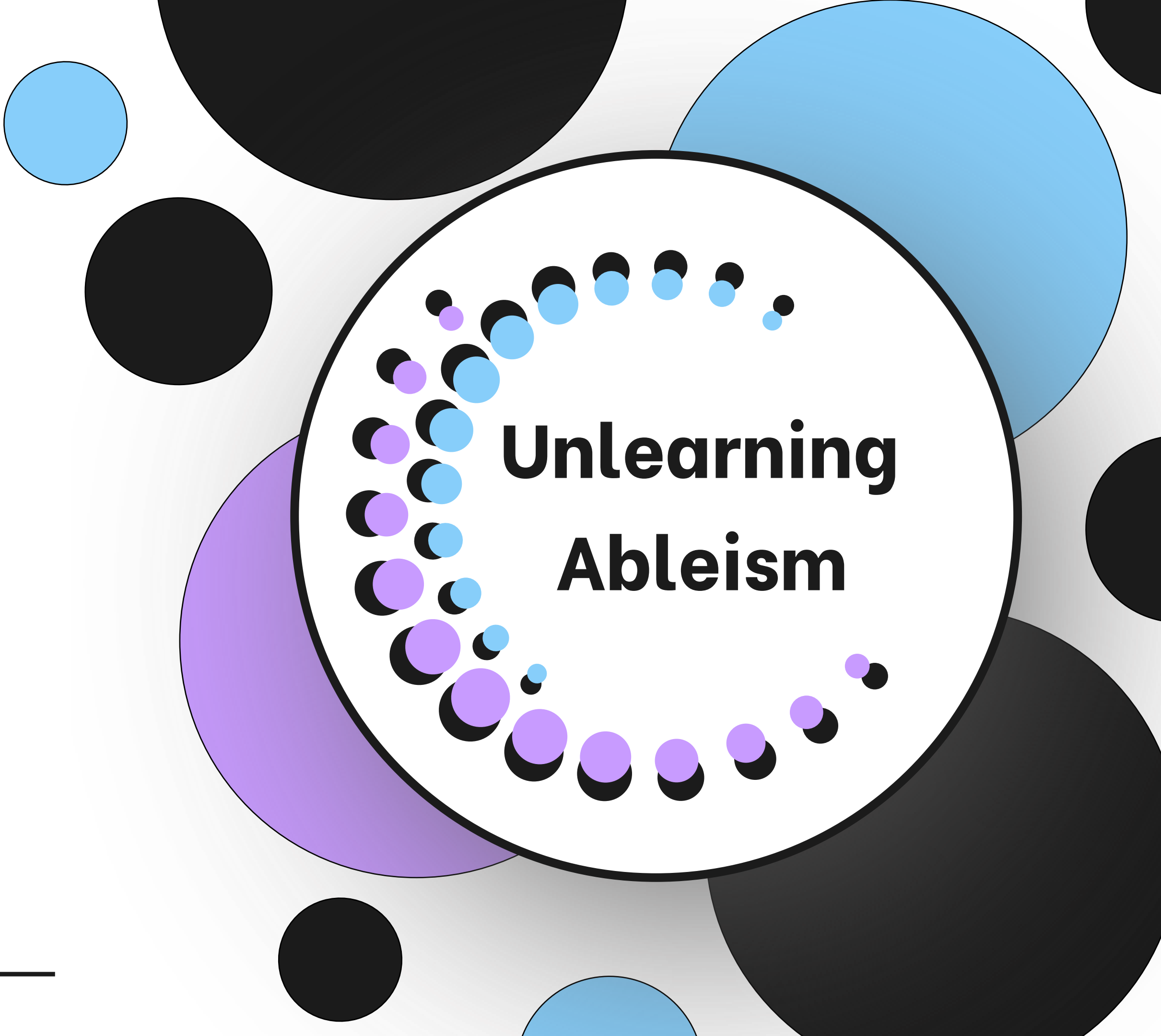


The Big Ableism Survey

Policy & Data

From Unlearning Ableism

Disability Pride Month 2024



**Unlearning
Ableism**

Isn't it time we started Unlearning Ableism?

The **truth**, the whole truth and nothing but the **truth**



Contents

1. Front Cover
2. Introduction
3. Contents
4. Mission Statement
5. The Survey Team
- 6-7. Key Findings
8. Executive Summary
9. Recommendations
10. Results Introduction
11. Disabled Experience
12. Awareness
- 13. Ableism in Policy**
- 14-15. Ableism in Society
16. Ableism Awareness (Disabled Perspective)
17. Internalised Ableism
18. Mental Health
19. Disability Support
20. Impact
21. Ableism Awareness (Non-Disabled People)
22. Thank You
23. Appendices Introduction
24. Methodology
25. Burden of Responsibility and Opportunity and Outcome
26. Terminology and The Social Model
27. Accountability and Responsibility
28. The Big Ableism Survey Questionnaire
29. Back Cover

Unlearning Ableism Mission Statement



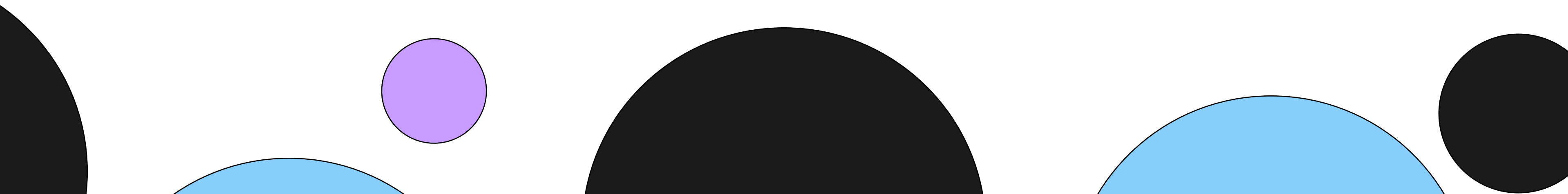
17% of the world's population identifies as Disabled, making us the largest minority group in the world. Despite this, ableism is one of the most under-addressed, under-discussed, and underrepresented conversations in society. Society is failing to unlearn our inherent ableism.

