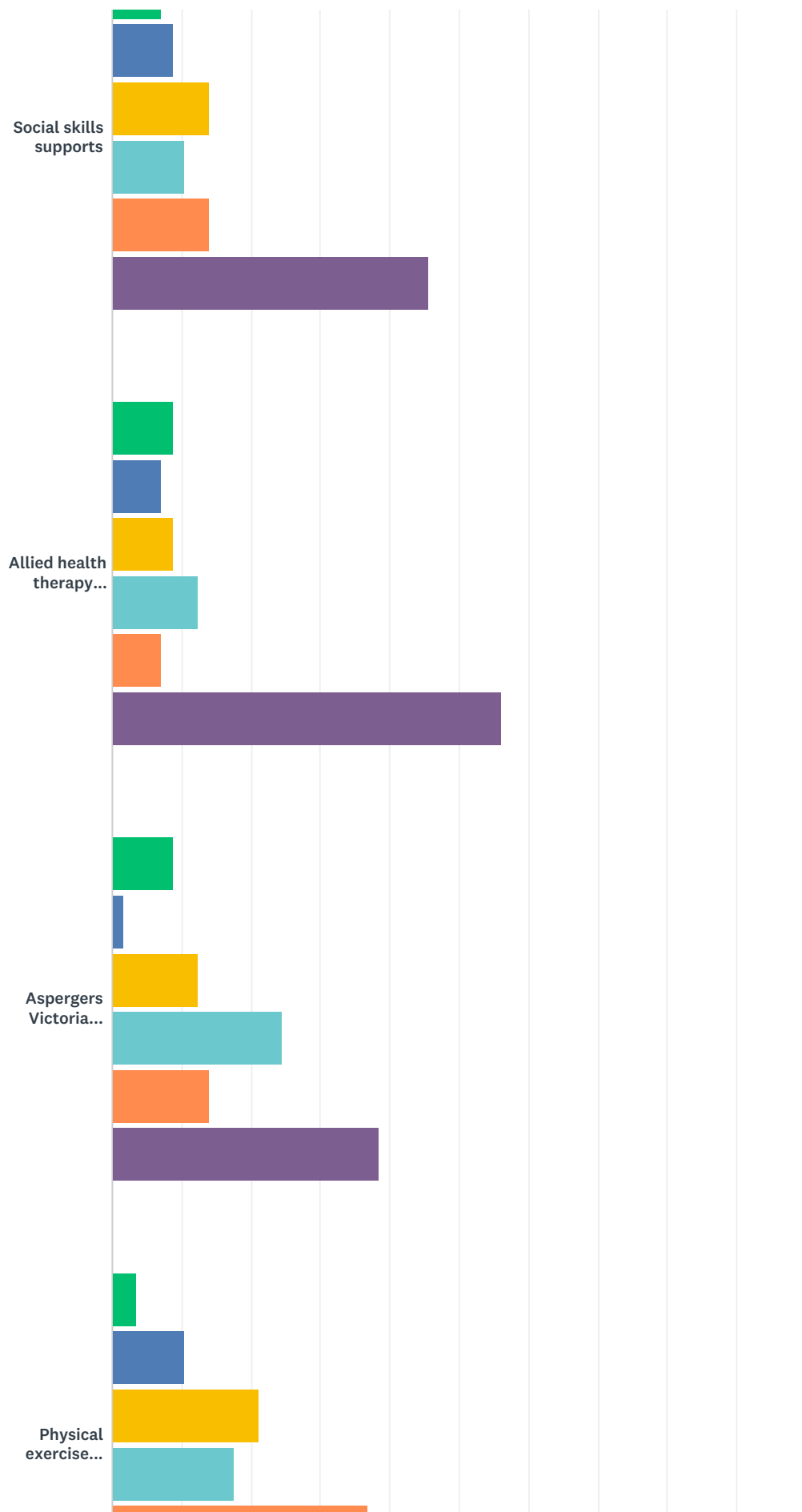
Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



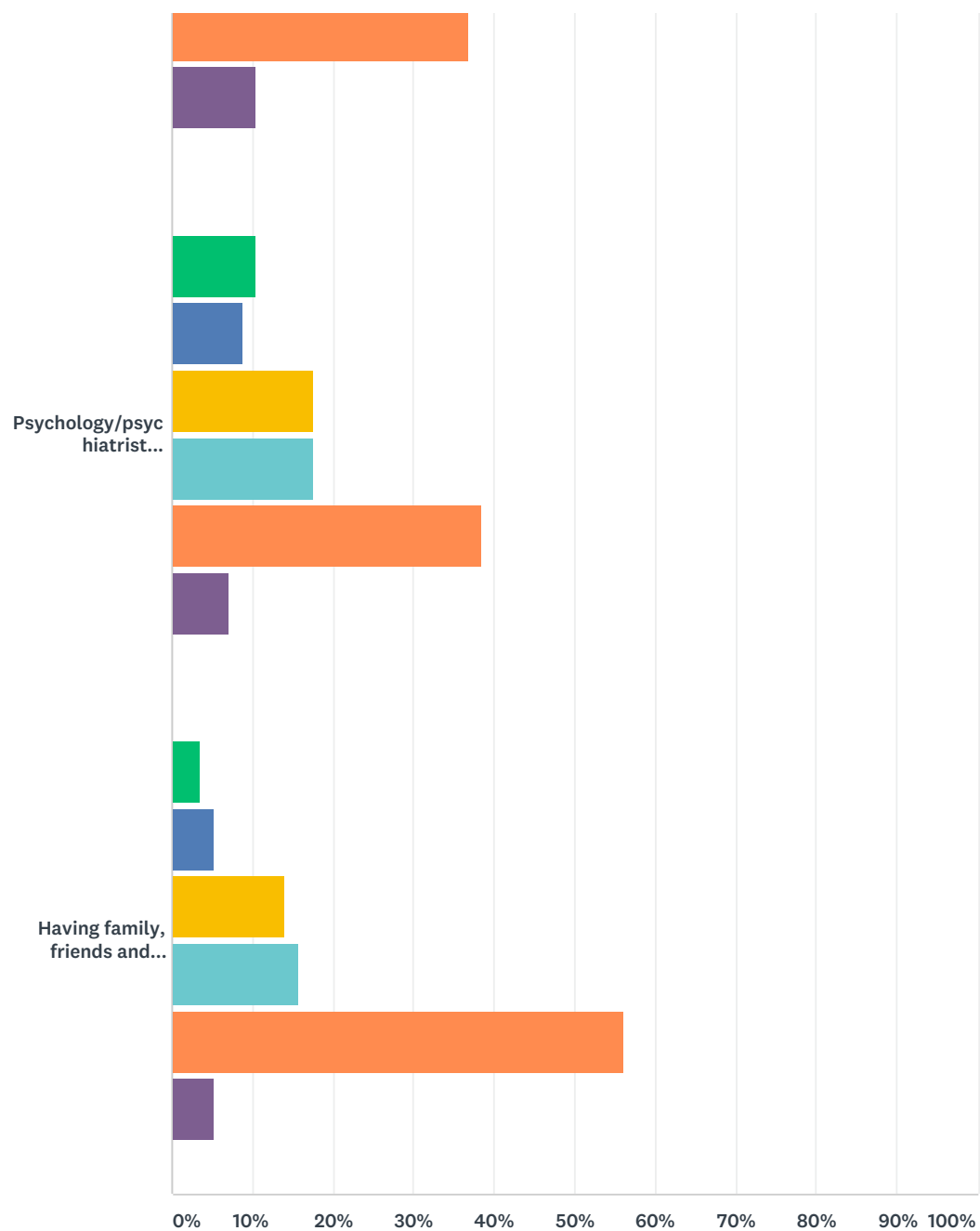
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Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



■ Not at all helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Very helpful
 ■ N/A

	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Being involved in volunteer activities	5.26% 3	8.77% 5	28.07% 16	14.04% 8	17.54% 10	26.32% 15	57	3.40
Inclusive environments at work and school	1.75% 1	8.77% 5	10.53% 6	14.04% 8	24.56% 14	40.35% 23	57	3.85
Courses in anxiety, depression, stress management	7.02% 4	10.53% 6	24.56% 14	5.26% 3	15.79% 9	36.84% 21	57	3.19

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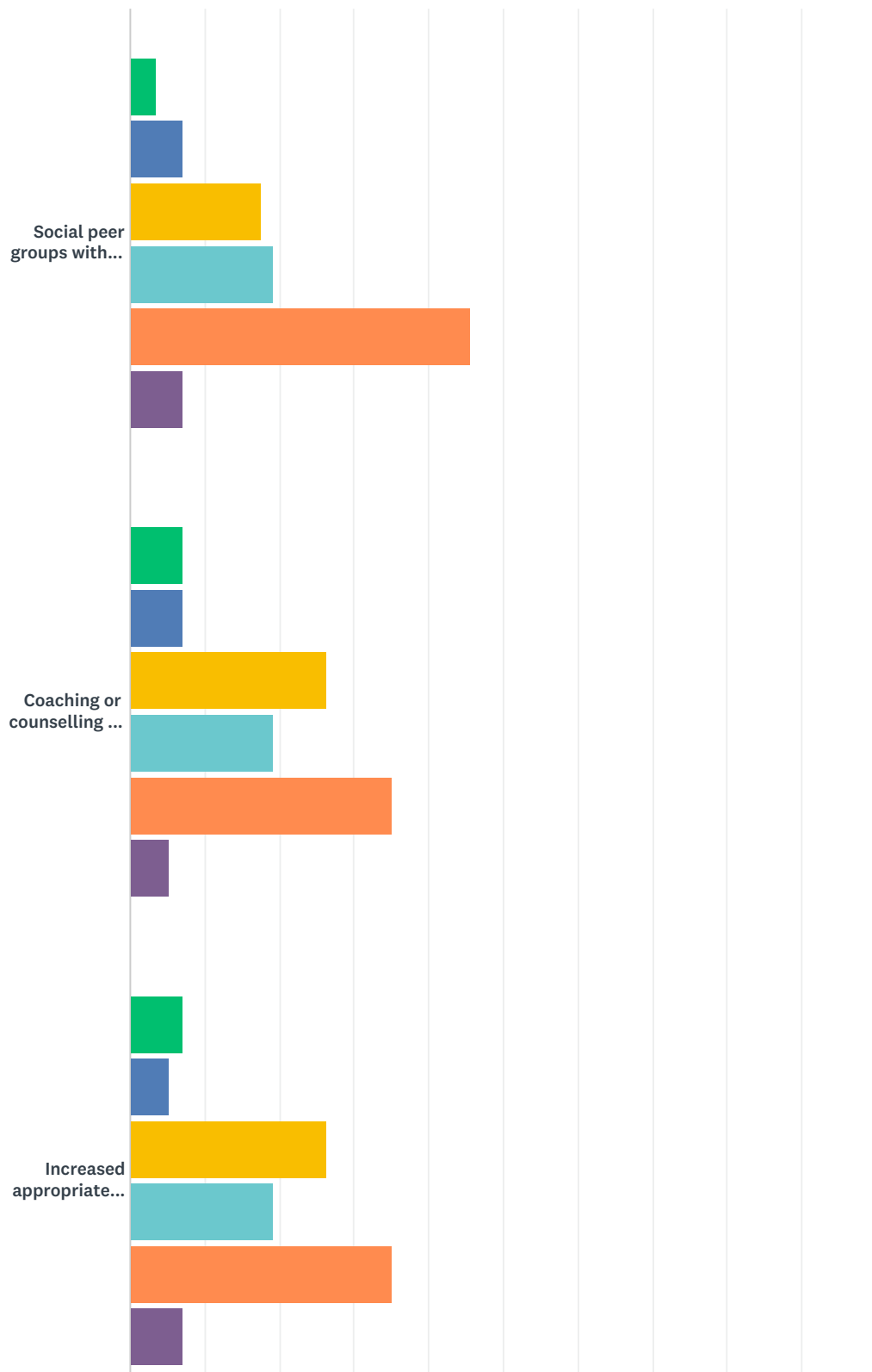
Employment coaching/support	5.26% 3	3.51% 2	5.26% 3	12.28% 7	15.79% 9	57.89% 33	57	3.71
Obtaining access to the Better Mental Health program	8.77% 5	5.26% 3	5.26% 3	8.77% 5	14.04% 8	57.89% 33	57	3.33
Medication	19.30% 11	10.53% 6	28.07% 16	8.77% 5	5.26% 3	28.07% 16	57	2.59
Social skills supports	7.02% 4	8.77% 5	14.04% 8	10.53% 6	14.04% 8	45.61% 26	57	3.29
Allied health therapy services (Occupational therapy, speech therapy)	8.77% 5	7.02% 4	8.77% 5	12.28% 7	7.02% 4	56.14% 32	57	3.04
Aspergers Victoria membership	8.77% 5	1.75% 1	12.28% 7	24.56% 14	14.04% 8	38.60% 22	57	3.54
Physical exercise including yoga, walking, gym	3.51% 2	10.53% 6	21.05% 12	17.54% 10	36.84% 21	10.53% 6	57	3.82
Psychology/psychiatrist sessions	10.53% 6	8.77% 5	17.54% 10	17.54% 10	38.60% 22	7.02% 4	57	3.70
Having family, friends and community who understand me	3.51% 2	5.26% 3	14.04% 8	15.79% 9	56.14% 32	5.26% 3	57	4.22

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Following Aspergers Victoria on socials, haven't joined yet, (Dx early 2019). Still finding my way.	7/1/2019 5:43 AM
2	Please reinstate funding to aspergers victoria to enable them to run their groups.	6/29/2019 3:08 PM
3	Herbal and nutritional supplements to help ease tension and anxiety	6/29/2019 8:51 AM
4	I'm a female Aspie. My social skills are fine, but that's masking, isn't it? I'm not a square peg to be forced into a round hole. I'm comfortable with who I am. I'm not an NT and it's very ableist to assume that I should emulate one. Acceptance of neurodiversity is more important. Autism does not mean we're broken.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
5	Social activities at Headspace: Very helpful	6/28/2019 3:27 PM
6	music	6/27/2019 6:03 PM
7	Creative outlets/artistic expression	6/27/2019 2:55 PM
8	psychologists can be helpful, psychiatrists generally aren't.	6/27/2019 12:56 PM
9	If anything had helped, maybe I would have been diagnosed, and maybe I would have an anti-depressant which worked, and a few other things. I'm still waiting for the social worker that [REDACTED] was going to send to see me after another suicide attempt at the end of 2012!!	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
10	Sandplay Therapy (Very Helpful)	6/27/2019 10:07 AM
11	psychologists/psychiatrists with no Asperger experience weren't only not helpful, but were detrimental.	6/26/2019 3:02 PM
12	Not much support or pathways to support for a 49 year old woman that I have found	6/26/2019 12:49 PM

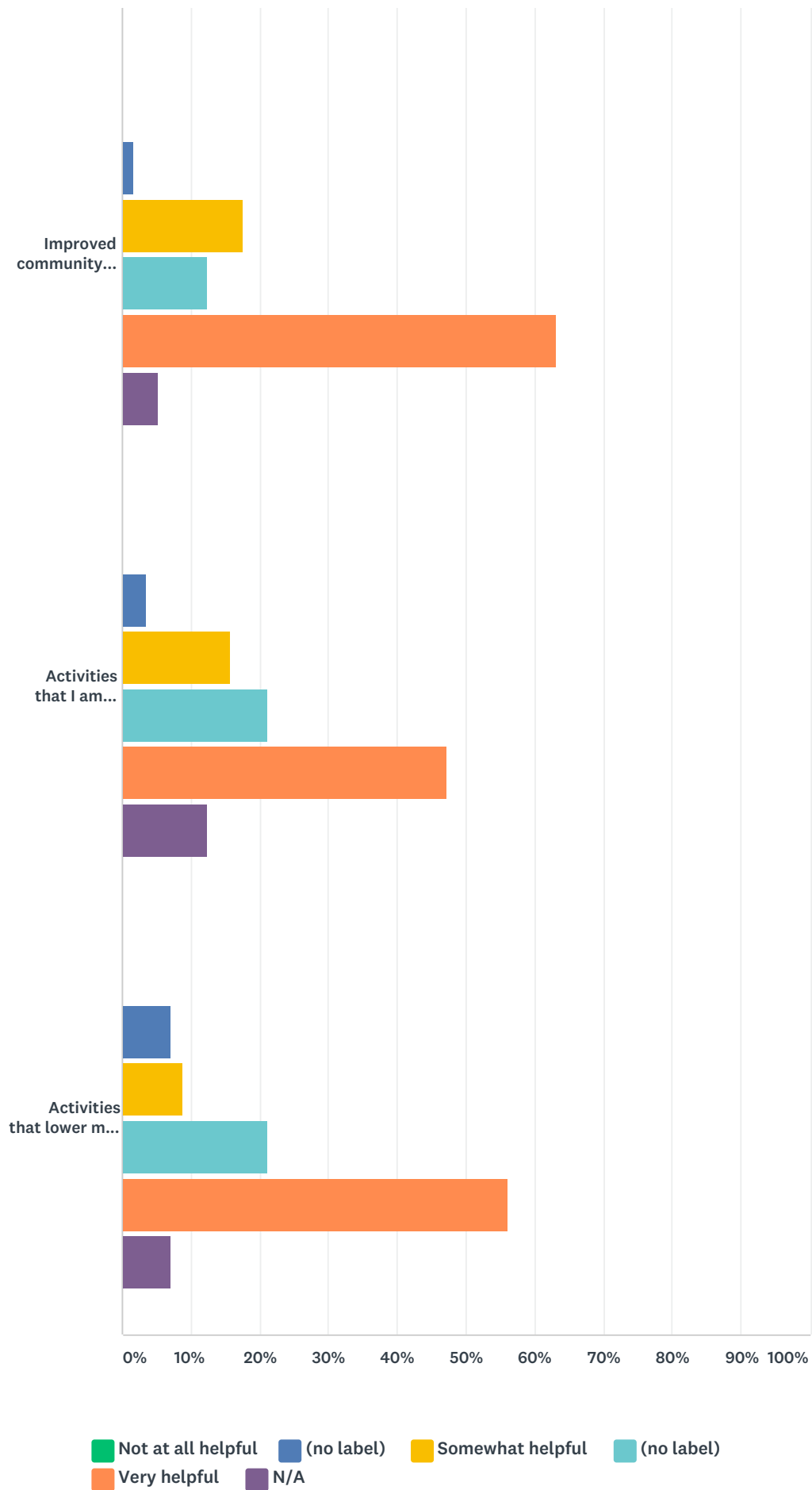
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Q12 For those living with mental illness, what opportunities could help improve your social participation? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



