

Research on learning disabilities in Gypsy and Traveller communities, May 2018

Approximately 1.5million people in the UK have a learning disability¹. Whilst a wealth of statistics exists about learning disabilities, in many cases, there is little evidence or information available about how different groups in the United Kingdom experience learning disabilities and in particular, awareness of learning disabilities between groups.

Together with [Amaze](#), an organisation which gives information, advice and support to families with disabled children and young people, we carried out a focus group and an online survey to discover more about awareness of learning disabilities in Gypsy and Traveller communities and to find out how community members would like to receive information on learning disabilities.

Key Findings

- There is a widespread awareness of learning disabilities and additional needs in Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- Almost ¾ of Gypsy and Traveller participants said they would like to find out more about learning disabilities and/or additional needs.
- People's preferred methods of learning were face-to-face support in their community (43% of respondents), followed by on a website (37% of respondents), followed by with a video (25% of respondents), followed by at a workshop or group session (24% of respondents), followed by with a leaflet or poster (19% of respondents).
- Participants emphasised the importance of easy-to-read information, both printed and online for carers of people with learning disabilities and/or additional needs.
- Gypsy and Traveller participants reported feeling a high level of support within their communities.

Recommendations:

1. Organisations working with people with learning disabilities and/or additional needs should include Gypsy and Traveller community members on their committees/steering groups
2. Organisations seeking to raise awareness and knowledge of learning disabilities in Gypsy and Traveller communities should consider offering face-to-face support in communities (assertive outreach) and providing information on a website.
3. Organisations seeking to raise awareness and knowledge of learning disabilities should ensure that they are offering information in easy-to-read formats.

About us

[Friends, Families and Travellers](#) is a leading national charity that works on behalf of all Gypsies, Roma and Travellers regardless of ethnicity, culture or background. Friends, Families and Travellers are members of the [VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#).

¹ People with Learning Disabilities in England 2011