Everyday, millions of Disabled people face macro and micro-aggressions, encounter inaccessible barriers, are excluded, overlooked, treated as a burden, or seen as a problem to be fixed. As a result, Disabled people are often left to manage internalised ableism in this ableist society.

We are on a mission to change this. We can no longer sit back and do nothing. We partner with individuals and organisations to remove the ableism ingrained in cultures, recruitment, products and services, policies, and everything in between.

Unlearning ableism makes the uncomfortable comfortable. We want to end this cycle of oppression and create an inclusive society that is accessible, empowers, represents and provides opportunity and participation for everyone, and;

The Big Ableism Survey is the next piece of the puzzle, for Disabled people, by Disabled people.



The Survey Team



Celia Chartres-Aris (she/her/hers)

Disabled Founder & Investor, Multi-Award Winning Campaigner & Lobbyist Researcher, Policy & Legal Expert, Speaker & Consultant



www.linkedin.com/in/celia-chartres-aris/

Jamie Shields (he/him/his)

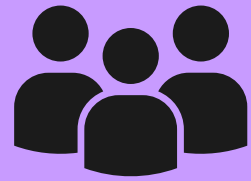
Registered Blind AuDHD Rhino, Solopreneur
- Disabled By Society Speaker, Trainer,
Consultant, multi award winning.



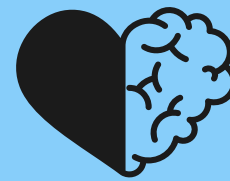
www.linkedin.com/in/shieldsjamie/



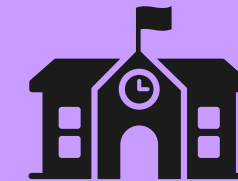
Key Findings



99% of Disabled people believe that non-Disabled people need more training and education on Ableism



Only 6.6% Of Disabled people have never experienced mental health challenges as a direct result of their Disability



93.8% of Disabled people believe there is not sufficient education about Disability and Ableism the in education system



95% of Disabled People have experienced Ableism



Over 99.7% of Disabled People have some kind of awareness of Ableism



More than 7/10 of Disabled people believe that the definition of Ableism needs updating and extending

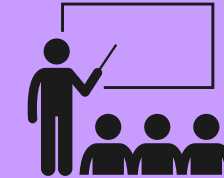
Key Findings Continued



94.3% of Disabled people believe not enough is being done to address Ableism in the workplace



96.8% of Disabled People do not believe enough is being done to address ableism within our society



87.9% Of Disabled people want more education and training in understanding Ableism



Only 1.5% of Disabled people have never experienced Internalised Ableism



Just 20.9% of Disabled people always feel comfortable to challenge Ableism

Executive Summary



The ground-breaking, first time being capture data in 'The Big Ableism Survey' for the purpose of Unlearning Ableism's report, as laid out within the Methodology, for the first time paints a clear, stark and shocking picture of the palpable disparities between Disabled people and non-disabled people in 2024. It paints a picture of how Disabled people truly feel about being Disabled in today's society. Despite being the largest minority group in the world of over 16% of the global population, over 1.3 billion people, larger than the population of China, Disabled people are being left behind in the movement towards better inclusion, opportunities, participation, representation and the breaking of barriers.

The conclusion; around every corner Disabled people face multiple barriers to participation and opportunity such as attitudinal, perceptions, stereotypes. The barriers faced by Disabled people at every single component of life such as work, education, community, social and technological are rife and consistent. As demonstrated by the data, Ableism is having a devastating consequence on the mental health, internalised Ableism, opportunities and outcomes of Disabled people. We cannot sit back and ignore this any longer. We must be forward thinking, proactive not reactive, and from the point of design with the correct and effective consultation of Disabled people move towards a better future for society that is accessible and inclusive of all Disabled people. A lack of support, a lack of proactiveness, a lack of wider societal allyship, are all contributing to Disabled people facing Ableism against themselves and their communities on a regular basis.

The responses received by respondents were emotional though provoking and entrenched with melancholy. Disabled people themselves also need better access to education and support around Ableism and internalised Ableism, to better understand their protections, to be able to advocate for themselves more safely, identify, access mental health resources, and to be able to access their human rights. The prevention of Ableism is a human right, and not a privilege. The cycle of Ableism must be broken.

Effective and accessible education, awareness and training is identified as the key to unlearning the inherent Ableism within our disabling society. The current lack of awareness has created hemorrhaging chasms of discrimination that are expanding rapidly. Education of all, at every level, at every generation, at every area. The burden of responsibility falls on every single person, as expressed by the Disabled community in the data extracted, to do better and be better. Disabled people cannot break down every barrier alone, with the necessity for allyship is vital. Our policy makers, legislative leaders and Governmental authorities must take an authoritative omnipotent role in redirecting the future for Disabled people in a better direction.