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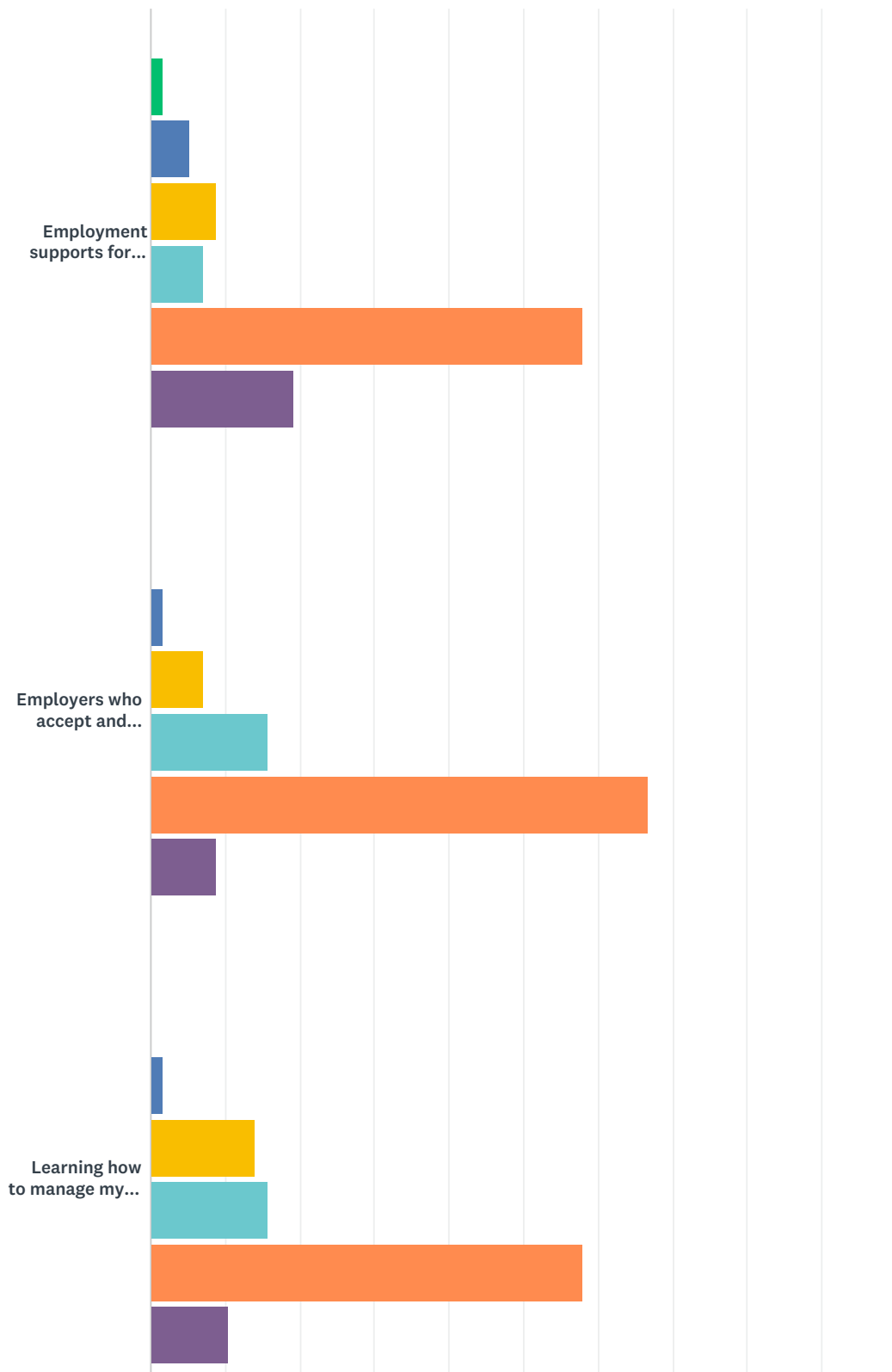
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	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Social peer groups with lived experience of Aspergers/autism	3.51% 2	7.02% 4	17.54% 10	19.30% 11	45.61% 26	7.02% 4	57	4.04
Coaching or counselling in social interaction	7.02% 4	7.02% 4	26.32% 15	19.30% 11	35.09% 20	5.26% 3	57	3.72
Increased appropriate social opportunities	7.02% 4	5.26% 3	26.32% 15	19.30% 11	35.09% 20	7.02% 4	57	3.75
Improved community understanding and support of my needs	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	17.54% 10	12.28% 7	63.16% 36	5.26% 3	57	4.44
Activities that I am interested in available in my community	0.00% 0	3.51% 2	15.79% 9	21.05% 12	47.37% 27	12.28% 7	57	4.28
Activities that lower my stress levels	0.00% 0	7.02% 4	8.77% 5	21.05% 12	56.14% 32	7.02% 4	57	4.36

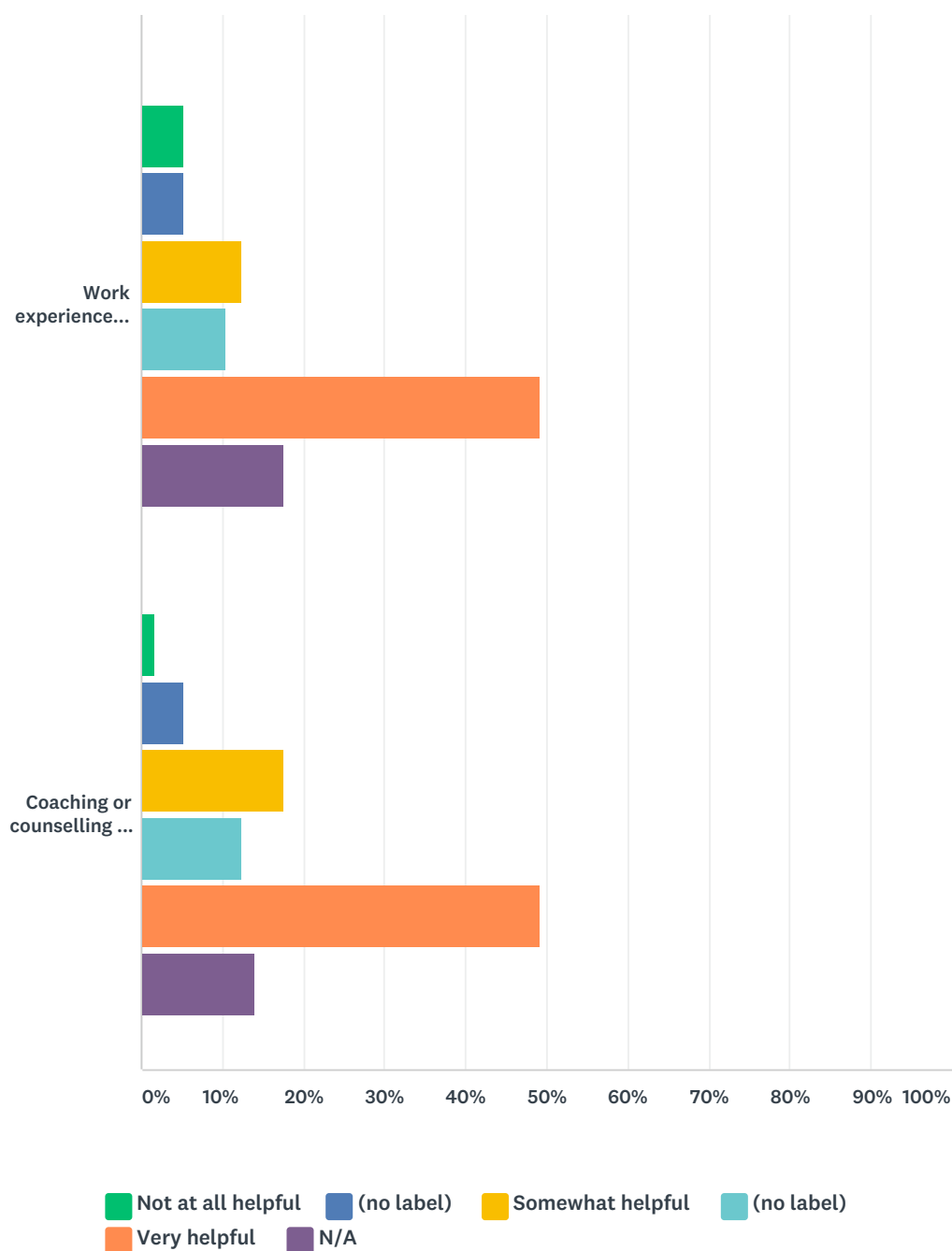
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):	DATE
1	Opportunities to shine, and have my abilities and achievements etc. recognised, have my opinions properly heard.	7/1/2019 6:18 PM
2	Unfortunately the state of Victoria is seriously lacking in the above areas that could improve an autistic persons life	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
3	You lot are sounding very ableist. I do like to socialise in small doses and with people who discuss deeper level topics. I live in a rural area where people prefer to gossip and make up stories about others. Why is that interesting? Why should I be forced to socialise with people who have limited interest in doing anything even remotely intelligent?? I like world movies, documentaries, art house films, theatre-going, reading a book, learning new things, coding, knitting for those experiencing homelessness, etc. You know, intelligent things. How is it a deficit when I don't want to socialise with people who think discussing getting drunk or last night's episode of Home and Away, is intellectual conversation? I have to travel - 1 hour - to the next shire just to find anyone who possesses the same level of intelligence and interests.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
4	possibly performance opportunities	6/27/2019 6:03 PM
5	Havng enuogh money to live on and to be able to afford to go out.	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
6	Opportunity to make a meaningful contribution i.e. volunteering for a cause I am passionate about	6/27/2019 10:07 AM
7	Recognition validation acceptance and understanding from neurological community would be v helpful, this is not a visible condition	6/26/2019 12:49 PM

Q13 For those living with mental illness, what opportunities could help to improve economic participation? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



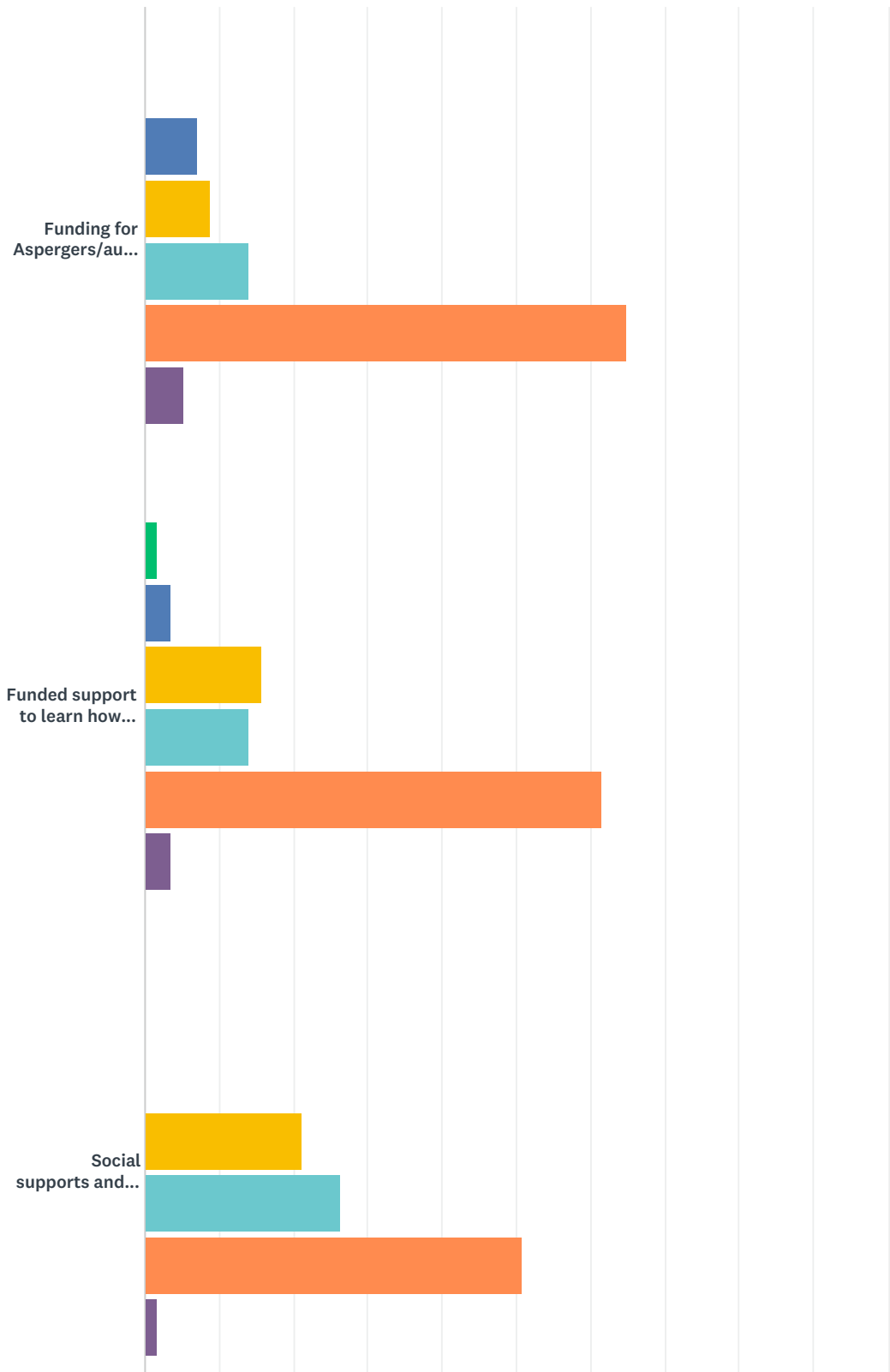
	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Employment supports for Aspergers	1.75% 1	5.26% 3	8.77% 5	7.02% 4	57.89% 33	19.30% 11	57	4.41
Employers who accept and understand my needs	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	7.02% 4	15.79% 9	66.67% 38	8.77% 5	57	4.62
Learning how to manage my social environment at work	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	14.04% 8	15.79% 9	57.89% 33	10.53% 6	57	4.45
Work experience opportunities	5.26% 3	5.26% 3	12.28% 7	10.53% 6	49.12% 28	17.54% 10	57	4.13
Coaching or counselling in understanding the world of work	1.75% 1	5.26% 3	17.54% 10	12.28% 7	49.12% 28	14.04% 8	57	4.18

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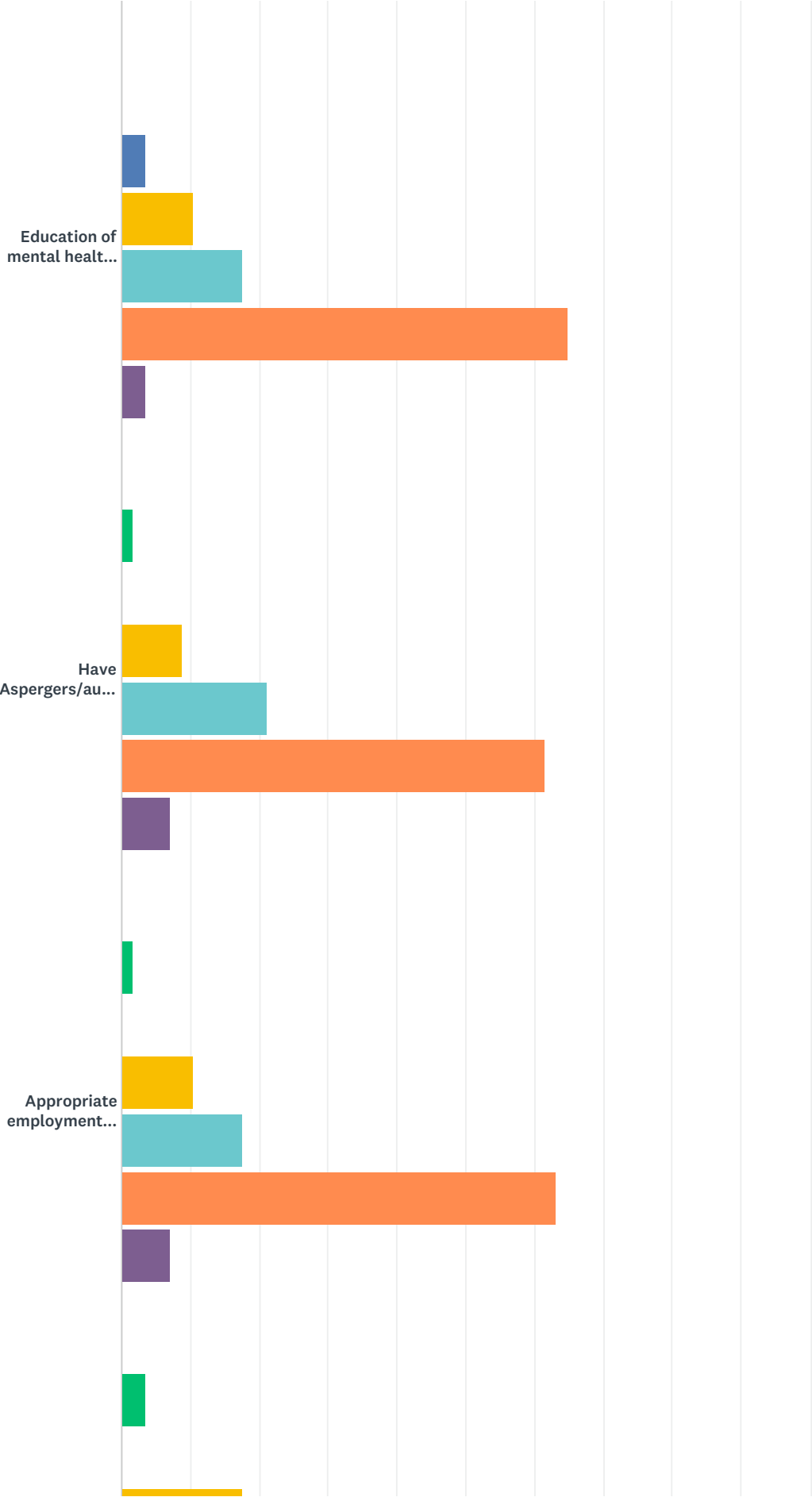
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):	DATE
1	Support for those running their own business or who wish to do so but face difficulties. Also broader view of what kinds of jobs people with Aspergers/Autism can do, rather than assuming limitations based on the label, and re-enforced by the limited assumptions of those such as [REDACTED] (let alone those who think none of us can work with people at all, let alone those who think that we have limited skills all up, even leaving aside the aspect of working with people!)	7/1/2019 6:18 PM
2	I am lucky, able to successfully working from home.	7/1/2019 5:43 AM
3	I have been on various employment opportunities for Autistic people, unfortunately having reported the Victorian government to the United Nations for disability discrimination i now appear to be "Blacklisted" and unable to gain any employment, legal assistance nor finance. Its a disgrace and will be writting to Scott Morrison for some answers.	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
4	I used to be an assistant manager. I have a firm grasp of the 'world of work', thanks. My employment opportunities are limited because I have Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, comorbid. Ehlers Danlos Syndrome is on the list of possible co-conditions for someone who is autistic. The fact remains, ableism still haa strong grip in society. I'm very much capable of working but no one will give me a job because they - wrongly - assume that I can't. Fix ableism.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
5	Academic and Workplace mentorship	6/27/2019 8:39 PM
6	None of this is applicable any longer - I had to leave employment in 2002, on a disability pension for chronic depression, and too many "nervous breakdowns", but if I'd had a diagnosis back then, it might have at least helped me understand why I was the outsider I obviously was, and maybe I might have been able to find out how to manage my behaviour a bit better. Some things I worked out intuitively, but a lot would have been different had I known why I was like I was.	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
7	I am now retired but struggled with work and unemployment all my life	6/27/2019 8:22 AM
8	This is the most important thing for me, I think	6/27/2019 6:35 AM
9	Reform of work assessment away from interviews towards tasks	6/26/2019 2:43 PM

Q14 What can be done better to prevent mental illness in Aspergers/autistic individuals? (Please rank from least preventative to most preventative)

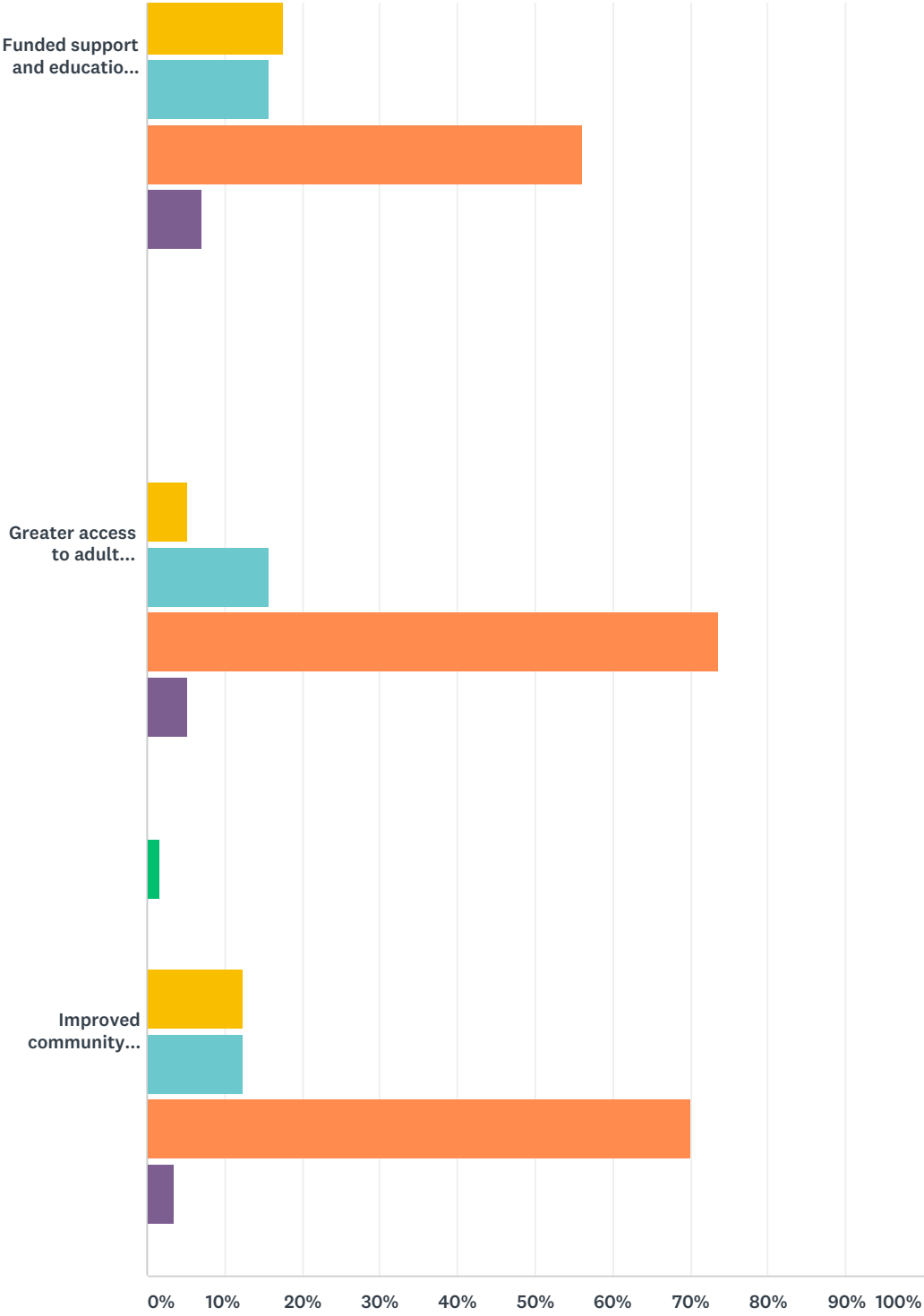
Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



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- Will not help to prevent mental illness
- (no label)
- Will somewhat help to prevent mental illness
- (no label)
- Will strongly help to prevent mental illness
- N/A

	WILL NOT HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	(NO LABEL)	WILL SOMEWHAT HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	(NO LABEL)	WILL STRONGLY HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE

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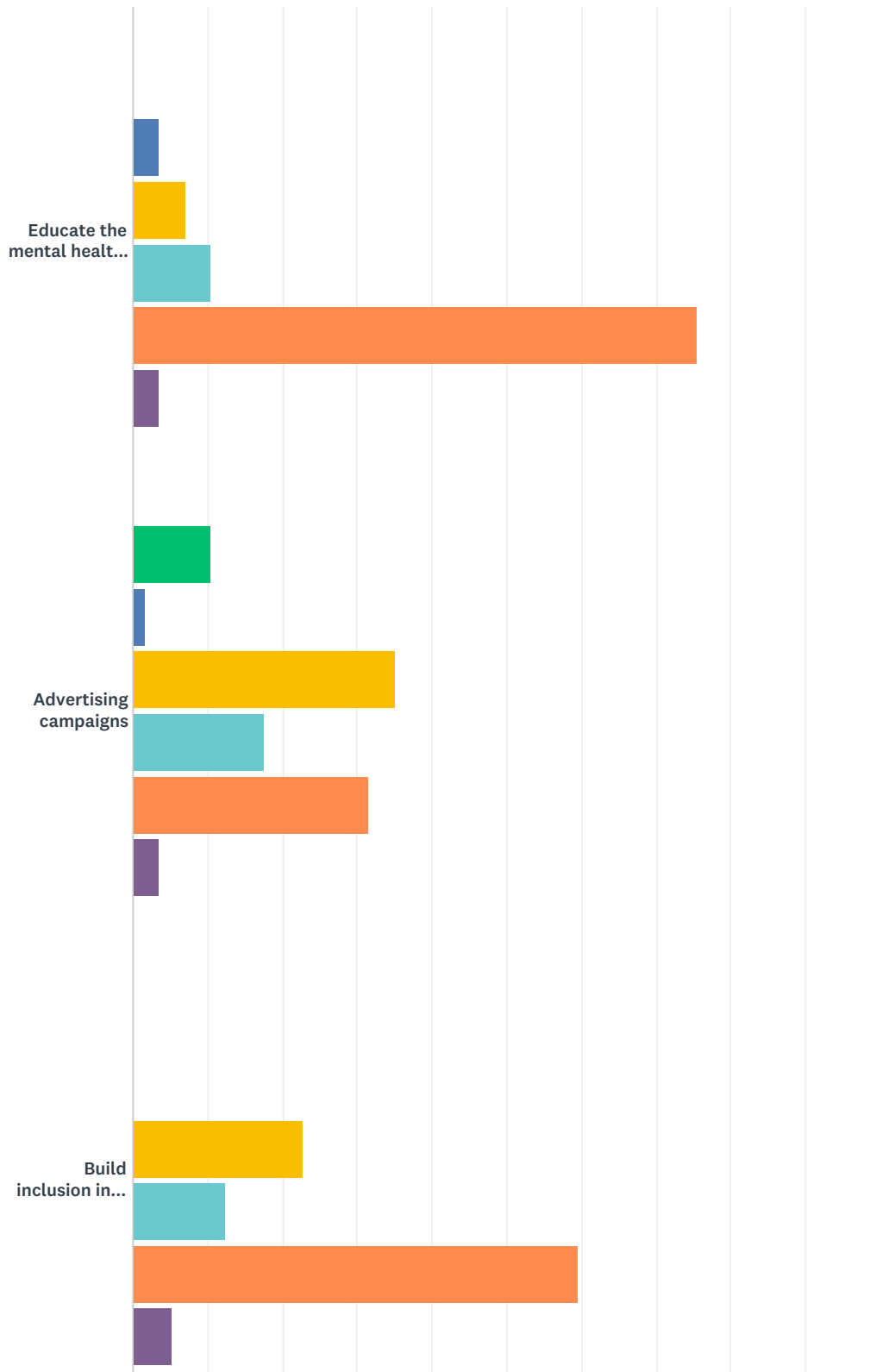
Funding for Aspergers/autism diagnosis for all ages	0.00% 0	7.02% 4	8.77% 5	14.04% 8	64.91% 37	5.26% 3	57	4.44
Funded support to learn how to reduce stress and anxiety	1.75% 1	3.51% 2	15.79% 9	14.04% 8	61.40% 35	3.51% 2	57	4.35
Social supports and educational opportunities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	21.05% 12	26.32% 15	50.88% 29	1.75% 1	57	4.30
Education of mental health services in supporting Aspergers	0.00% 0	3.51% 2	10.53% 6	17.54% 10	64.91% 37	3.51% 2	57	4.49
Have Aspergers/autism specialists available to help in the hospital and medical system to support Aspergers/autistic individuals	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	8.77% 5	21.05% 12	61.40% 35	7.02% 4	57	4.51
Appropriate employment support in the workplace	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	10.53% 6	17.54% 10	63.16% 36	7.02% 4	57	4.51
Funded support and education for families/partners/carers in best way to support Aspergers/autistic individuals	3.51% 2	0.00% 0	17.54% 10	15.79% 9	56.14% 32	7.02% 4	57	4.30
Greater access to adult therapy services (OT, speech, psychiatric)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.26% 3	15.79% 9	73.68% 42	5.26% 3	57	4.72
Improved community understanding of my needs with Aspergers	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	12.28% 7	12.28% 7	70.18% 40	3.51% 2	57	4.55

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Make it safe to disclose: remove from society the idea of special needs, low abilities, mistaken stereotypes (such as low verbal comprehension, low wisdom and insight, inability to understand figures of speech, jokes and sarcasm etc.), remove the current big fascination about the autism spectrum from society (because I find it a big disincentive re disclosure, having people's fascination in my face, let alone having them lecture me about my condition).	7/1/2019 6:18 PM
2	All the above will greatly prevent mental health problems from reaching an uncontrollable level. Having lived in the UK most of my life and helped the UK government establish an Autism Act in parliament as well as having A National Autistic Society greatly improved the lives of individuals on the Autistic spectrum.	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
3	We often end up with PTSD or C-PTSD because of people going the wrong way about what 'supports' they think we need. It usually comes from a place of trying to fix us. Actual support, yes. Fixing is not something we need. People need to listen to us and ask us what we need; not a bunch of NTs telling us what 'supports' they think we should have. Even non verbal autistic people, should not be treated like square pegs. I'm not non verbal but, as a disabilities activist, I often communicate with non verbal autists - via communications tech - who express themselves fluently. It's incorrect to assume that non verbal means no thoughts about anything. Try researching Anne McDonald or contact Rosemary Crossley. Yes, I possess empathy. I've worked in Welfare, and talk to people experiencing homelessness, whilst others walk by with their noses in the air. NTs try to fix us, but can't accept us. Where is their empathy?	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
4	Relationship and Friendship development support	6/27/2019 8:39 PM
5	funding/subsidisation for training/retraining	6/27/2019 6:03 PM
6	Employment and social support most important for me	6/27/2019 6:35 AM
7	More research into autism in females, and funding for adult diagnosis	6/26/2019 6:02 PM
8	Don't understand the question. ASD is a mental illness	6/26/2019 5:07 PM

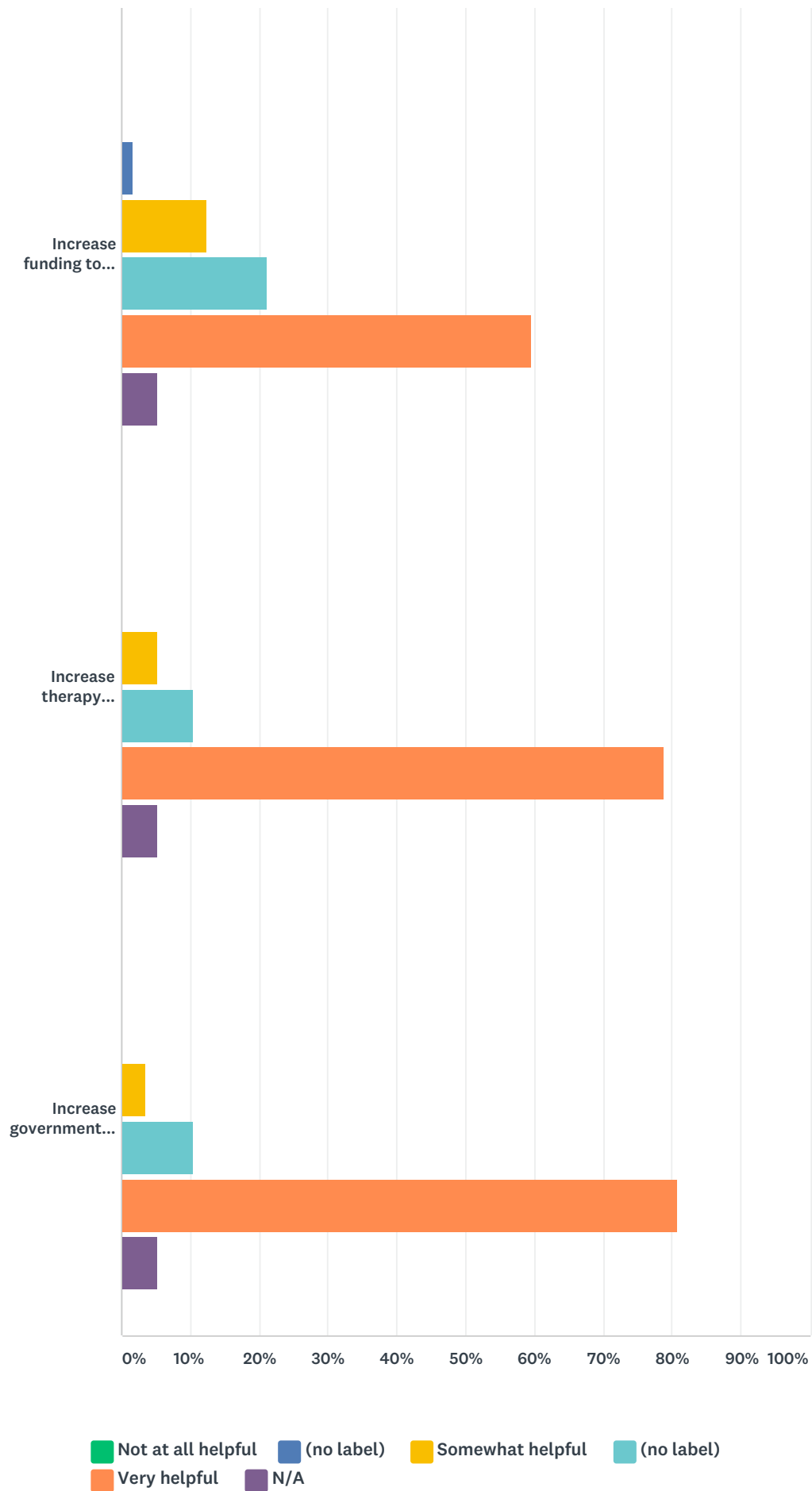
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Q15 What can be done to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



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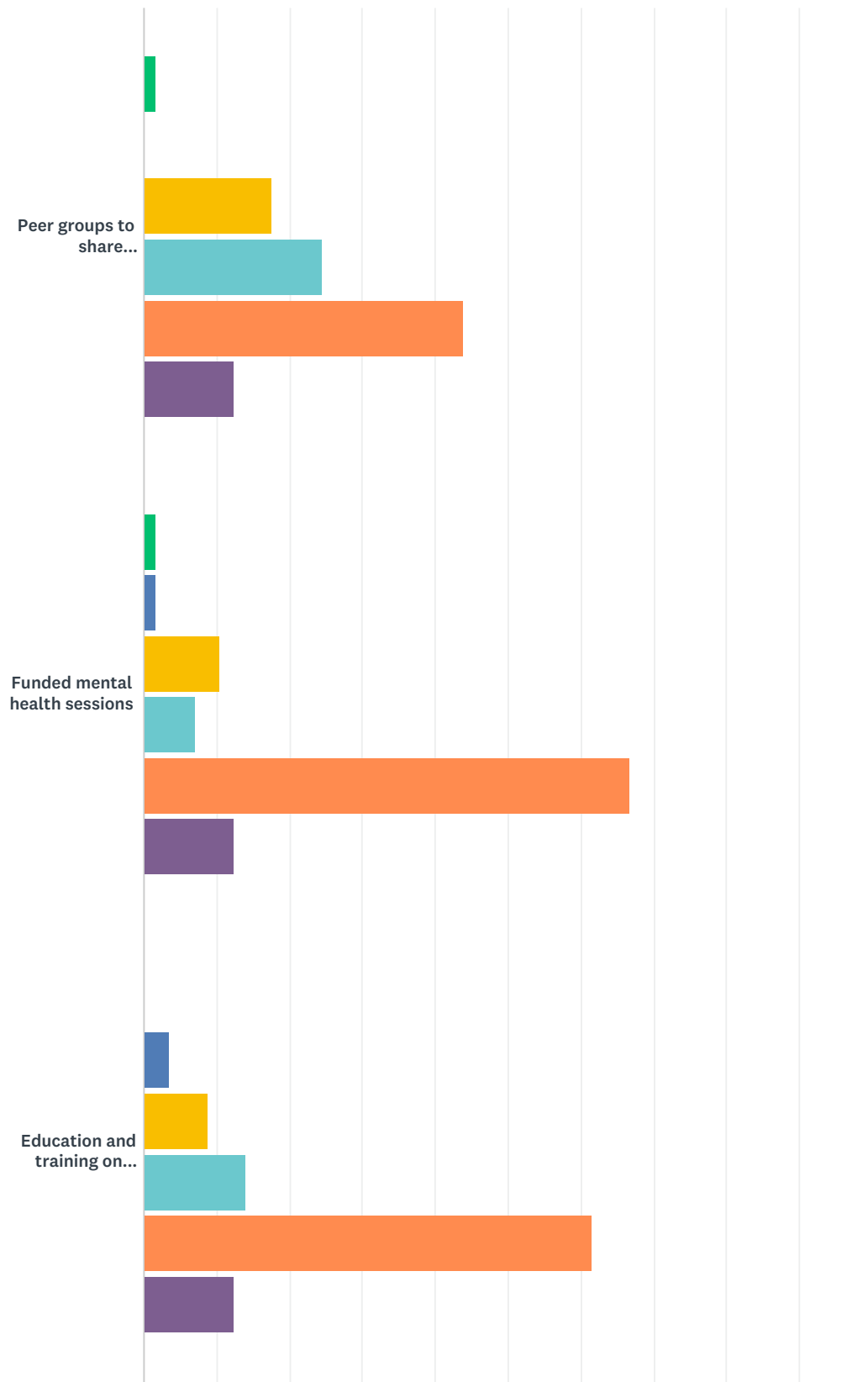
	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Educate the mental health workforce about the strengths and challenges of Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.00% 0	3.51% 2	7.02% 4	10.53% 6	75.44% 43	3.51% 2	57	4.64
Advertising campaigns	10.53% 6	1.75% 1	35.09% 20	17.54% 10	31.58% 18	3.51% 2	57	3.60
Build inclusion into education and employment systems	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.81% 13	12.28% 7	59.65% 34	5.26% 3	57	4.39
Increase funding to health services so they build capacity to support autistics and their families	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	12.28% 7	21.05% 12	59.65% 34	5.26% 3	57	4.46
Increase therapy sessions available to Aspergers/autistic individuals under the Better Access Mental Health Plan	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.26% 3	10.53% 6	78.95% 45	5.26% 3	57	4.78
Increase government funding to support bulk billing and affordable gap payments of medical, therapy and counselling services	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.51% 2	10.53% 6	80.70% 46	5.26% 3	57	4.81

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Bring an Autism Act into the legal system, also advertising the strengths of an autistic as an employee extremely focused, reliable etc	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
2	Inclusion is, unfortunately, more like integration. We are place in an environment where others are told we're (autists) autistic and they'll either avoid you or stare at you whilst gossiping about you behind your back. They'll all seen Rainman or watched Parenthood (TV show) and wait for you to do something autistic. We're not zoo animals to be gawped at. It's not inclusion if we're not accepted.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
3	education of psychiatrists not to try to make one wrong diagnosis to individual with multiple diagnoses.	6/27/2019 12:56 PM
4	I am on the Age Pension. Fortunately I managed to get ONE bulk-billed appt with an expert in Femals Aspergers (after doing all the research myself, and with a supportive GP who has now retired ...), but should I require a fully tested and certified etc diagnosis (which I would if I was trying to access NDIS or other supports etc), it would cost me over \$2000 AT LEAST! Being so old, it scarcely matters any more if I get depressed & die, except that I have a undiagnosed (but way up the spectrum) son in gaol, and he's going to have to live with me when he gets out, and he will need a diagnosis (getting one while he's in gaol is a joke - we've been trying for 3 years, and have given up), and hopefully a job etc, and that's also going to be a nightmare!	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
5	I think disability supported positions with lower expectations could be helpful	6/27/2019 6:35 AM
6	Don't care about the Victorian community; too large to be meaningful to me	6/26/2019 5:07 PM