It is evident from these realities unearthed by 'The Big Ableism Survey' that the recommendations and commitments of Unlearning Ableism and the whole Disabled community, is non-negotiably vital and must be observed in a manner of necessity.

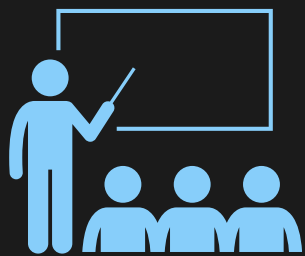
Recommendations



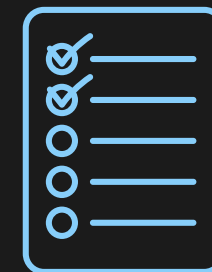
Improved access to Ableism training and education for non-Disabled people



Improved access to judicial, legal and civil support for Disabled people to challenge Ableism



Improved access to Ableism training and education for Disabled people



Legal definition of Ableism extended and updated with direct Disabled community consultation



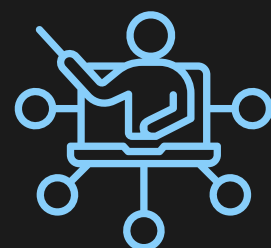
Proactive action from national and local Governments addressing policy and societal Ableism



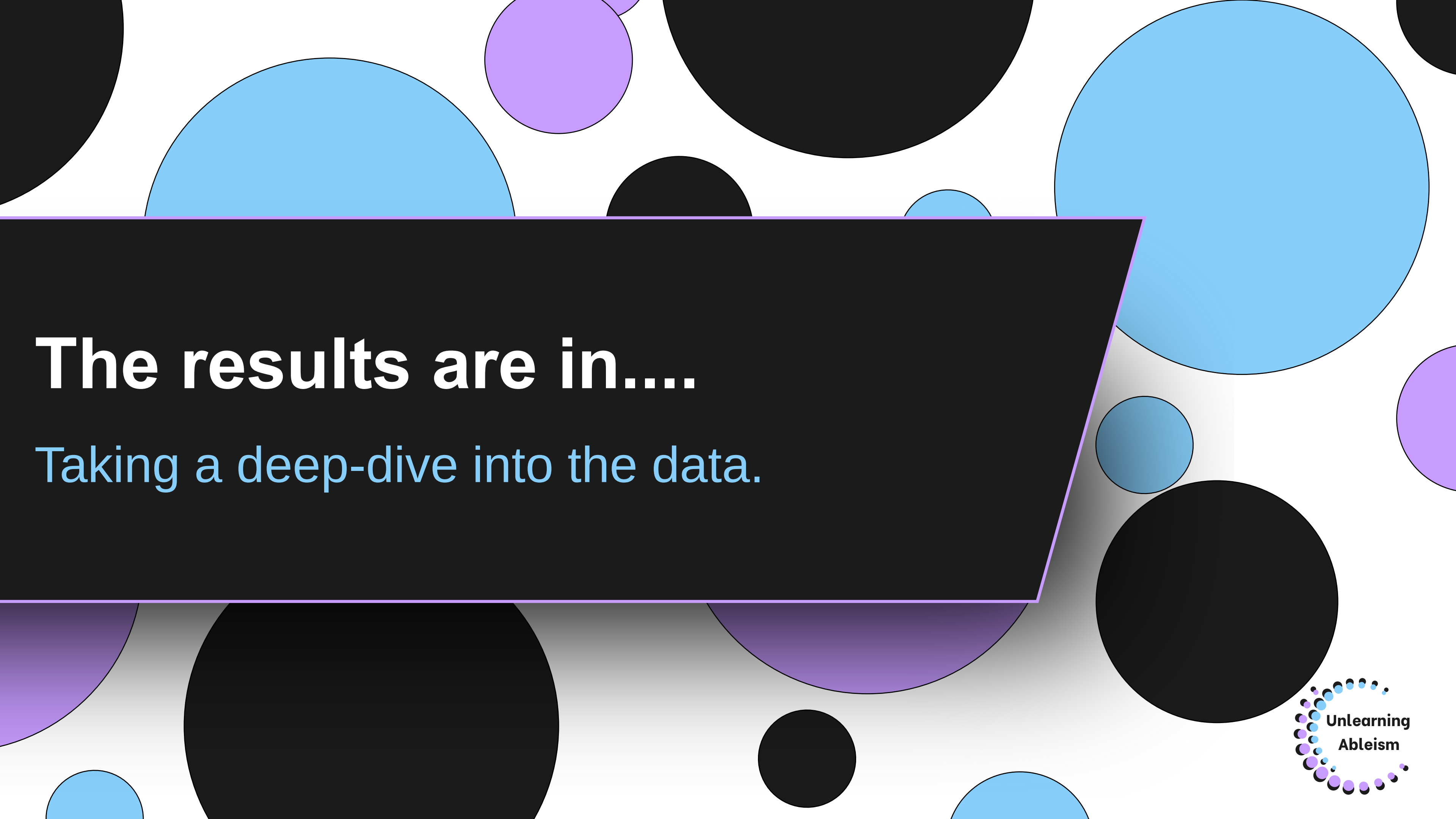
Improved access to Ableism training and education in schools and the education system



Improved access and quality of support for Disabled people and internalised Ableism



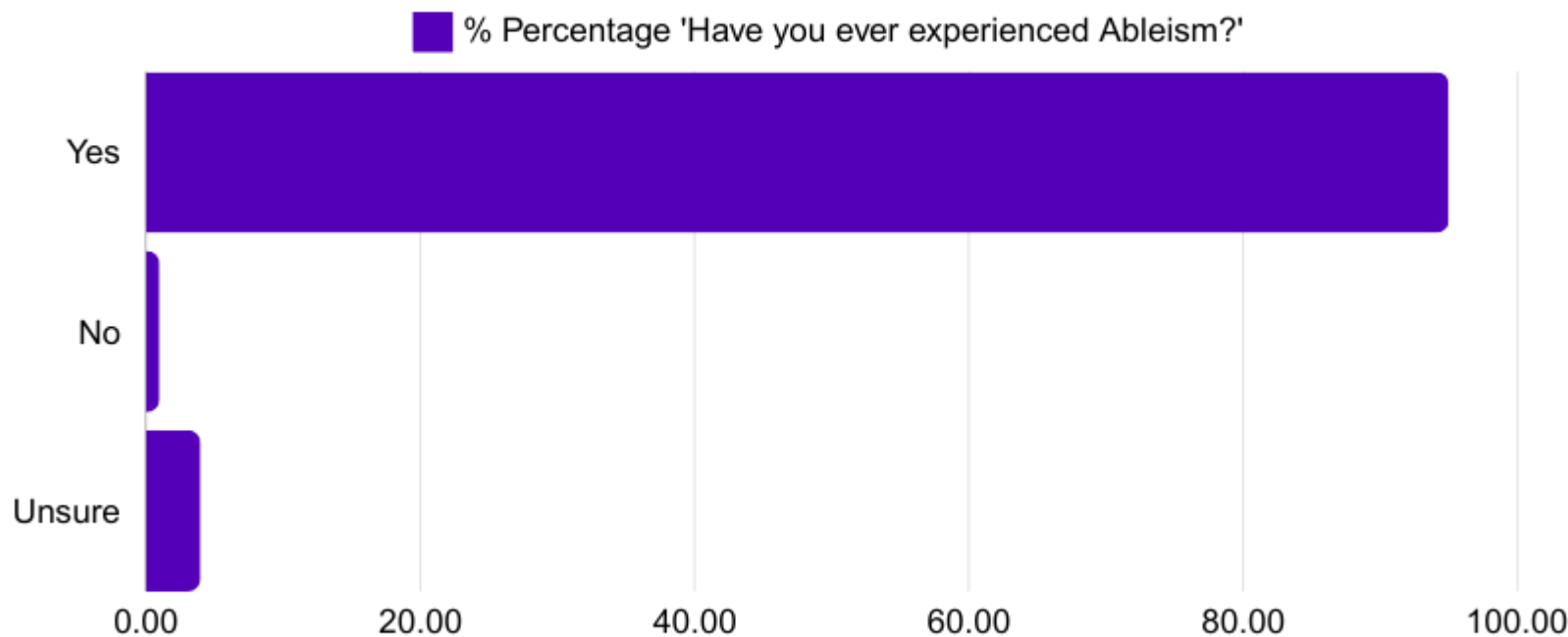
Improved access to Ableism training and education across the employment sector



The results are in....

Taking a deep-dive into the data.

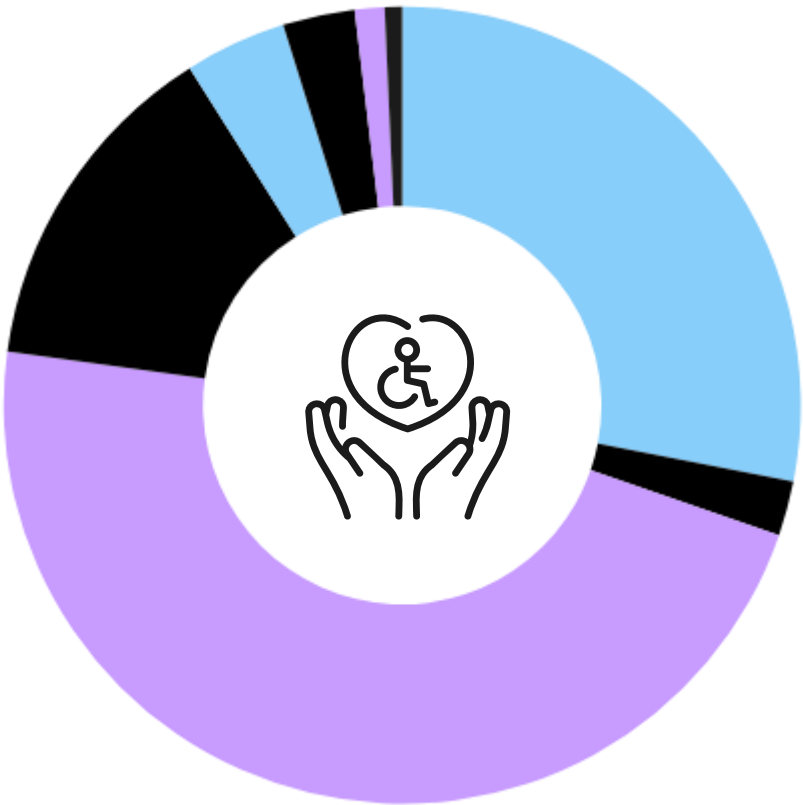
Disabled Experience



95% of Disabled People have experienced Ableism

That's 1,235,000,000 billion Disabled people

- 27.9%** Experience Ableism at least once a month
That's 362,699,999 million people
- 2.2%** Experience Ableism everyday
That's 28,600,000 million people
- 46.6%** Experience Ableism at least once a week
That's 605,800,000 million people
- 13.8%** Experience Ableism every couple of months
That's 179,400,000 million people



Each respondent noted that how often they experience Ableism was highly influenced by circumstances such as; social and healthcare, workplace and education.