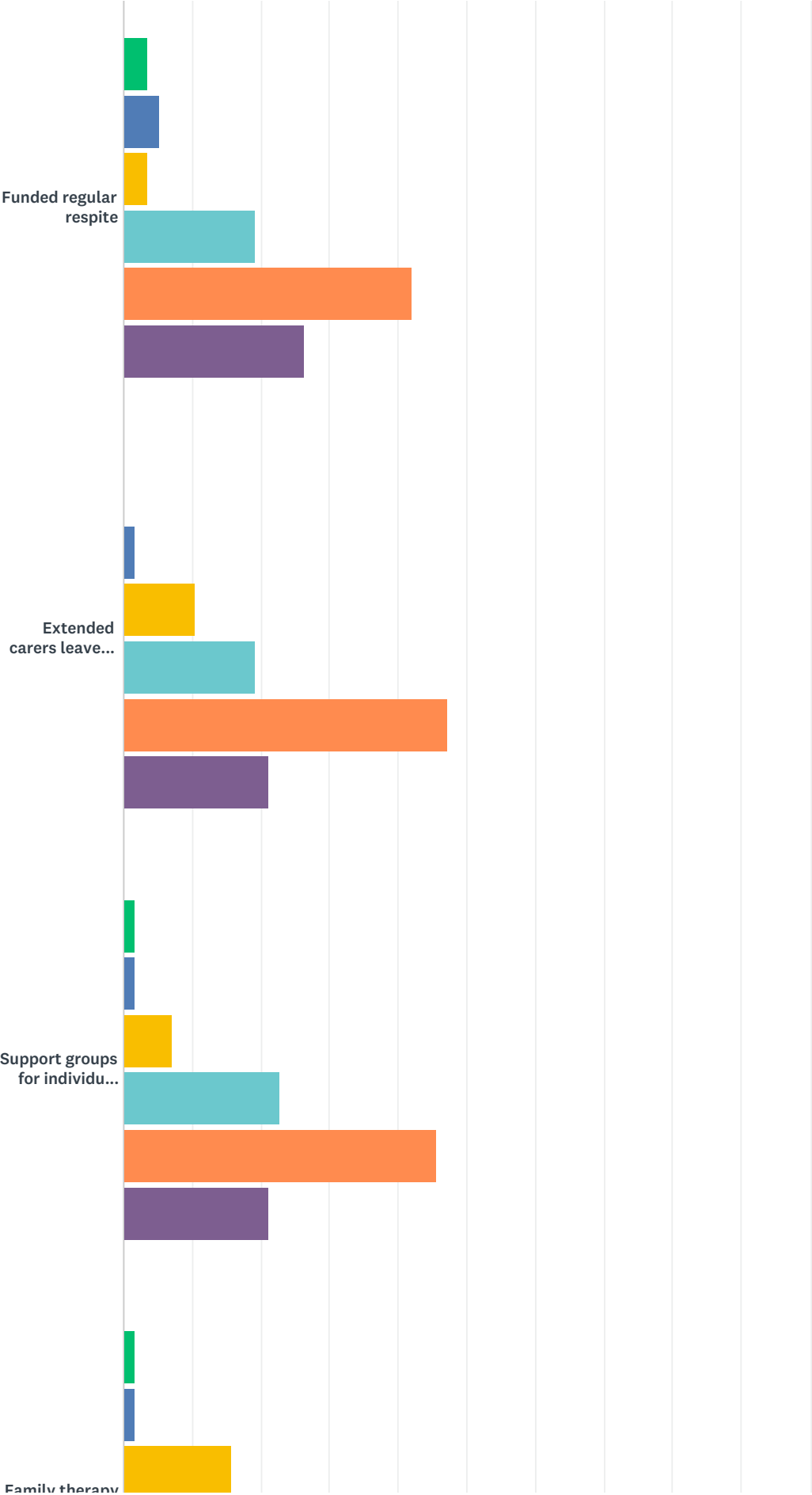
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Q16 What is needed to support carers of someone struggling with mental health and Aspergers? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

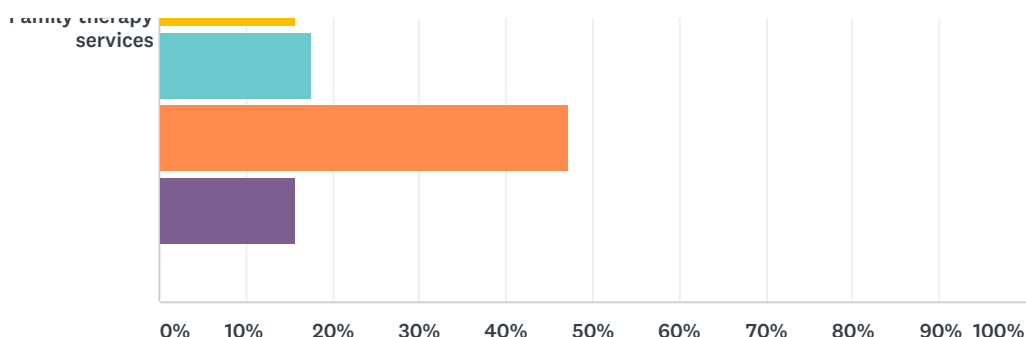
Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



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■ Not at all helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ (no label)

■ Very helpful
 ■ N/A

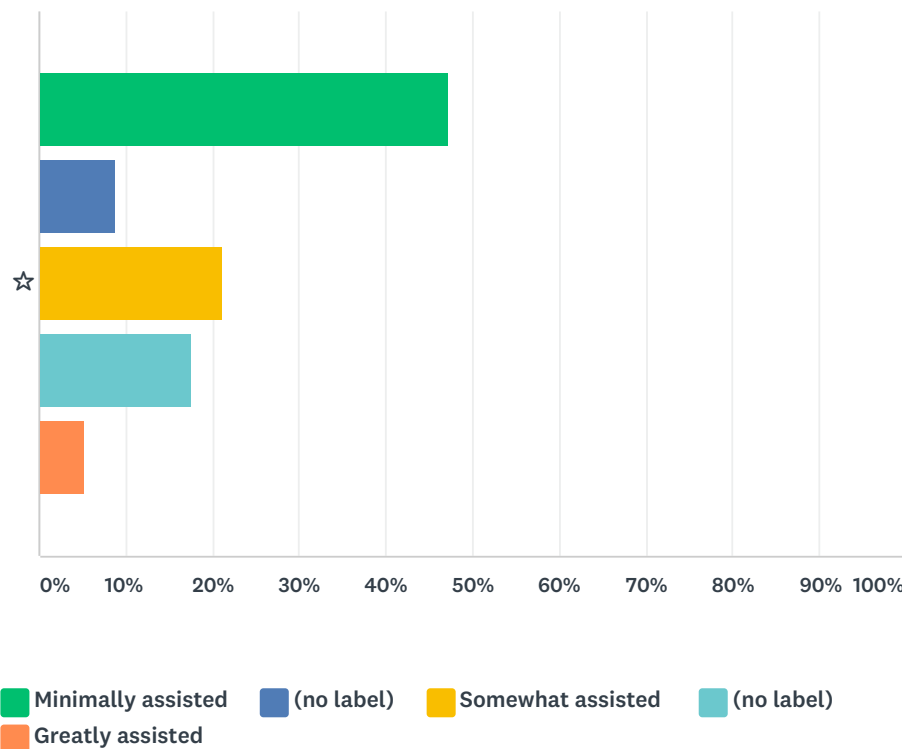
	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Peer groups to share experience and knowledge	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	17.54% 10	24.56% 14	43.86% 25	12.28% 7	57	4.24
Funded mental health sessions	1.75% 1	1.75% 1	10.53% 6	7.02% 4	66.67% 38	12.28% 7	57	4.54
Education and training on specific ways to support Aspergers/autistic individuals with mental health issues	0.00% 0	3.51% 2	8.77% 5	14.04% 8	61.40% 35	12.28% 7	57	4.52
Funded regular respite	3.51% 2	5.26% 3	3.51% 2	19.30% 11	42.11% 24	26.32% 15	57	4.24
Extended carers leave at work	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	10.53% 6	19.30% 11	47.37% 27	21.05% 12	57	4.42
Support groups for individual families	1.75% 1	1.75% 1	7.02% 4	22.81% 13	45.61% 26	21.05% 12	57	4.38
Family therapy services	1.75% 1	1.75% 1	15.79% 9	17.54% 10	47.37% 27	15.79% 9	57	4.27

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I moved to this country in 2012 from the UK with my husband and 2 children, suffered horrendous family violence and not seen my 2 children in 5 years left alone in a very corrupt country. My husband and children still live in Melbourne in the same suburb as me and alienating me. I am very thankful for the NDIS support as the rest of my family still live in the UK. I feel trapped here and will not go back to the UK until i know my children are safe and receive justice for what this government done to me and my children. My son potentially has undiagnosed Autism and is prevented from accessing help due to the Family Court awarding my abusive husband parental responsibility, as i was unrepresented in court. This abuse needs to stop	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
2	Family therapy where the therapist will empathise with the NT and tell that our introversion is ruining family life. My kids are autistic and I'm autistic; Yes, Aspies. In my home we accept Autism. We don't need fixing. I will add, however, that my eldest child (now adult) has schizophrenia. Whilst I accept neurodiversity, I do understand the need for carers to have time out and talk with other carers.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
3	Supports for families of adults with Autism	6/27/2019 8:39 PM
4	My parents are fine just worry a bit	6/27/2019 6:35 AM
5	See answer to question 11	6/26/2019 5:07 PM

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Q17 Has Aspergers Victoria assisted you (or someone you know) with mental health issues?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 11



	MINIMALLY ASSISTED	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT ASSISTED	(NO LABEL)	GREATLY ASSISTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	47.37%	8.77%	21.05%	17.54%	5.26%	57	2.25
	27	5	12	10	3		

#	HOW (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I chose the middle option because not applicable to me so far! (Only just started attending!)	7/1/2019 6:18 PM
2	Since moving here, confidence to approach employment and to become a functioning part of society have drastically increased.	7/1/2019 10:53 AM
3	Via social media feed (FB) - great links to more info. Shared experience, not feeling so alone.	7/1/2019 5:43 AM
4	I don't know anyone who's accessed this but there isn't an N/A option	6/30/2019 8:24 PM
5	Provides connections to like minded individuals on the Autistic Spectrum, having similar challenges and can work through them together.	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
6	N/A	6/29/2019 3:08 PM
7	No one has ever told me about them	6/29/2019 9:50 AM
8	No	6/29/2019 8:25 AM
9	With information. I found that the person I spoke to, was not supportive of neurodiversity, and sounded condescending.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
10	Going to the social groups has lowered my anxiety and depression	6/28/2019 3:27 PM
11	Running social support groups, meetings and group activities. Sharing helpful posts on Facebook.	6/28/2019 6:06 AM
12	Only because I haven't sought it out	6/27/2019 6:03 PM

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13	support group	6/27/2019 2:55 PM
14	Being able to talk about problems, social support	6/27/2019 12:56 PM
15	Haven't use Aspergers Victoria	6/27/2019 12:40 PM
16	By running the Facebook page & keeping me informed of what might be available for when the son gets out of gaol (which is not much in a good week, and bugger-all for the rest), but at least I have somewhere else to go to knock my head on another brick wall. Even though I'm getting a bit tired of doing that, after 50++ years of it, with no result ...	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
17	Attending various presentations and accessing the womens support group	6/27/2019 10:07 AM
18	meeting other aspies recently	6/27/2019 8:22 AM
19	Providing opportunities for social interaction in a non-threatening and supportive environment.	6/26/2019 8:46 PM
20	I have had minimal contact with Asperger's Victoria.	6/26/2019 7:21 PM
21	Not at all yet as only just stumbled onto the site.	6/26/2019 5:32 PM
22	Used to attend support meetings until they shifted the venue further away	6/26/2019 5:07 PM
23	I have only just found Asperger's Victoria recently. Also only diagnosed in April, this year.	6/26/2019 4:08 PM
24	Not really, but I have attended 2 AV events and felt included, which was nice.	6/26/2019 3:02 PM
25	Ongoing support group, education regarding employment challenges and strengths	6/26/2019 2:43 PM
26	Made me feel less like an outcast and more like part of the group.	6/26/2019 2:39 PM
27	Not much available for adult women	6/26/2019 12:49 PM
28	Suggested a psych for myself	6/26/2019 11:07 AM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q18 What else would you suggest for the Commission?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 11

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	<p>*Awareness that ADHD in people with ASD sometimes requires much smaller doses of meds, and that a dose that's too high for us can just "hype us up" again. *Education for us as to how and when to disclose ASD (to people who aren't friends, or aren't close friends)... and in my case a big issue as well as clarifying in what circumstances it is worthwhile to disclose, in the face of the various pros and cons, there is also how to briefly explain my capabilities in the face of the myths and overgeneralisations and deficit mentality about even "Aspergers" (if it's possible to explain briefly), and deal with the potential fallout from disclosure (re people's unhelpful and unwanted responses and assumptions). A few words of explanation about my condition (Aspergers) wouldn't always be enough to fend off the potential negative consequences, or if there are a few words that would be enough, I can't figure out what those few words would be! *In regard to allowing the voices of autistic adults to be heard: for some reason, even autistic parents of autistic children tend not to have their articles selected for publication or be selected as speakers, even on the topic of autistic children (whereas NT parents are often sought after!) *In regard to how many mental health professionals refuse to see ASD clients: have the Australian Psychology Society website list separate categories for different levels of expertise re ASD (since currently ASD expertise according to the website only requires completion of a weekend workshop with Tony Attwood – who may no longer be the best trainer available anyway – and practitioners' ASD-specific qualifications are not listed on the website). Have some designated ASD experts screen people diagnosed with ASD to see whether they have a high need for an ASD-specific professional or whether they are "safe" to shop for who they want to see, even if not an expert in ASD (and many of us would be very "safe"!)</p> <p>That way, practitioners without expertise in ASD can be assured whether the client wanting to see them is "safe", i.e. no more likely to be harmed by their practice than a non-autistic client would, rather than there being this fear on behalf of practitioners in regard to all people with ASD. Or require practitioners to be trained to apply such screening themselves. *In regard to communities that support young people with ASD, they should be trained in autism-positive awareness, and being aware of low expectations and "othering", and the pitfalls of seeing non-autistics as universally more "capable" than ASD people.... I've had one woman in a leading position in a key autism-supporting org make some very ableist remarks to me, not specifically about her impression of me but in regard to "Aspergers" in general, and I thought, that's fine for me, I know what's what, but I thought that's a worry what messages she and others could be giving to young aspies (even young *adult* aspies), i.e. the message they could be getting, leading them to believe in the lower expectations of them!</p>	7/1/2019 6:18 PM
2	Keep up the upstanding support to the ASD populace. Providing the right support is crucial and without it, unemployment ultimately increases. Thank you.	7/1/2019 10:53 AM
3	It's not ALL about us being a burden to society. We have a lot to offer Victoria and the wider world. Sometimes your kryptonite is also your greatest superpower... if you are just given a chance.	7/1/2019 5:43 AM
4	Not sure	6/30/2019 8:24 PM
5	Look into bringing out an Autism Act similar to the UK. People with Autism carrying an alert card, similar to allergy alert, so if the autistic person were to engage with police, ambulance etc the emergency services are aware that the person has autism and respond appropriately. An Central Autistic Society (Charitable Organisation/government funded). Linking all autistic supports, where a diagnosis can be carried out, social groups, where to obtain sensory items, sensory rooms, NDIS supported providers etc throughout Australia. Like the National Autistic Society in the UK.	6/30/2019 2:56 PM
6	Not sure	6/30/2019 8:14 AM
7	Invest in a TAC style advertising campaign educating Victorians challenges Aspergers Syndrome people have in relation to discrimination and how it affects their mental health and leads to long term issues.	6/29/2019 3:08 PM
8	Telephone help lines are not accessible to many autistic people. We need access to face to face counseling (beyond 10 Medicare sessions) for ongoing issues navigating the NT world, and for crisis intervention when in meltdown/overwhelmed/suicidal. Neither are available to me.	6/29/2019 10:11 AM

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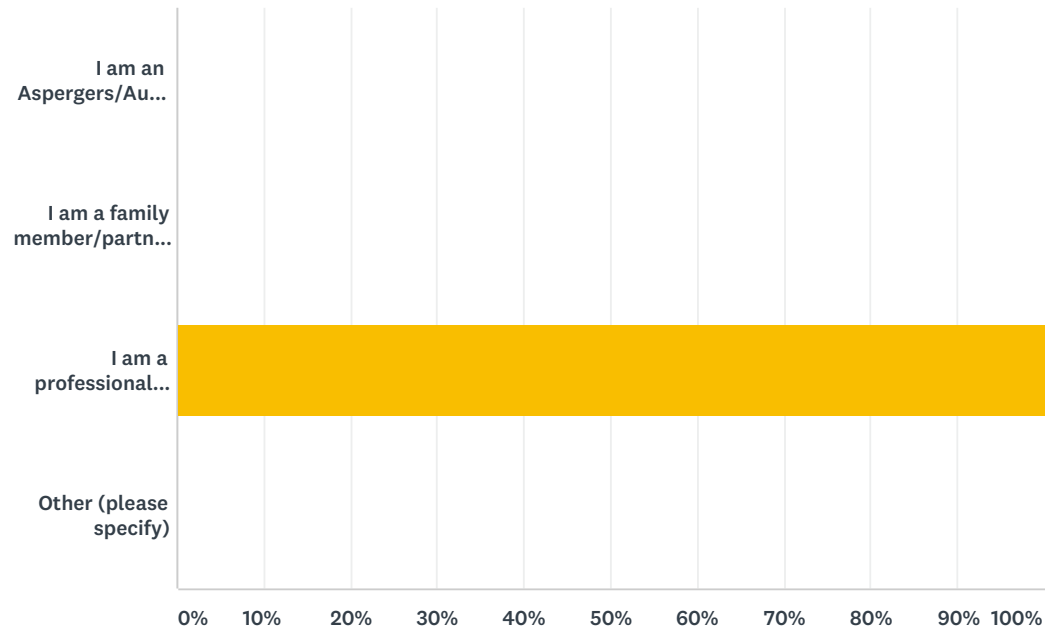
9	My biggest struggle is working enough to support myself and pay for therapy to help me be able to work more while trying to not crumble under the stress	6/29/2019 9:50 AM
10	Better understanding and tolerance in the community and especially the workplace (I have been bullied a lot) would have made the biggest difference to me	6/29/2019 8:51 AM
11	I've got been able to access the public hospital system, Case Management through eastern health or PARC because I have other supports (my Psychiatrist). If I'm suicidal I'm suicidal and should be supported regardless of variables. I've been made to feel that my suffering doesn't matter because I have the means to fund a private medical specialist. Everyone should be helped but I feel like I'm constantly being hand balled from one person to another with no one taking accountability	6/29/2019 8:25 AM
12	Code of conduct or recommendations for businesses, such as banks, power companies, water companies etc. for their dealing with Autistic people.	6/29/2019 6:32 AM
13	Ask autistic people. A bunch of NTs who've read about autism in a couple of books is not going to give any insights into our needs or supports. We are not another species.	6/29/2019 6:06 AM
14	More flexibility in classes	6/28/2019 3:27 PM
15	I highly suggest that the DSM05 is ditched and that the DSM03 is reinstated and cemented with the addition of PCD (passive compulsive disorder)	6/28/2019 1:54 PM
16	Increased funding and support for those living with a mental health condition including education programs and courses, peer support workers and more employment opportunities.	6/28/2019 6:06 AM
17	Autism, regardless of which Australian State or Territory the diagnosis was made, needs to be recognised across the board. eg. A diagnosis made in NSW should be valid in Western Australia. Why is it that a Psychologist and a Psychiatrist have to agree on an ASD diagnosis in Western Australia, whereas a psychologist with a PhD in NSW alone can make a diagnosis? That needs to be supported. Also, Autistic adults need assistance when they are older. Due to social isolation, they are vulnerable and more likely to be without family support, children and can often end up homeless due to not being able to reach out for support. Autistic people are often forgotten. ABA needs to be banned. Autistic people don't grow out of Autism. Funding needs to be increased to get Autistic people in to stable housing, teaching or managing budgets, and relationship/friendship counselling is crucial. Autistic people have blind spots when it comes to relationships and are often vulnerable to manipulation.	6/27/2019 8:39 PM
18	more activities to meet people on the spectrum	6/27/2019 7:54 PM
19	N/A	6/27/2019 6:24 PM
20	nil	6/27/2019 6:03 PM
21	Every autistic or Asperger's person is different and our needs should be considered for funding on a case by case basis, especially past 18.	6/27/2019 5:43 PM
22	Most important - raise awareness of autistic mental health issues and strengths with employers. And most of all - more financial support/bulk billing to help with accessing professional mental health support.	6/27/2019 5:43 PM
23	Please take all the comments seriously!	6/27/2019 4:13 PM
24	A Focus on tailored support for high functioning individuals with Autism	6/27/2019 2:55 PM
25	Please look into Mental Health in schools and other educational programs	6/27/2019 2:12 PM
26	Finally supporting those of us in the community who have been left forgotten, berated, abused, shelved and taken advantage of for so long.	6/27/2019 1:31 PM
27	Psychiatrists need to be more respectful of other people making prior diagnoses - they don't respect psychologist's assessments especially re: PTSD or Autistic spectrum.	6/27/2019 12:56 PM
28	N/A	6/27/2019 12:40 PM
29	Somehow get this wretched government to see that putting a few \$\$ into services for real ordinary people, instead of taking from the poor to give to the rich, might make the place slightly more pleasant to live in. But then, that's not their aim (I can't say philosophy - they don't know about big words), and anyway, if we all die soon, then we'll all get "saved" sooner, and they'll also save more money to give to their rich mates by not having to pay pensions and NDIS. Good luck with that!	6/27/2019 10:49 AM
30	Recognise the benefit of non-verbal psychotherapy for individuals on the spectrum i.e. sandplay therapy	6/27/2019 10:07 AM