What remains consistent is community, perceptions and misconceptions, attitudes, language, accessibility barriers and stereotypes that are consistently and innately operating against Disabled people.

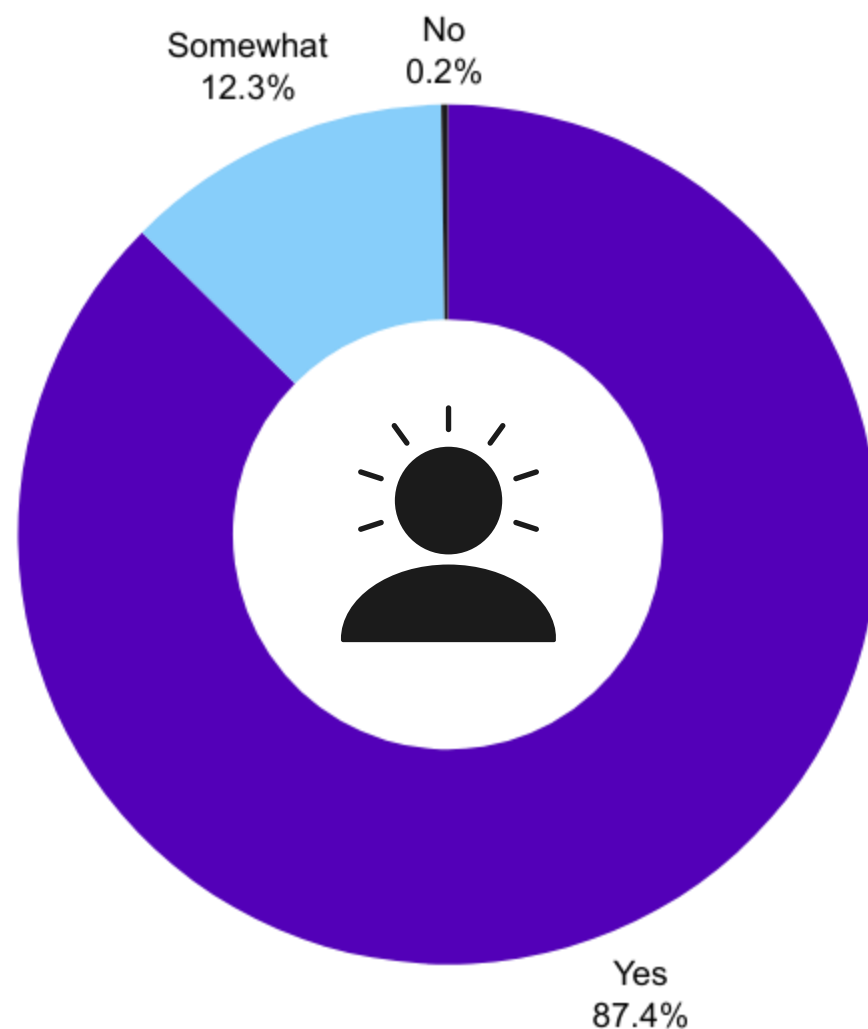
Other responses include: unsure (2.9%), Never (1.2%), less than previously (0.7%), at least once a year (4.1%) and the remainder did not answer.

Awareness



Ableism is the discrimination, social prejudice or less favourable treatment of Disabled people in favour of 'able-bodied' people (Oxford English Dictionary)

Ableism takes many forms including but not limited to; micro-aggressions (subtle, often unintentional, everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target individuals or groups), macro-aggressions (overt and explicit acts of discrimination, prejudice, or hostility directed towards individuals or groups), conscious bias (sometimes also known as an explicit bias is where you are conscious of the decisions and actions you are making, acting with intention), unconscious bias (where a person holds biases towards Disabled people without even realising they are doing it), and direct and indirect discrimination (discrimination that can be either directly towards Disabled people or indirectly towards Disabled people).



Over 99.7% of Disabled People have some kind of awareness of Ableism

With only less than 0.2% of Disabled people not being able to anyway define Ableism at all.

Knowledge and understanding of Ableism is inherently present within the Disabled community, coming from a variety of different sources, unlike the non-Disabled community whose knowledge and understanding of Ableism is inherently absent. Of those who stated they were 'somewhat' aware of Ableism, they largely expressed they were able to define based off their own experiences not legal definitions and therefore didn't feel confident responding yes. This highlights an educational gap within the Disabled community on legal protections and policies for themselves, along with the need for definition expansions to encompass all types of Ableism discrimination, whether conscious or unconscious.

Ableism in Policy



Ableism is the discrimination, social prejudice or less favourable treatment of Disabled people in favour of 'able-bodied' people (Oxford English Dictionary)

The very definition of Ableism is in itself inherently ableist. The majority of respondents, at 77.5% agree that this definition needs updating and extending.

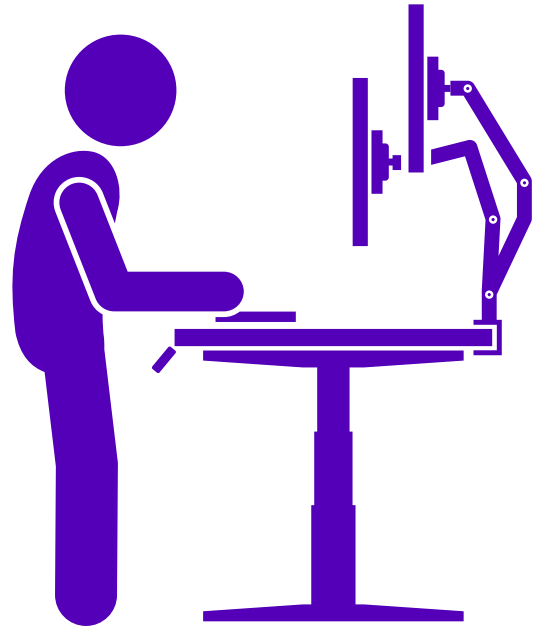
'Less favourable treatment', 'social prejudice' turns of term which are significantly downplaying the magnitude of ableism and the devastating consequences ableism has on the lives of Disabled people. Referring to non-Disabled people as 'able-bodied' which is extremely outdated language which perpetuates the incorrect notion that Disabled people are 'less-abled' or without capability in comparison to others.

More than 7/10 of Disabled people believe that the definition of Ableism needs updating and extending

Disabled children are 22% more likely to be victim of crime compared to 9% for non-Disabled children. Disabled people account for 52% of those living in poverty. There is a 13.1% likelihood of a Disabled woman experiencing domestic abuse. Homes with a Disabled family member have £108 less each week than homes with no Disabled members. 13% of Disabled people feel lonely compared to 3-4% of non-disabled people. The likelihood of a Disabled adult completing higher education is 25% compared to 43% of non-Disabled adults. There is a 29% employment gap between Disabled and non-Disabled adults. This is the daily reality for Disabled people, an inherently ableist and weak definition are further contributing to ableist cycles, lack of protection, failure to implement accessibility and Medical model entrenchment. The cavities left by a an unsolid definition leaves too much room for loopholes and individual interpretation which must be closed.

The definition of Ableism should echo the definitions of racism, sexism, homophobia etc... providing better protection, opportunity and participation for Disabled people.

Ableism in Society



94.3% of Disabled people believe not enough is being done to address Ableism in the workplace

93.8% of Disabled people believe there is not sufficient education about Disability and Ableism the in education system



Ableism in Society...



96.8% of Disabled People do not believe enough is being done to address ableism within our society

With 90.8% of Disabled people having witnessed Ableism against another Disabled person

Disabled people unanimously believe that not enough is being done to address Ableism, with major failures in our education, employment, Government and wider society to educate and introduce policies which break down barriers for Disabled people and eradicate mis-information. Ableism is 'out-in-the-open' for all to witness. Ableist behaviour is not being called out, prevented or intervened enough by non-Disabled people. Unlike other forms of discrimination there is no set precedent or repercussions for ableist action. A lack of education and awareness has created a perpetual cycle where Disabled people feel isolated, face accessibility and attitudinal barriers, and are actively discriminated against, creating a cycle of justified ableism and internalised ableism. Proactiveness and positive action is evidently inherently absent.

69.7% Believe individuals must do more to address Ableism

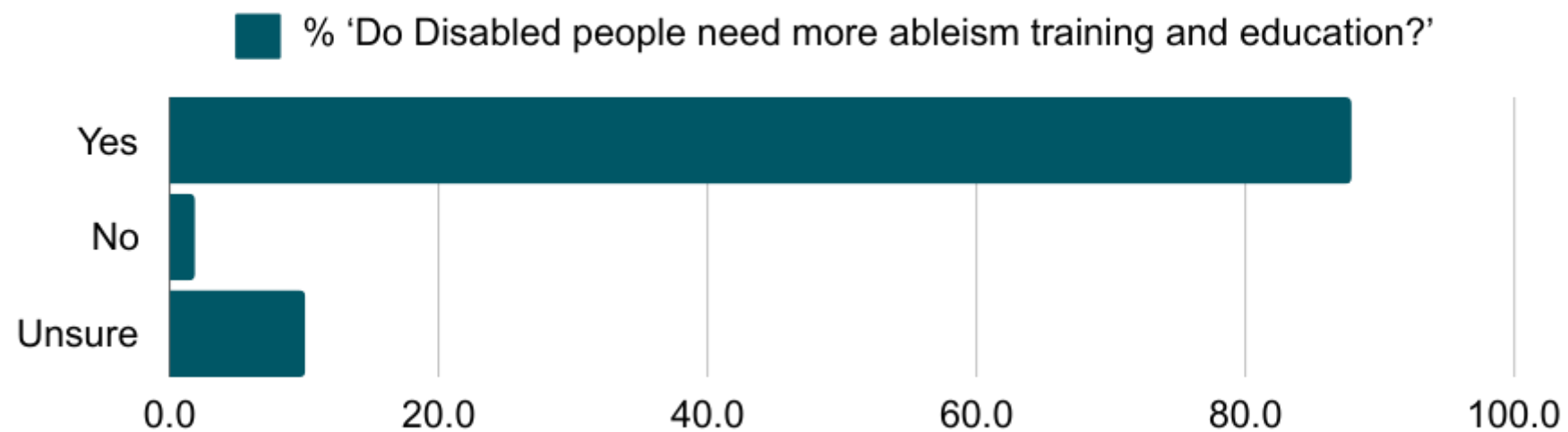
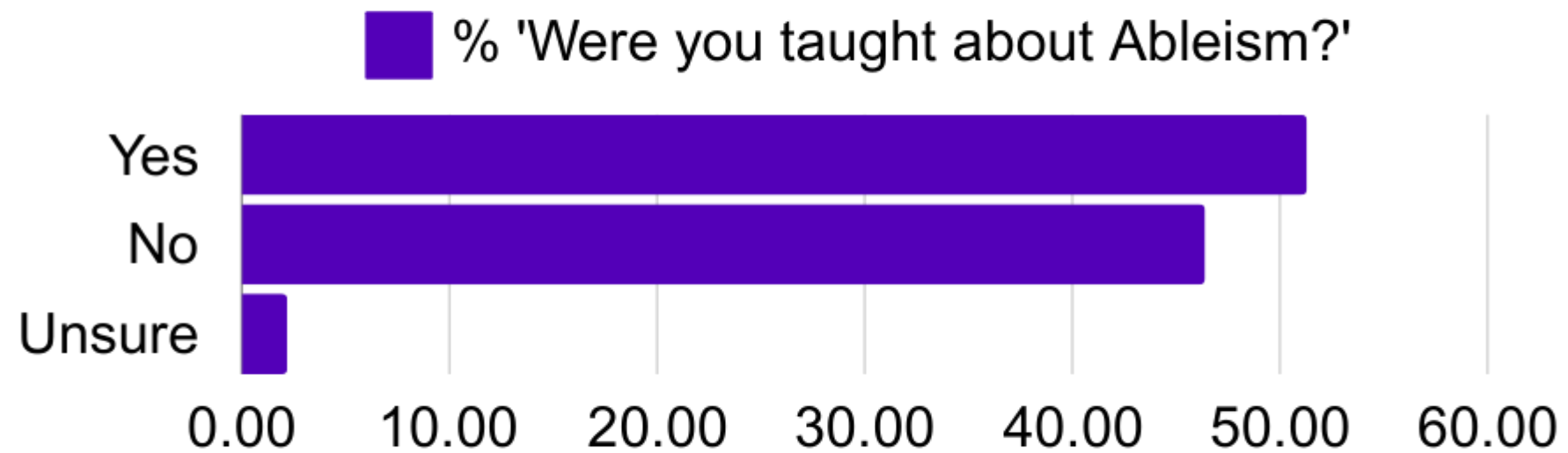
87.9% Believe workplaces must do more to address Ableism