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31	Autism and aspergers seem to cover a very broad range of neuro diverse individuals. I am recently self diagnosed.	6/27/2019 8:22 AM
32	To reiterate: govt funded jobs for ppl w disabilities, social skills training. Getting a job very low % according to research.	6/27/2019 6:35 AM
33	A broad outlook across all issues	6/27/2019 6:02 AM
34	Please make sure that this doesnt all go into a report that gathers dust in the Parliamentary Library	6/26/2019 9:00 PM
35	Access to professionals who understand the specifics of Aspergers.	6/26/2019 8:48 PM
36	Provide further opportunities to improve social interaction in a non-threatening and supportive environment.	6/26/2019 8:46 PM
37	Nothing else to suggest.	6/26/2019 7:40 PM
38	A means for me to interact with the commission.	6/26/2019 7:21 PM
39	More sessions under BAMH for ASD diagnoses	6/26/2019 7:18 PM
40	Nothing	6/26/2019 6:31 PM
41	More funding and research into autism in females	6/26/2019 6:02 PM
42	More affordable housing	6/26/2019 5:55 PM
43	Establish employment opportunities in various speciality areas that would take advantage of aspirin traits: Such as Apprenticeships (all ages) in technical trades i.e. electrotechnology, engineering. Also areas in academia as staff, and have a simple process to qualify that is not interview (stress based) but rather short period based auditions (1-4 weeks workshops & training).	6/26/2019 5:51 PM
44	Policies need to be in place to prevent discrimination, bullying and exploiting weaknesses in the workplace. Specific education for teachers and aids to break down stereotypes and create understanding.	6/26/2019 5:32 PM
45	Nothing	6/26/2019 5:07 PM
46	Provision of Day Centres/ drop in centres for adult autistic people with normal IQ, but who have difficulty finding work. We need structure & meaning , somewhere to go & something to do every day. At the moment we are aimless.	6/26/2019 4:19 PM
47	Increase awareness of how girls & women present with Asperger's. My mental health may not have become as bad as it is if I had been diagnosed earlier in my life.	6/26/2019 4:08 PM
48	what about all those that are nowhere help	6/26/2019 3:26 PM
49	More research into treatments for depression and anxiety for people with aspergers	6/26/2019 3:17 PM
50	increased awareness of asperger's in females for all health professionals. I was undiagnosed until age 27 and the numerous psychologists I saw for years before then blamed me for being "too task orientated". They said they can't help me unless I become more person orientated because in their opinion, that's what I should be like. They blamed me for my continuing depression and anxiety, without thinking that maybe they were overlooking something. I now no-longer have depression, and after years of being told that I may have it for life and that it was my fault. Increased awareness and a non-judgemental outlook from health professionals would be nice.	6/26/2019 3:02 PM
51	More training of gps	6/26/2019 2:50 PM
52	nothing	6/26/2019 2:43 PM
53	Mandatory training for aids in all schools to better understand the condition.	6/26/2019 2:39 PM
54	I think most of the issues have been covered. Being a female on the autistic spectrum it's harmful that people lack awareness of how ASD presents in women, and it's lead to many women being diagnosed late. I struggle daily with lots of issues that people don't understand because they don't see me as autistic.	6/26/2019 2:27 PM
55	Focus on Aspergers strengths as well as deficits	6/26/2019 12:49 PM
56	No idea	6/26/2019 11:41 AM
57	Greater awareness and education relating to Aspergers in schools, cheaper diagnosis options	6/26/2019 11:07 AM

Q1 What is your relationship with Aspergers/Autism?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



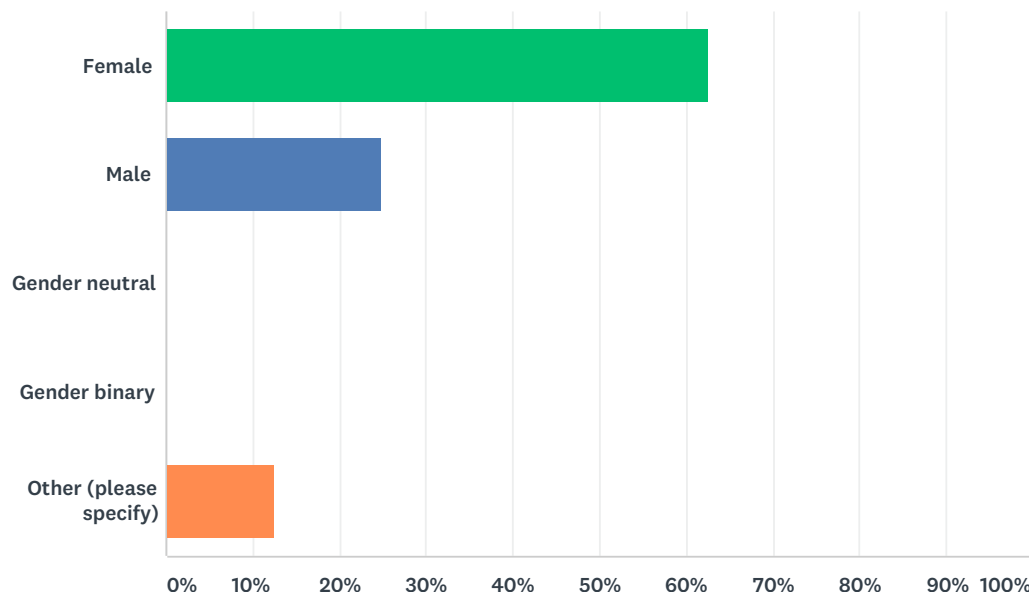
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
I am an Aspergers/Autistic individual.		0.00%	0
I am a family member/partner/carers of someone who identifies as an Aspergers/Autistic individual.		0.00%	0
I am a professional supporting Aspergers/Autistic individuals.		100.00%	8
Other (please specify)		0.00%	0
TOTAL			8

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q2 What is your gender identity? OR If you are the member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, what is their gender identity?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



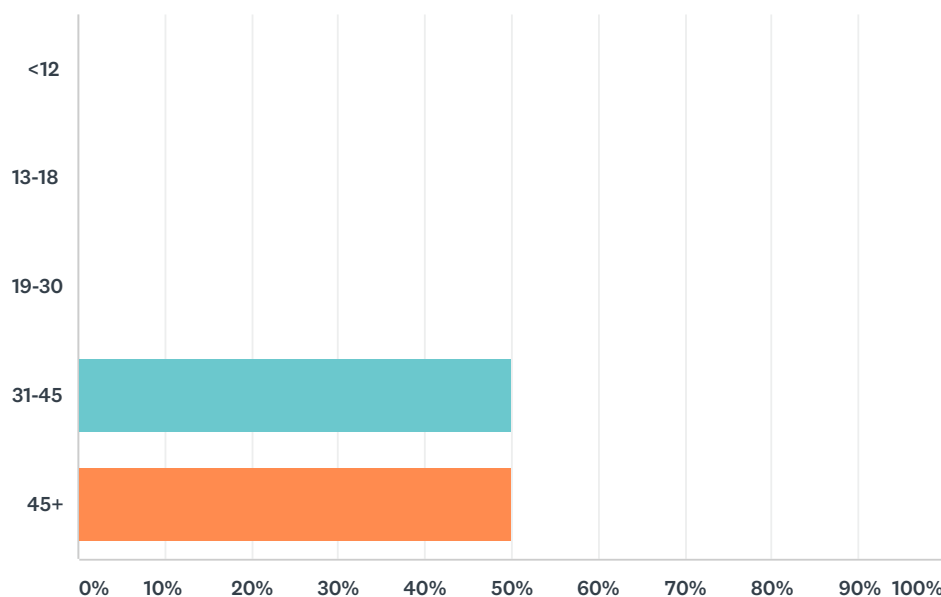
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	62.50%	5
Male	25.00%	2
Gender neutral	0.00%	0
Gender binary	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	12.50%	1
TOTAL		8

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I am my husband and children are	6/26/2019 4:15 PM

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Q3 What is your age? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, what is their age?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

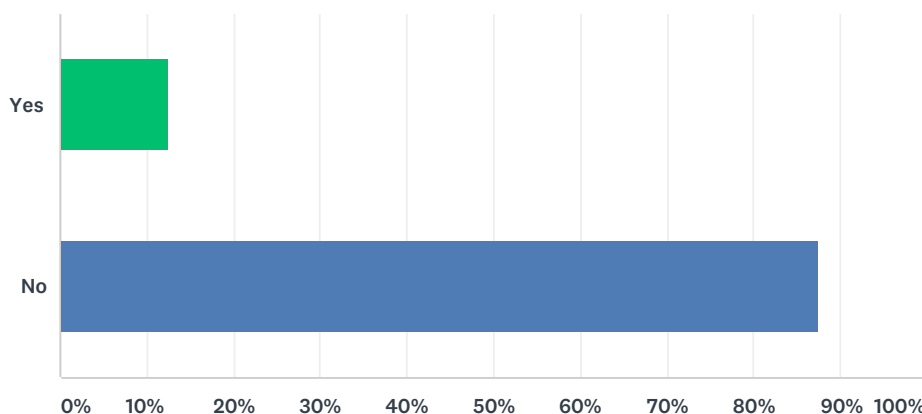


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
<12	0.00%	0
13-18	0.00%	0
19-30	0.00%	0
31-45	50.00%	4
45+	50.00%	4
TOTAL		8

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Q4 Have you applied for NDIS funding? OR If you are the member/partner/carers of an Aspergers/autistic individual, have you applied for NDIS funding on their behalf?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

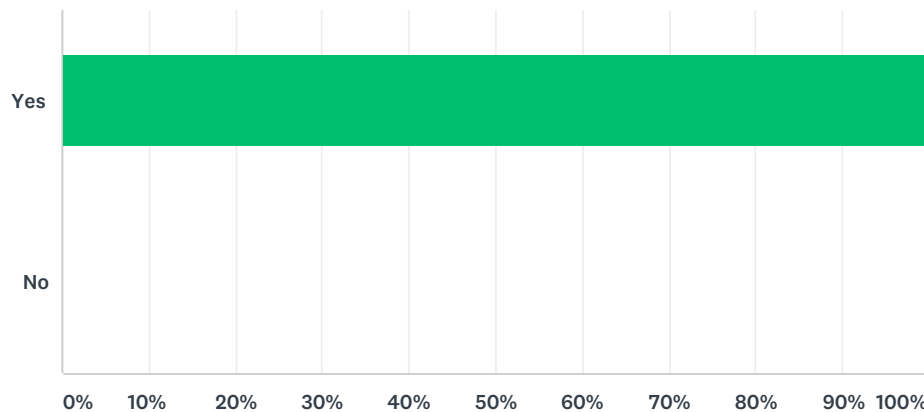


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	12.50%	1
No	87.50%	7
TOTAL		8

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Q5 Have you received your NDIS funding? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, have you received NDIS funding on their behalf?

Answered: 1 Skipped: 7

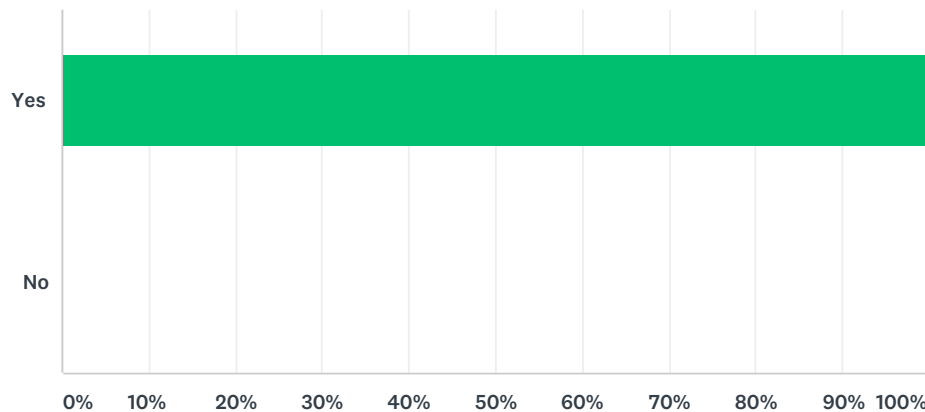


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	1
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		1

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Q6 Is your NDIS funding sufficient and appropriate for your needs? OR If you are the family member/partner/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, do you believe the funding is sufficient and appropriate for their needs?

Answered: 1 Skipped: 7

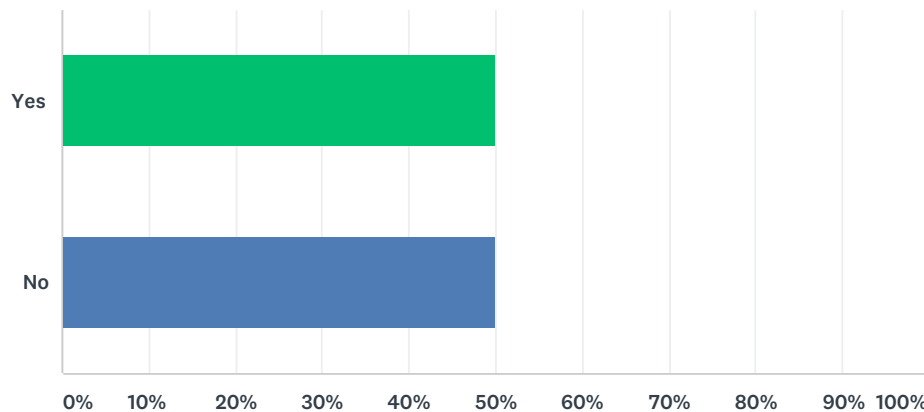


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	1
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		1

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q7 Have you accessed mental health services in Victoria?(Mental Health services can include accessing a GP, hospital services, psychologists, psychiatrists, peer support groups)

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

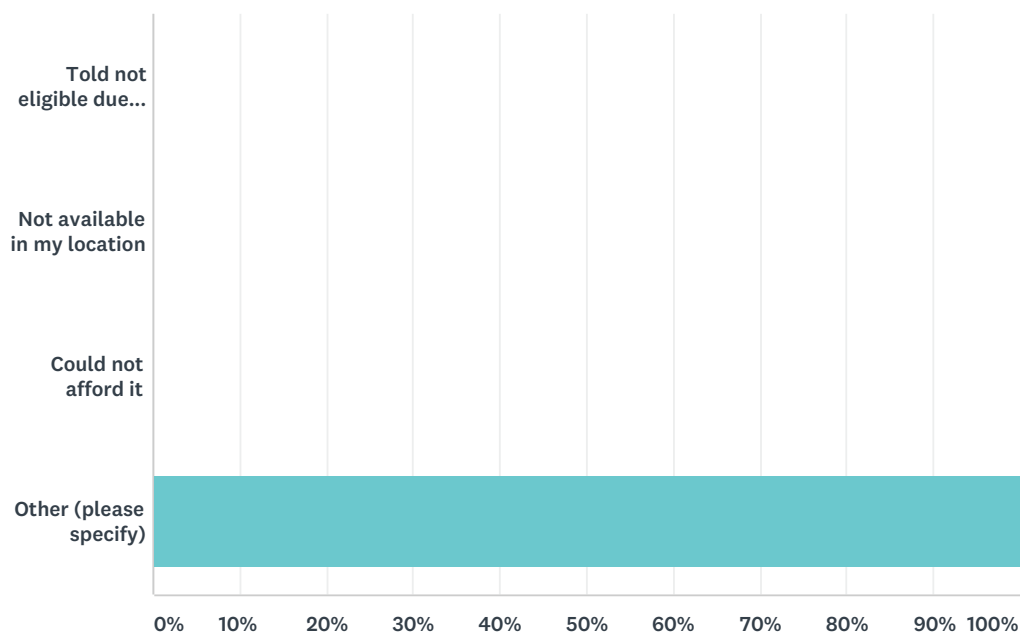


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	50.00%	4
No	50.00%	4
TOTAL		8

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Q8 If you could NOT access the service, what was the reason?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5

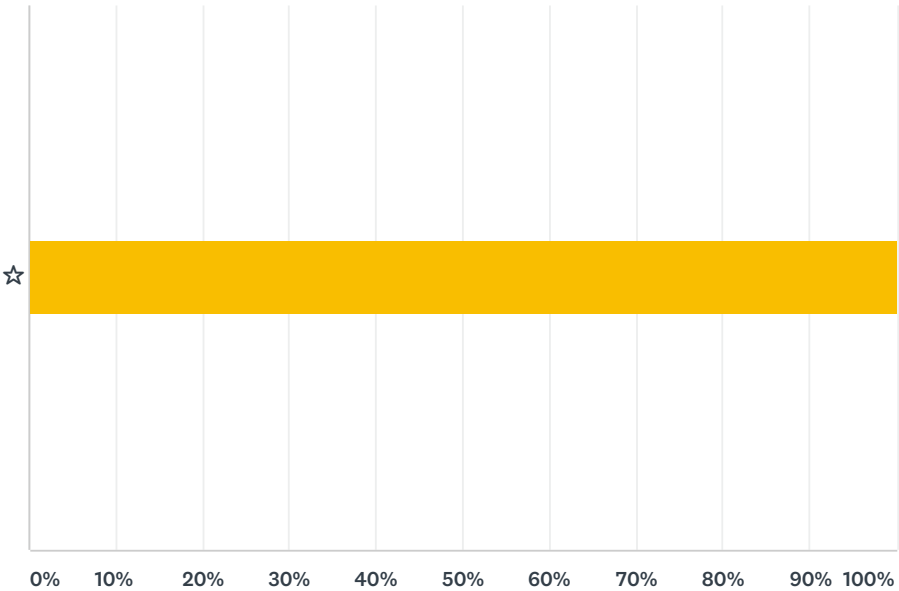


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Told not eligible due to Aspergers diagnosis	0.00%	0
Not available in my location	0.00%	0
Could not afford it	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	100.00%	3
TOTAL		3

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Have never looked into it for myself, would know where to start	6/30/2019 8:42 AM
2	not required for me	6/27/2019 7:00 AM
3	N/A professional working with some with Aspergers	6/26/2019 8:39 PM

Q9 If you have accessed the mental health services, to what extent did the system understand your needs?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 6