81.8% Believe Government must do more to address Ableism

87.9% Believe the education must do more to address Ableism

The sources of Ableism is around every corner, and Disabled people unanimously believe that the burden of responsibility for awareness and prevention must not fall on Disabled people alone. All major strands of society must take responsibility, enact positive action from the point of design, and actively address ableism, eradicating from the root causes, such as lack of education, lack of inclusive policy and inaccessible workplace culture. Respondents also identified that individuals have a responsibility to be inclusive and aware and cannot rely solely on education from others. Everyone must take responsibility and accountability for their actions.

Ableism Awareness (Disabled Perspective)



87.9%

Of Disabled people want more education and training in understanding Ableism

Disabled people want better access to training and education in understanding Ableism, the vast majority of respondents said that they were only taught about Ableism because they themselves went out to seek guidance, mainly from other Disabled people and Disability organisations, teaching is not coming from Government, Education systems or workplaces. This major failure creates yet another burden of responsibility onto Disabled people. Additionally non-disabled people who are not proactively looking to Disabled people to educate themselves about Ableism therefore are not actively receiving anti-ableism training. Breaking the cycle of Ableism begins from the point of societal learning, and is a responsibility of everyone, it must be included in diversity and inclusion benchmarks equally to other elements of identity, to embed The Social Model and break down barriers.

As demonstrated by the data, non-Disabled people are not likely to be receiving ableism training if Disabled people aren't. Disabled people must have better access to education so that they are in a more confident position to know their rights, ask for support, protect and thrive. And non-Disabled people must have better access to education so that they are in a more confident position to act proactively, demonstrate allyship, provide means, and as a wider society be better to do better. Once we are aware of ableism and our role in contributing to it, we have a responsibility to take accountability. Accountability for making conscious change personally, professionally and across society. Educating about ableism is crucial to creating a society that is truly inclusive. If you have met one Disabled person you have met one Disabled person, we need learning from different sources and continued to be aware. Unlearning ableism does not happen in a day, a night, a week etc. It is making a conscious effort, consistently and generationally to being aware, listening and amplifying Disabled voices and advocating for Disabled people.