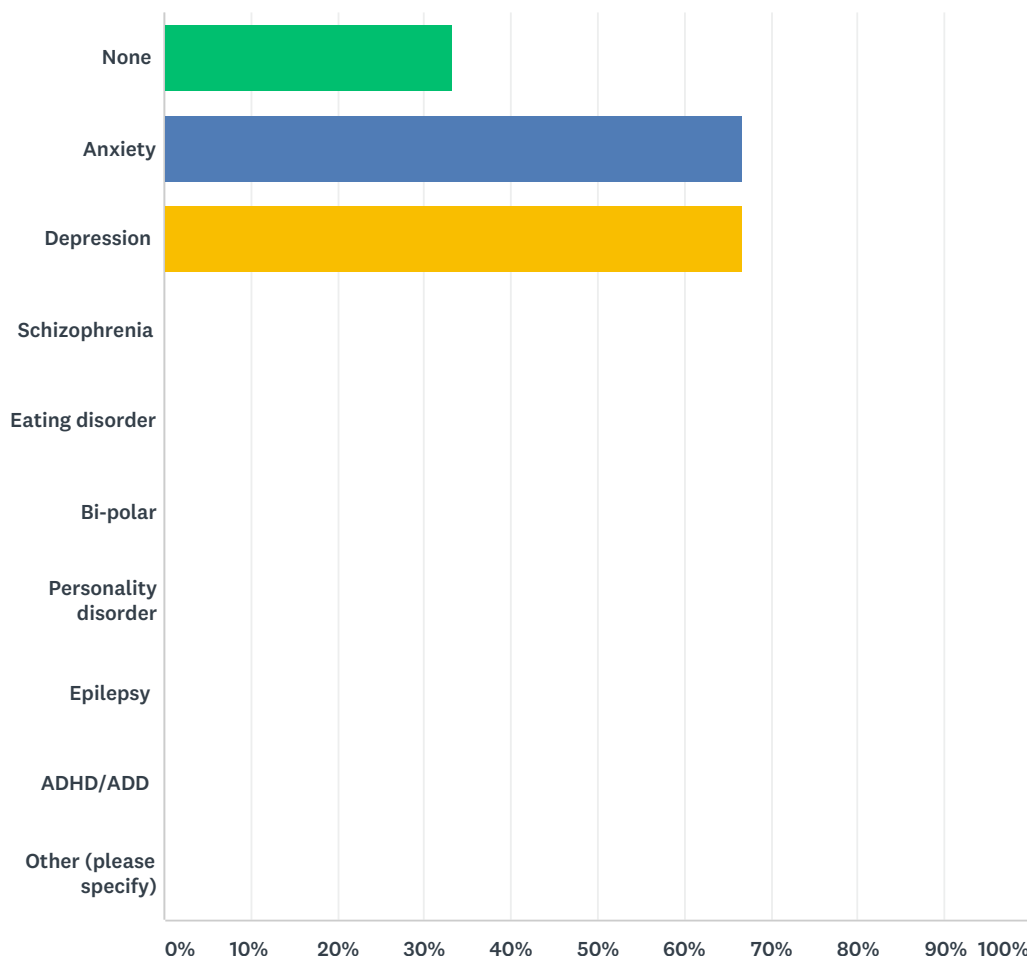
Did not understand my needs (no label)
Somewhat understood my needs (no label) Understood all my needs

	DID NOT UNDERSTAND MY NEEDS	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT UNDERSTOOD MY NEEDS	(NO LABEL)	UNDERSTOOD ALL MY NEEDS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2	3.00

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q10 As an Aspergers/austistic individual, which mental health condition(s) have you accessed support for OR if you are a family member/parent/carer representing an Aspergers/autistic individual, which mental health condition(s) have you accessed support for? (Please check any that apply)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	33.33%	1
Anxiety	66.67%	2
Depression	66.67%	2
Schizophrenia	0.00%	0
Eating disorder	0.00%	0
Bi-polar	0.00%	0
Personality disorder	0.00%	0
Epilepsy	0.00%	0

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ADHD/ADD	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 3		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

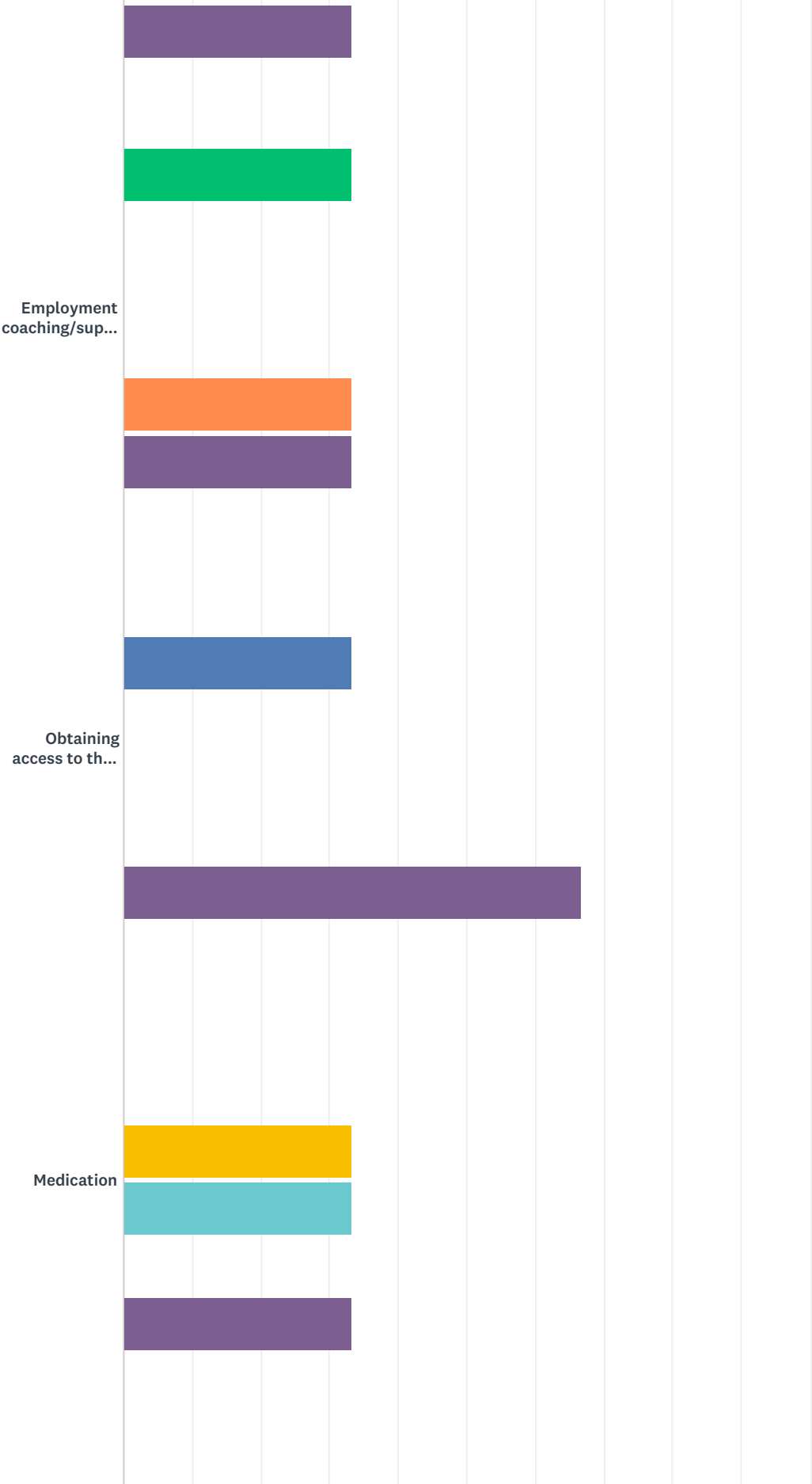
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Q11 As an Aspergers/autistic individual, which supports have been helpful to improve your mental health outcomes OR if you are a family member/parent/carer of an Aspergers/autistic individual, which supports have been helpful to improve mental health outcomes? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

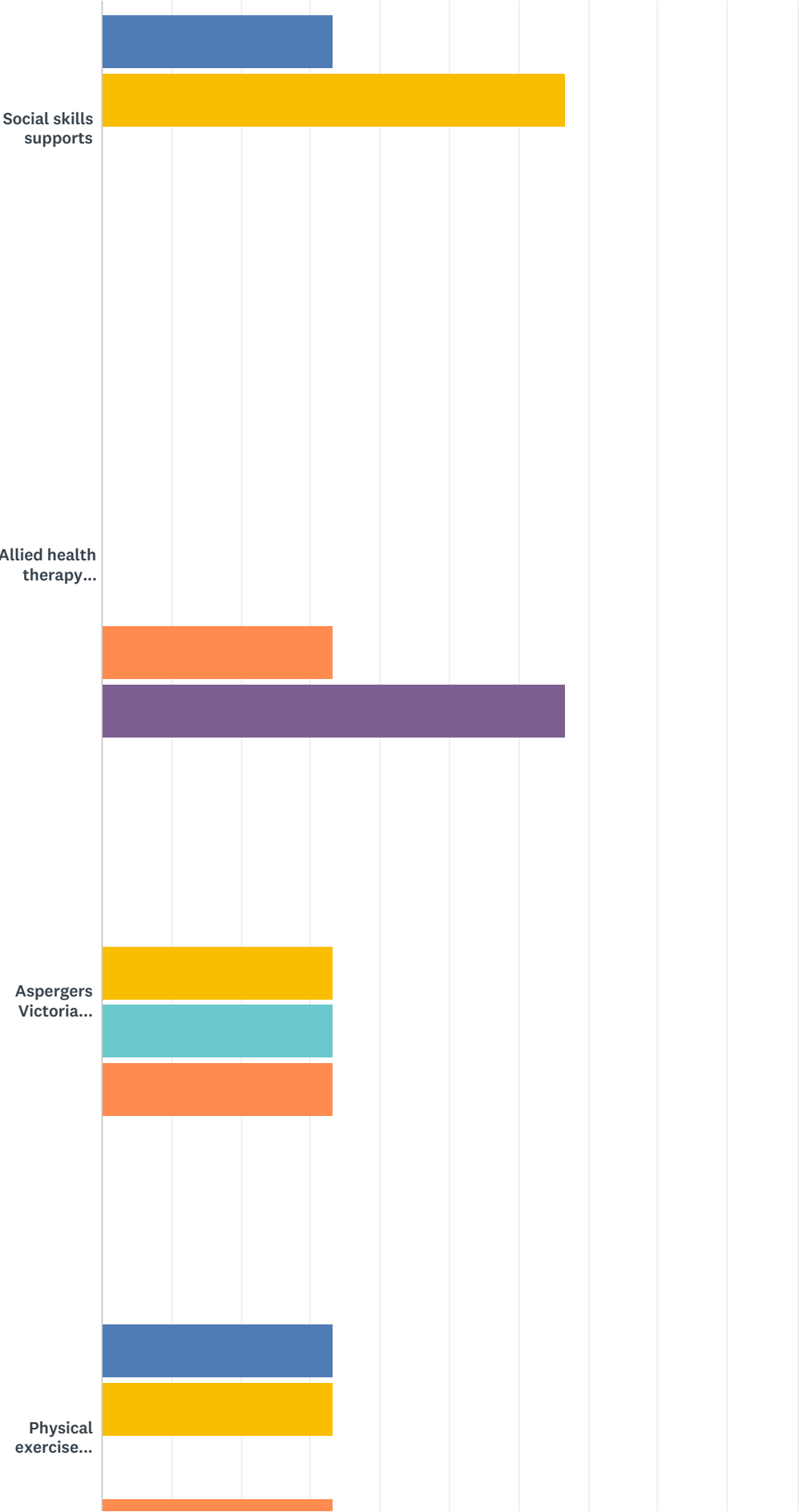
Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



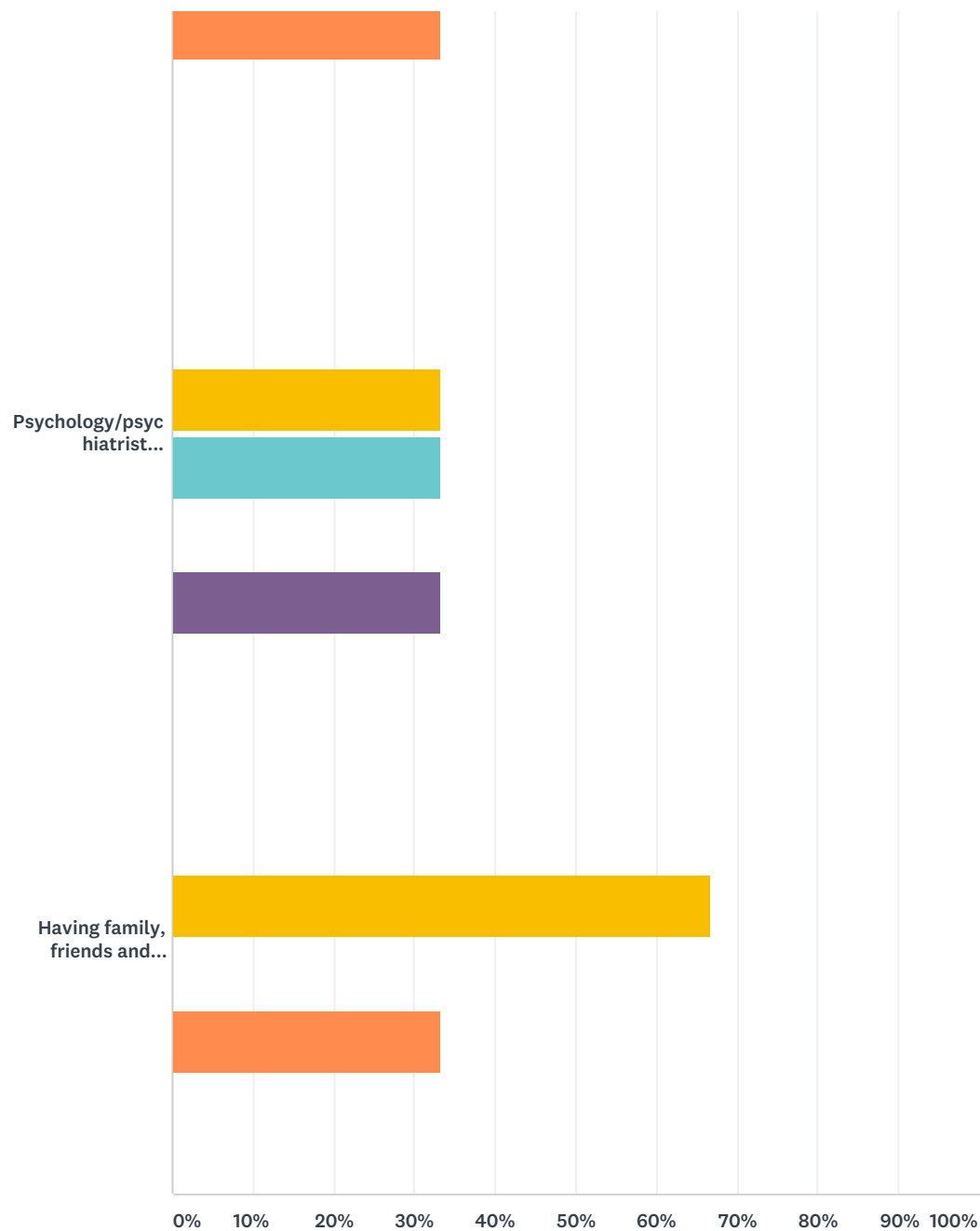
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■ Not at all helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ (no label)

■ Very helpful
 ■ N/A

	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Being involved in volunteer activities	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3	3.00
Inclusive environments at work and school	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Courses in anxiety, depression, stress management	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	3	2.50

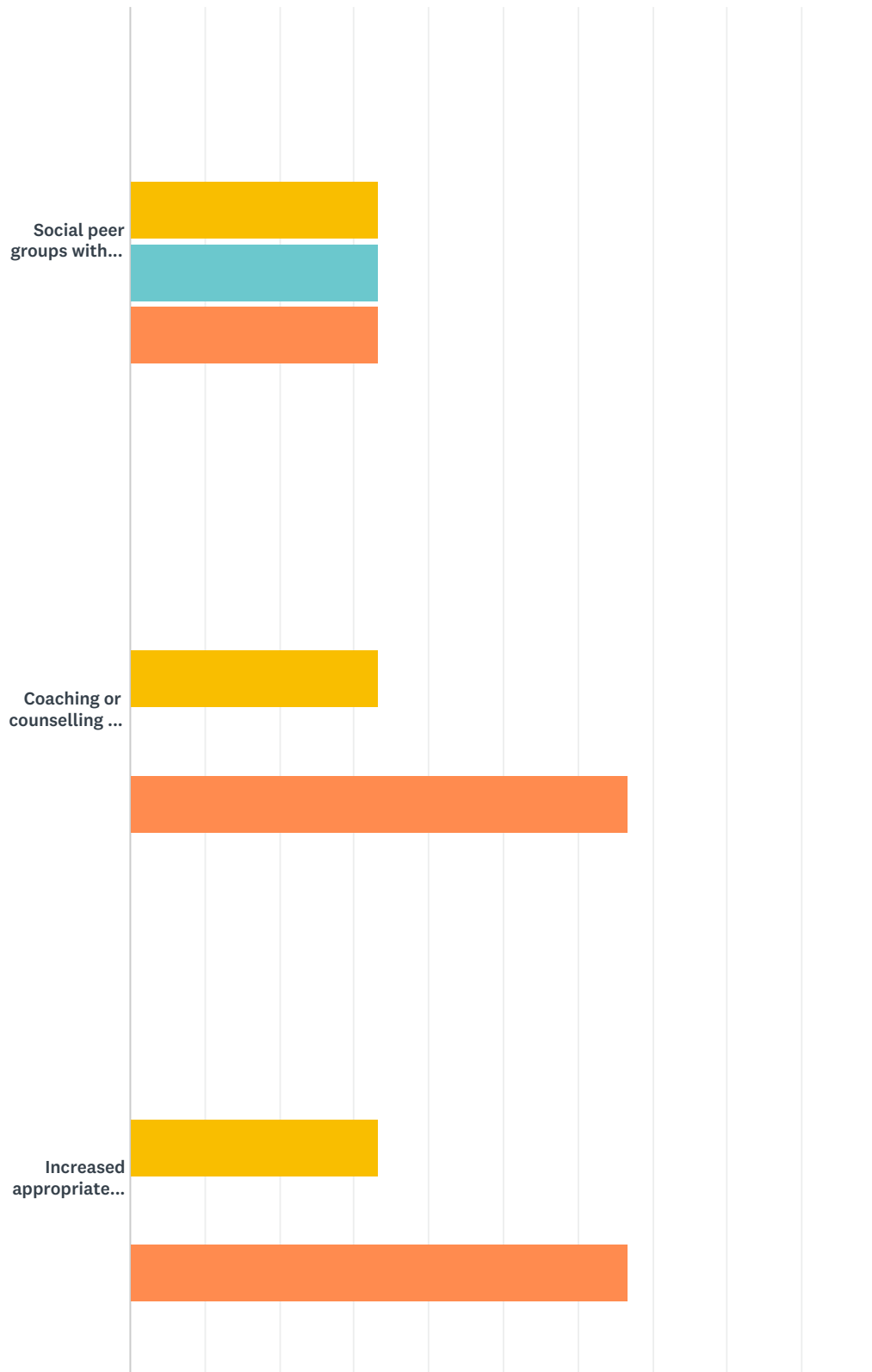
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Employment coaching/support	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	3	3.00
Obtaining access to the Better Mental Health program	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	3	2.00
Medication	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	3	3.50
Social skills supports	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3	2.67
Allied health therapy services (Occupational therapy, speech therapy)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	66.67% 2	3	5.00
Aspergers Victoria membership	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Physical exercise including yoga, walking, gym	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	3.33
Psychology/psychiatrist sessions	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	3	3.50
Having family, friends and community who understand me	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	3.67

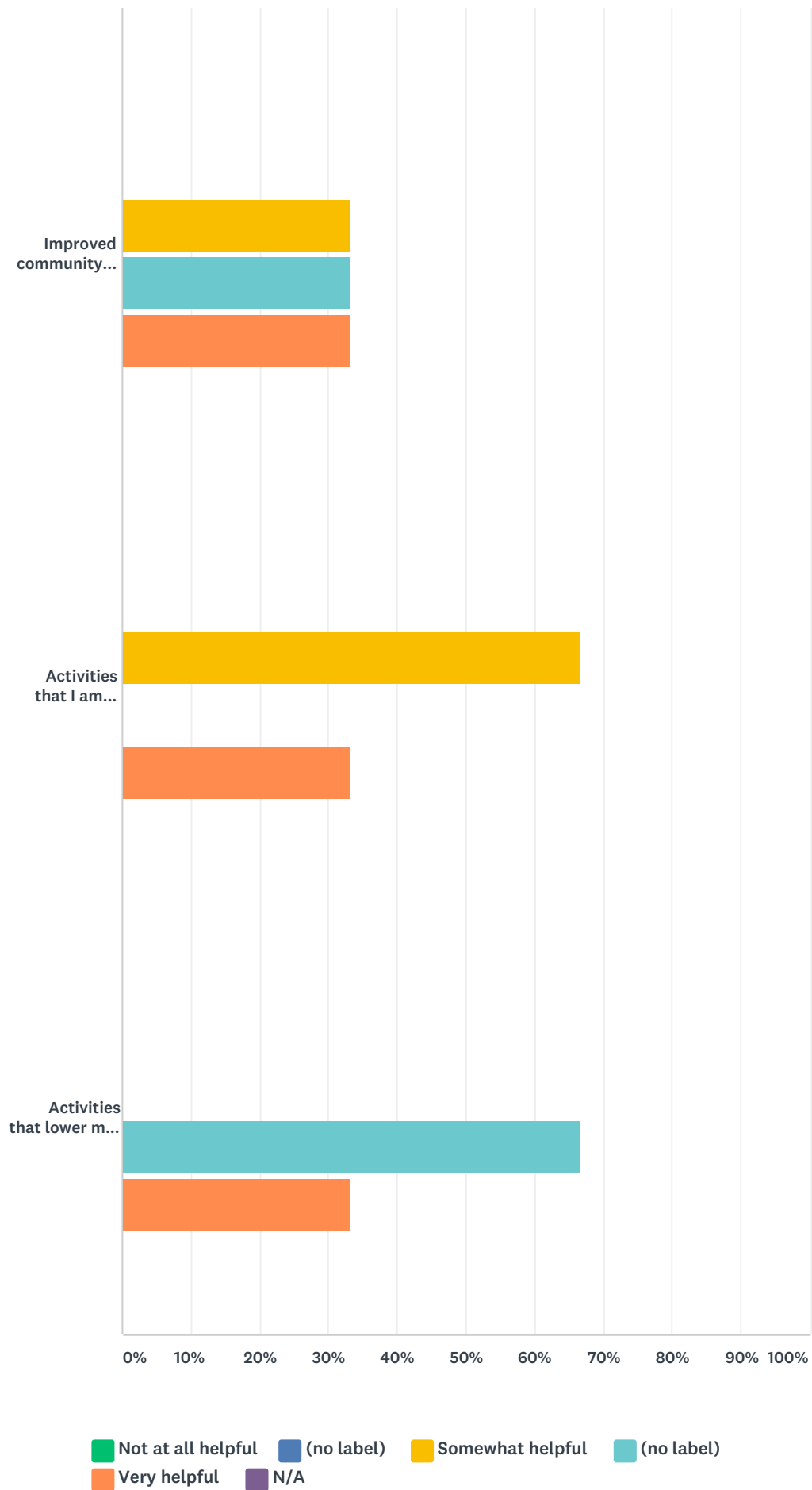
Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q12 For those living with mental illness, what opportunities could help improve your social participation? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



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	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Social peer groups with lived experience of Aspergers/autism	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Coaching or counselling in social interaction	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Increased appropriate social opportunities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Improved community understanding and support of my needs	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Activities that I am interested in available in my community	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	3.67
Activities that lower my stress levels	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.33

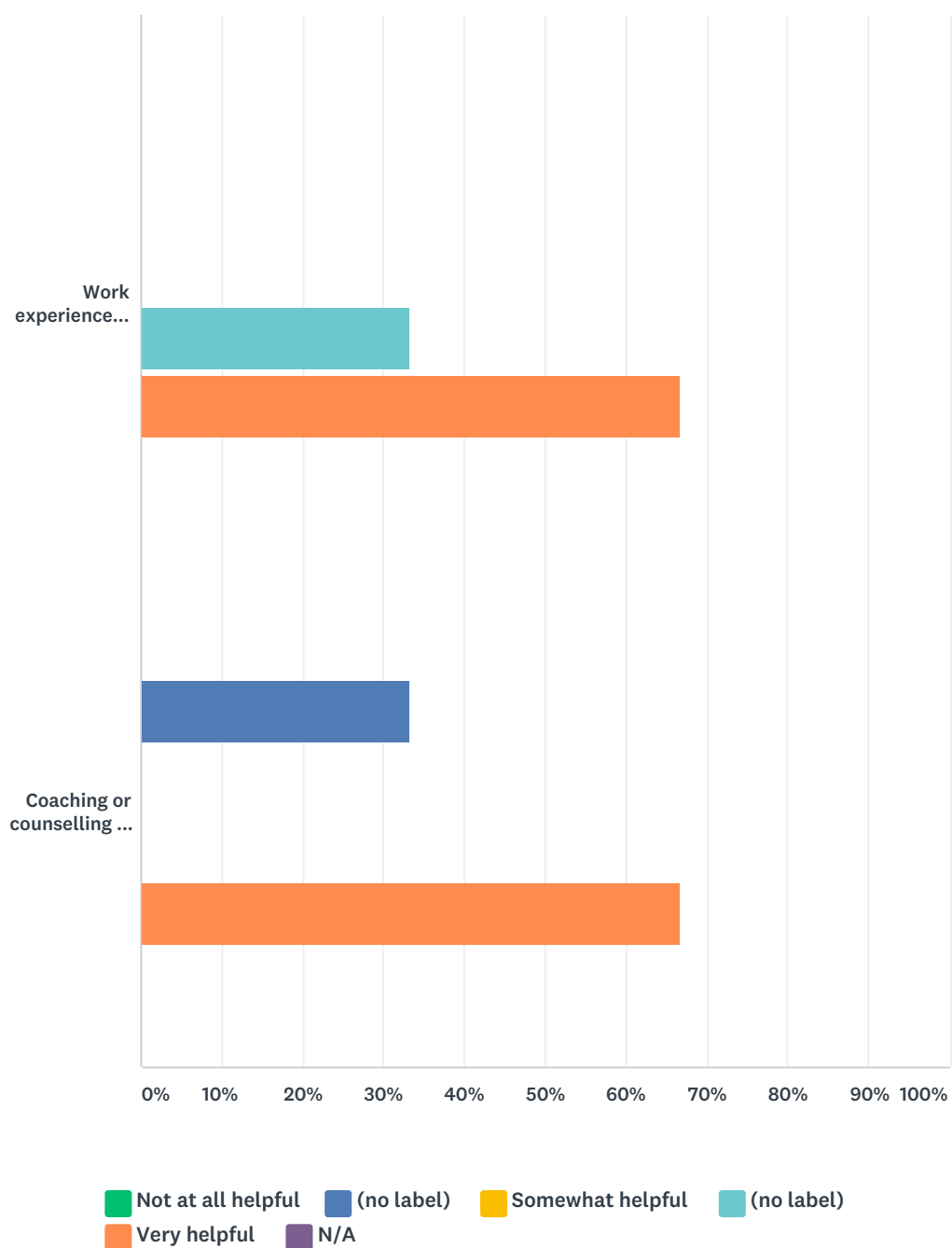
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Q13 For those living with mental illness, what opportunities could help to improve economic participation? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

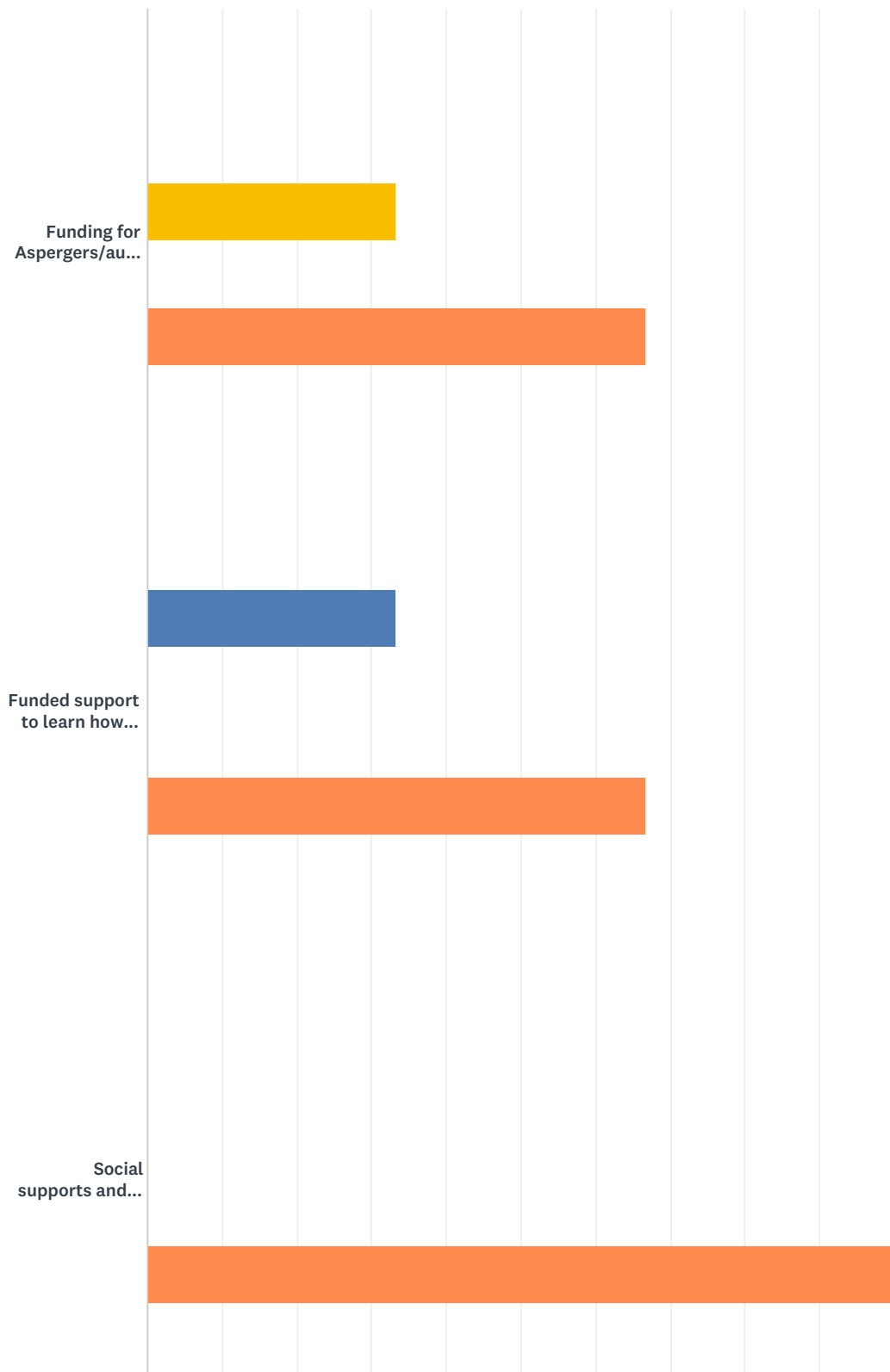


	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Employment supports for Aspergers	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.67
Employers who accept and understand my needs	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 3	0.00% 0	3	5.00
Learning how to manage my social environment at work	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Work experience opportunities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.67
Coaching or counselling in understanding the world of work	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.00

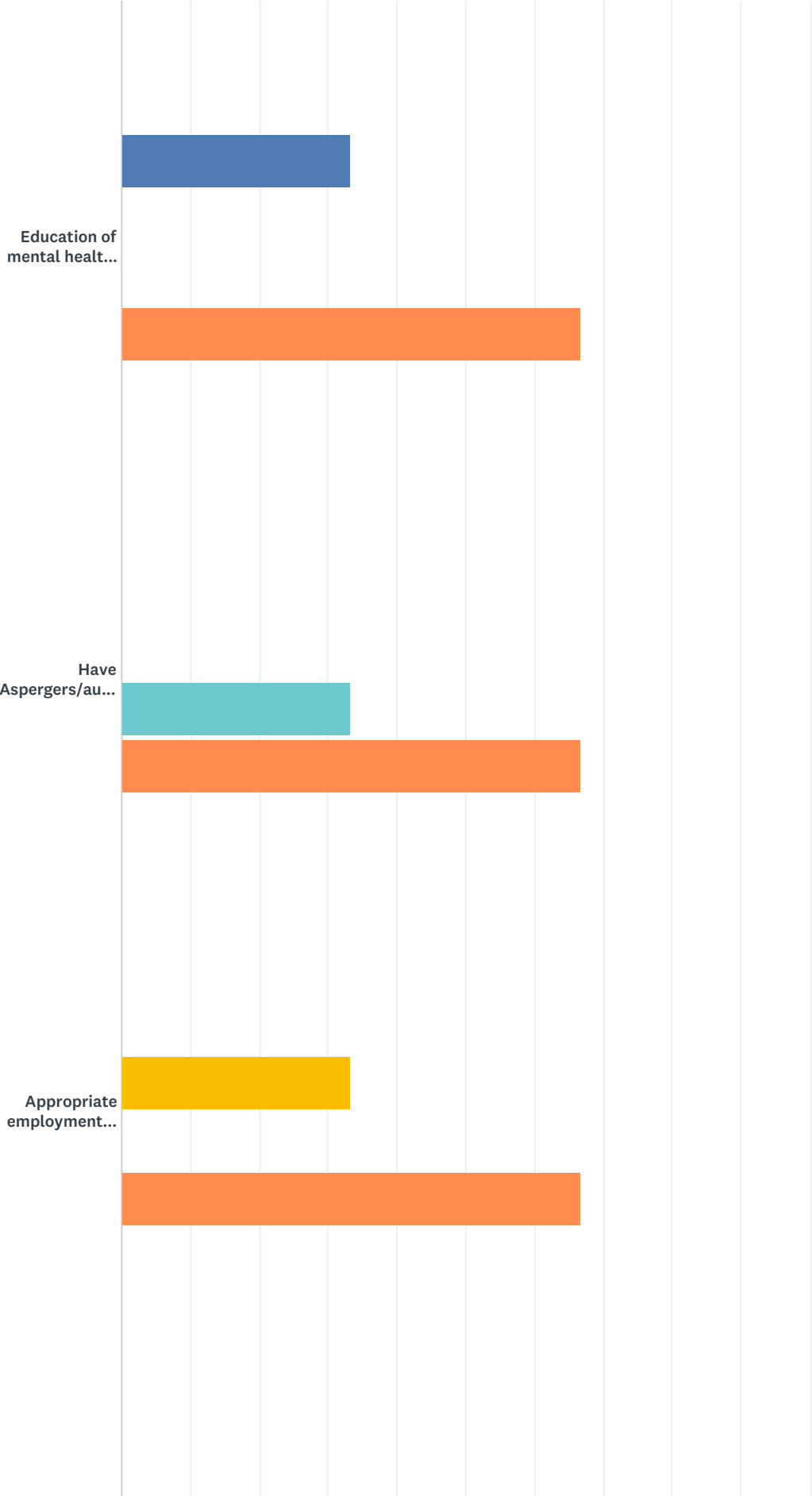
Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q14 What can be done better to prevent mental illness in Aspergers/autistic individuals? (Please rank from least preventative to most preventative)

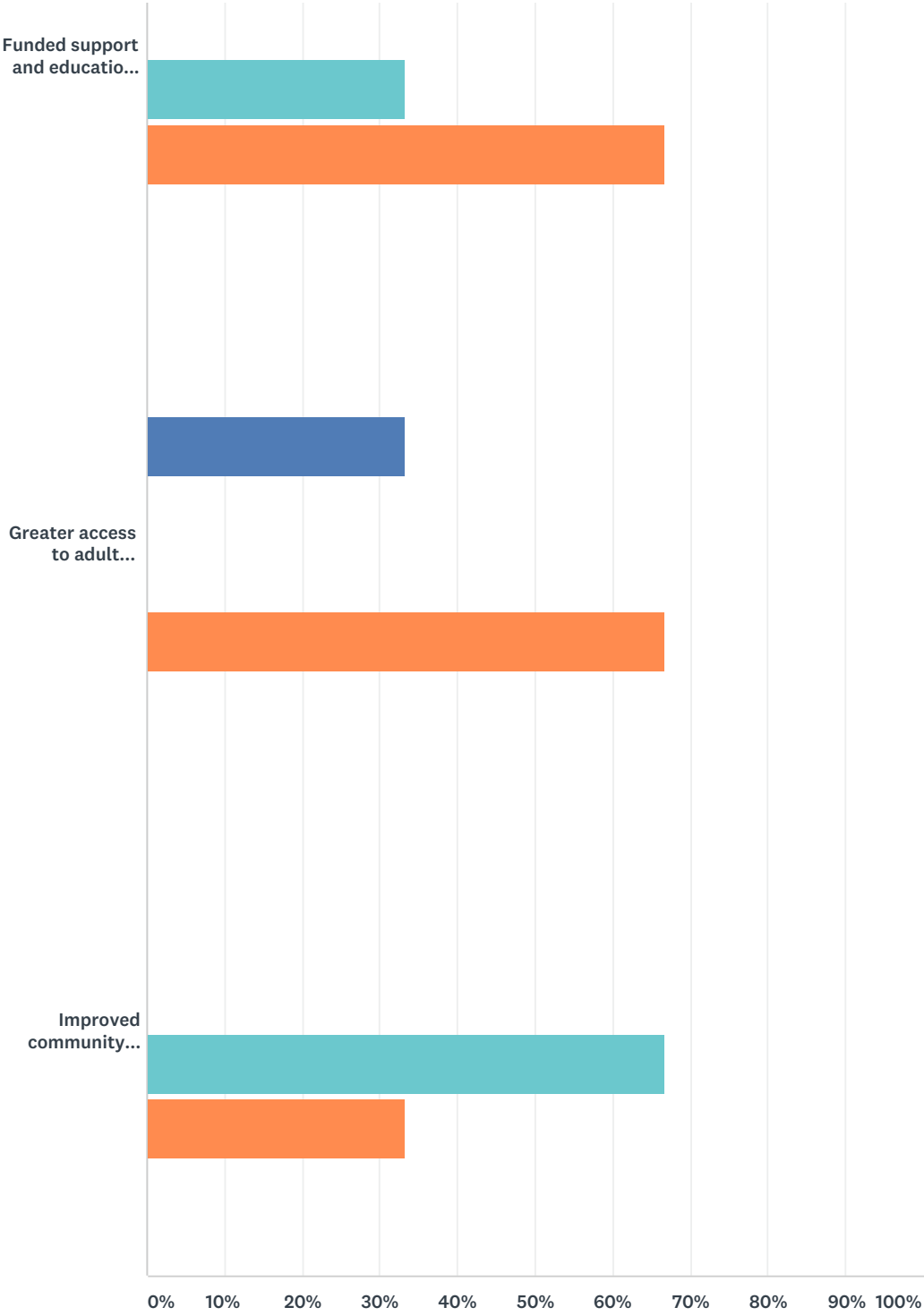
Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



- Will not help to prevent mental illness
- (no label)
- Will somewhat help to prevent mental illness
- (no label)
- Will strongly help to prevent mental illness
- N/A

	WILL NOT HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	(NO LABEL)	WILL SOMEWHAT HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	(NO LABEL)	WILL STRONGLY HELP TO PREVENT MENTAL ILLNESS	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
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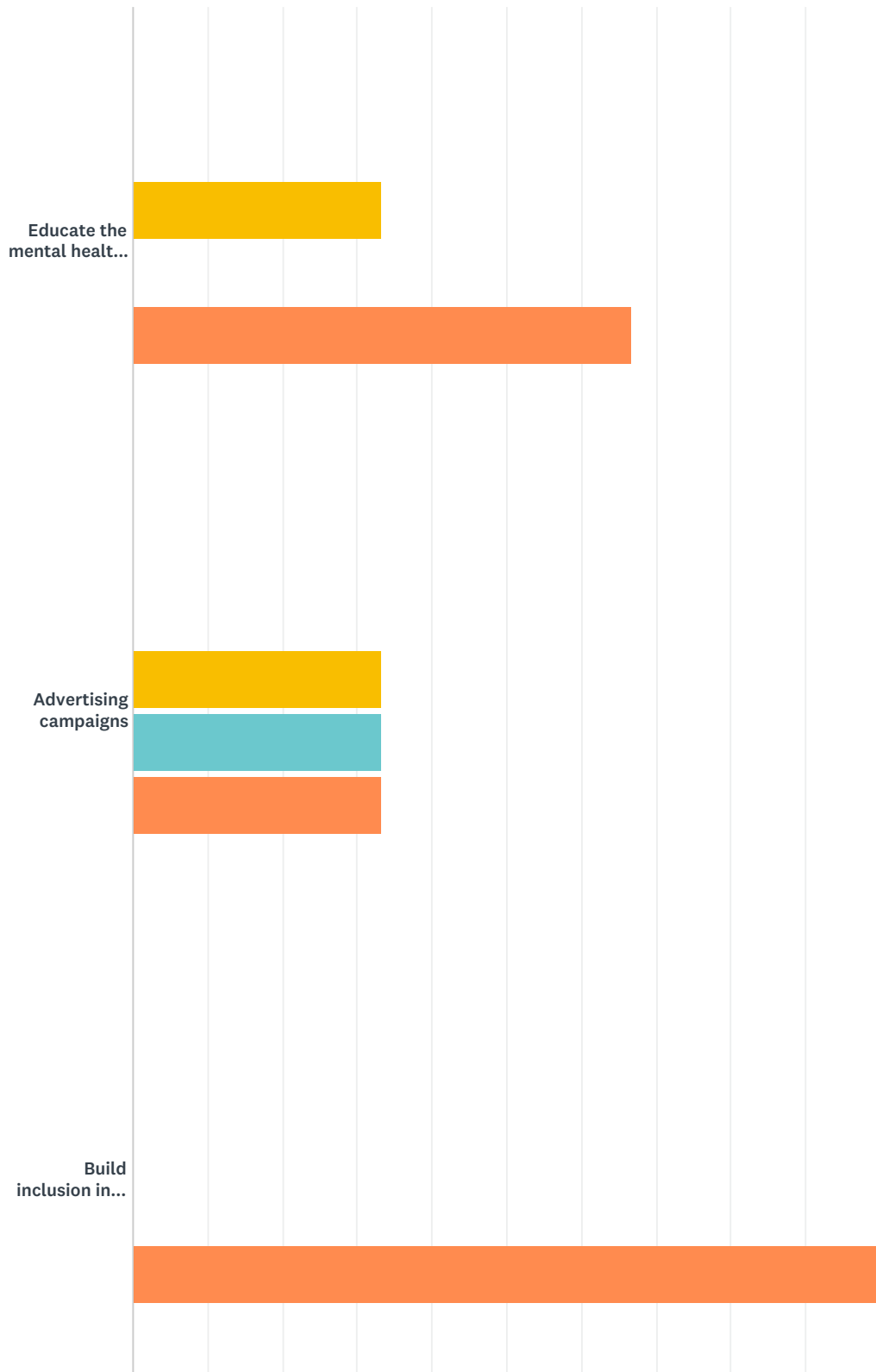
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Funding for Aspergers/autism diagnosis for all ages	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Funded support to learn how to reduce stress and anxiety	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Social supports and educational opportunities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 3	0.00% 0	3	5.00
Education of mental health services in supporting Aspergers	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Have Aspergers/autism specialists available to help in the hospital and medical system to support Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.67
Appropriate employment support in the workplace	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Funded support and education for families/partners/carers in best way to support Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.67
Greater access to adult therapy services (OT, speech, psychiatric)	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Improved community understanding of my needs with Aspergers	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.33

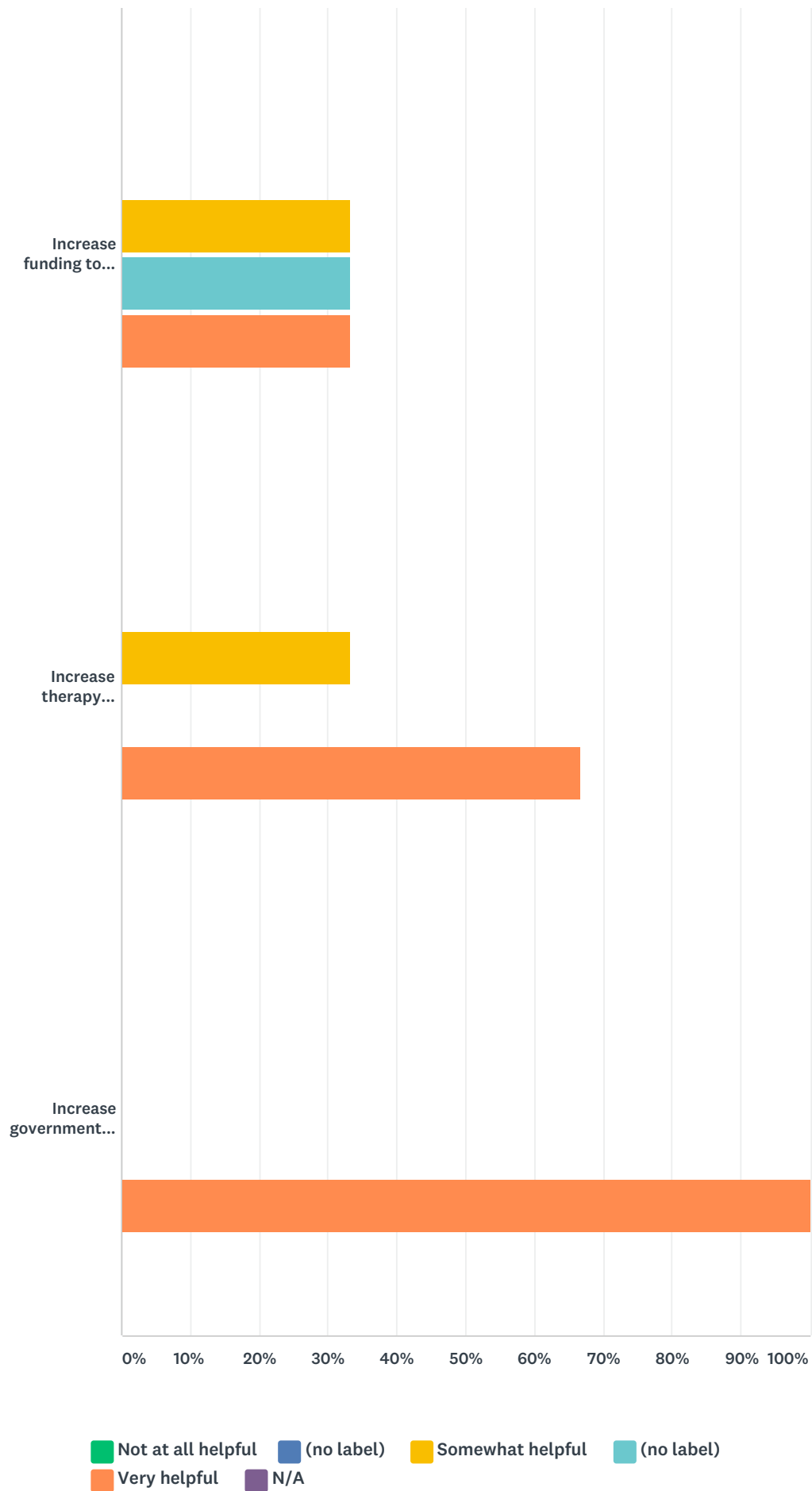
Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q15 What can be done to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



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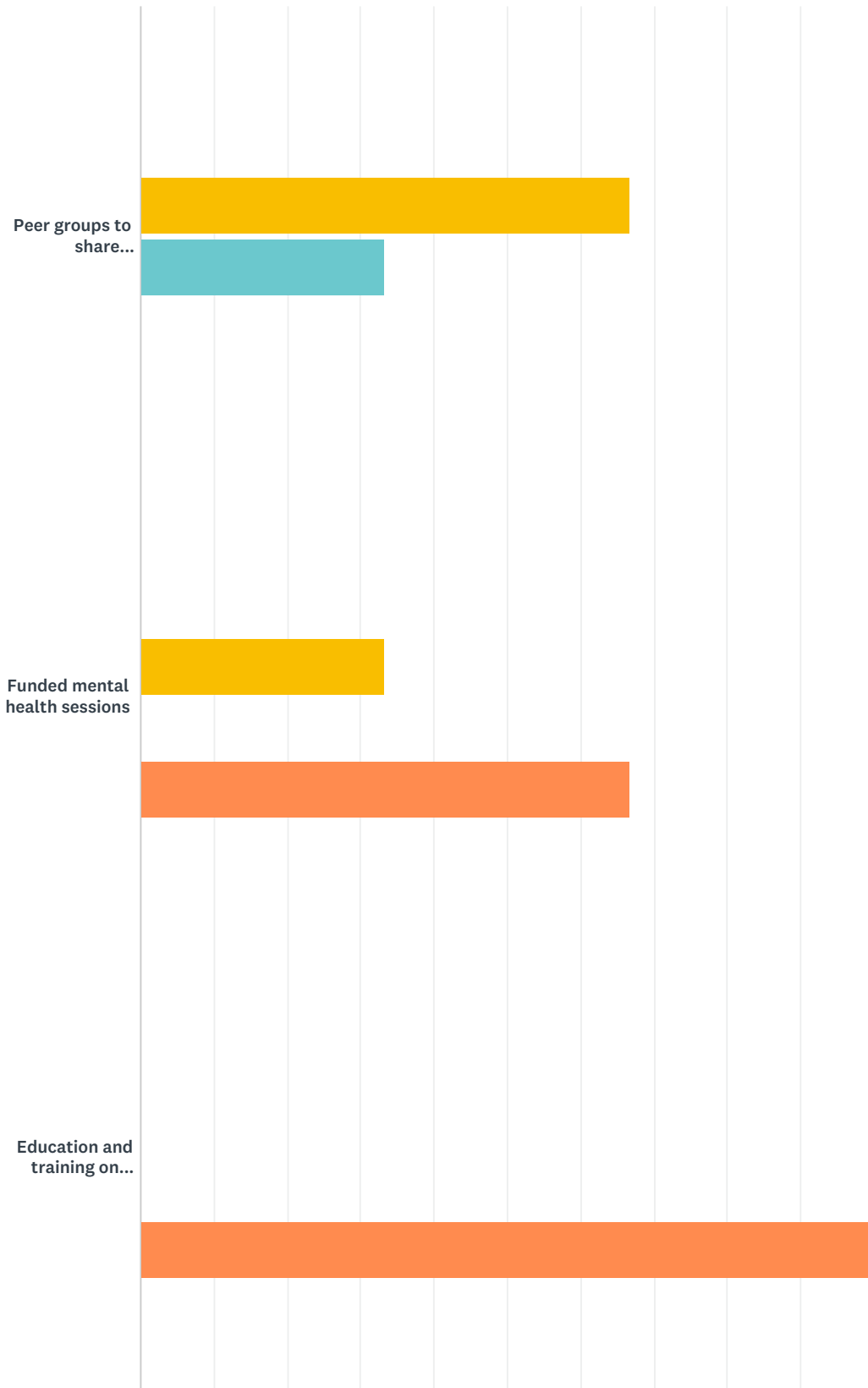
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	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Educate the mental health workforce about the strengths and challenges of Aspergers/autistic individuals	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Advertising campaigns	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Build inclusion into education and employment systems	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 3	0.00% 0	3	5.00
Increase funding to health services so they build capacity to support autistics and their families	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Increase therapy sessions available to Aspergers/autistic individuals under the Better Access Mental Health Plan	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Increase government funding to support bulk billing and affordable gap payments of medical, therapy and counselling services	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 3	0.00% 0	3	5.00

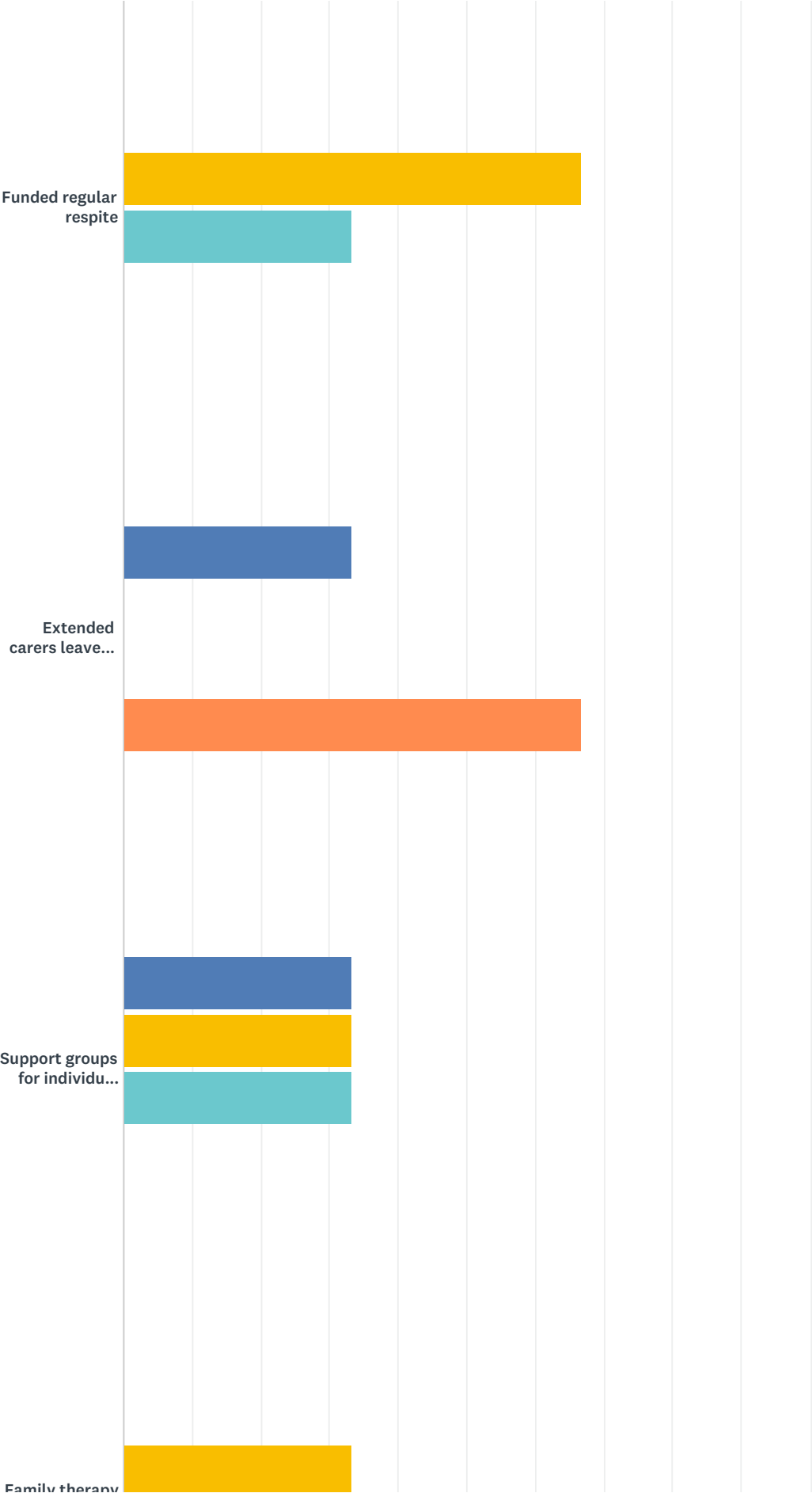
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Q16 What is needed to support carers of someone struggling with mental health and Aspergers? (Please rank from least helpful to most helpful)

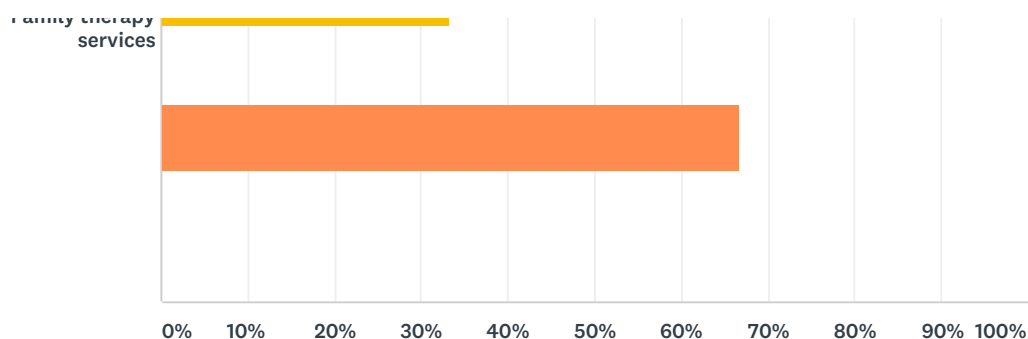
Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission



■ Not at all helpful
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ (no label)

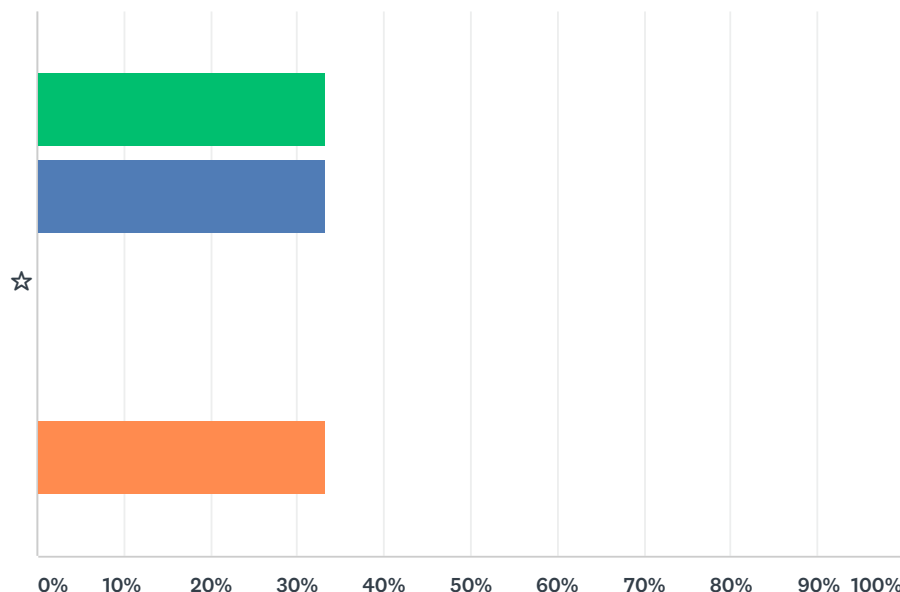
■ Very helpful
 ■ N/A

	NOT AT ALL HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL	(NO LABEL)	VERY HELPFUL	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Peer groups to share experience and knowledge	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3	3.33
Funded mental health sessions	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33
Education and training on specific ways to support Aspergers/autistic individuals with mental health issues	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 3	0.00% 0	3	5.00
Funded regular respite	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3	3.33
Extended carers leave at work	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.00
Support groups for individual families	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3	3.00
Family therapy services	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	3	4.33

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q17 Has Aspergers Victoria assisted you (or someone you know) with mental health issues?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5



■ Minimally assisted
 ■ (no label)
 ■ Somewhat assisted
 ■ (no label)
■ Greatly assisted

	MINIMALLY ASSISTED	(NO LABEL)	SOMEWHAT ASSISTED	(NO LABEL)	GREATLY ASSISTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	3	2.67
	1	1	0	0	1		

#	HOW (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Helping to make the work place a comfortable place to be and fit in.	6/30/2019 8:52 AM

Survey for Asperger Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Service submission

Q18 What else would you suggest for the Commission?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Cant think of anything.	6/30/2019 8:52 AM
2	Need a co ordination approach to the diagnosis of ASD The cost and time taken to make a diagnosis is too great and takes to long for the average person	6/26/2019 5:49 PM
3	Nothing	6/26/2019 4:23 PM