62.4% Of Disabled people taught themselves about Ableism

41.2% Of Disabled people were taught about Ableism by other Disabled people

Only 14.1% of Disabled people were taught about Ableism in education

18% of Disabled people have never been taught about Ableism

Only 15.2% of Disabled people were taught about Ableism in the workplace

87% of Disabled people rely on family and friends for Ableism teaching

Internalised Ableism



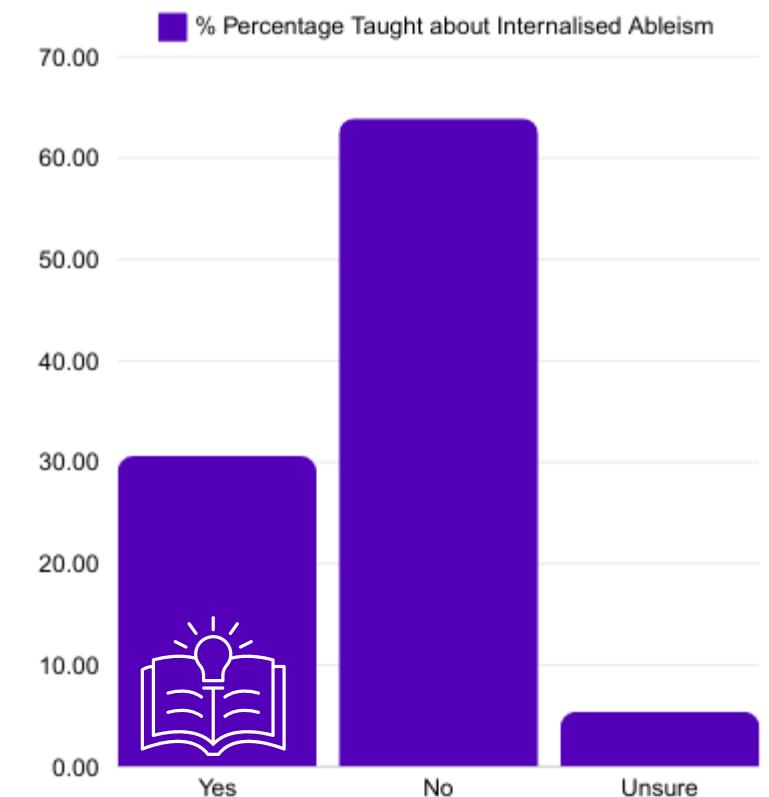
Internalised Ableism is when a Disabled person discriminates against themselves and other Disabled people by holding the view that Disability is something to be ashamed of, something to hide, or by refusing accessibility or support. Internalised Ableism is the result of navigating an ableist, disabling society. Internalised Ableism is not something we are educated about, nor is it part of the mental health conversation. Internalised Ableism manifests itself in a multitude of ways, and the experience is unique to an individual, and happens as a consequence of a Disabled person internalised the ableism they have experienced.

50.3% Of Disabled people experience Internalised Ableism every week

Only **1.5%** Have never experienced Internalised Ableism

In the collection of qualitative data, nearly all respondents stated that how often they experienced internalised ableism was directly correlated to their external factors such as employment, education, community, support available and care. How often a Disabled person experiences internalised ableism therefore fluctuates enormously, but what remains consistent is that over half of Disabled people experience internalised ableism at least once a week. Early intervention to break down internalised ableism cycles as soon as possible, access to information, and support is vital in tackling internalised ableism. The substantial lack of education for internalised ableism for Disabled people, through correct channels such as education, health and social care is also a contributing factor, only 30.6% stated that they had, and in the majority of circumstances they had been taught by themselves or by direct interaction with another Disabled person.

Only 30.6% have been taught about Internalised Ableism



Mental Health



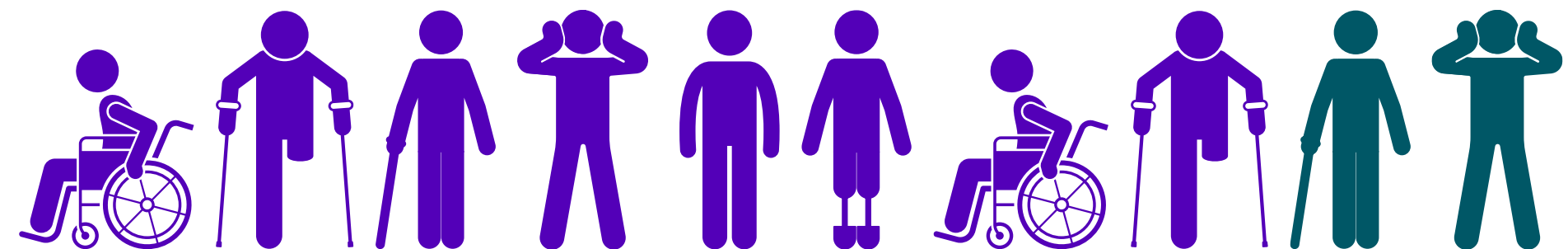
Only **6.6%** Of Disabled people have never experienced mental health challenges as a direct result of their Disability

And **86.6%** said they don't receive regular support from others when they experience ableism



It is clearly evident from the respondents is the distinct lack of consistent, reliable, accessible mental health support for Disabled people that provides the expertise and personable understanding of internalised ableism and how to address it. Respondents stated in the majority of circumstances they are relying on other Disabled people to support them due to being unable to access formal mental health support, or mental health support that understands the relationship between mental health and Disability. The existence of the Medical Model of Disability is inherent in this instance, with attitudes of 'curing' and not seeing a person as a whole experience. Disabled people are being left isolated and without correct support leading to devastating consequences.

Disability Support



Just 20.9% of Disabled people always feel comfortable to challenge Ableism

And only 58.5% would definitely feel comfortable communicating their experiences about Ableism and Internalised Ableism

Disabled people face multiple barriers such as; inaccessibility, bias, language, behaviours, attitudes, discrimination, beliefs, prejudice, segregation and oppression. This concoction together creates an environment where Disabled people feel less able or willing to communicate their experiences or challenge behaviour for fear of repercussions, or lack of positive outcome, this data proves this fact beyond any reasonable doubt. Those whom responded that they did feel comfortable, in the majority stated that this was only towards other Disabled people, outward allies or Disability organisations. Society must take positive action to create safe, open and honest places of discussion which allow for the barriers of ableism to be broken down. From the qualitative responses provided by respondents, the Reframing Deal Flow highlights current areas of failure and provides peer-suggested recommendation to encourage better access to and comfort with support.

Reframing Deal Flow

Identify

Recognition, understanding, acknowledgement and respect for intersectionality

Challenge

Questioning validity, evidence gathering, alternative perspectives, reframing

Positive Affirmation

Social Model, realigned focus, acknowledgement and celebration of Diversity

Compassion

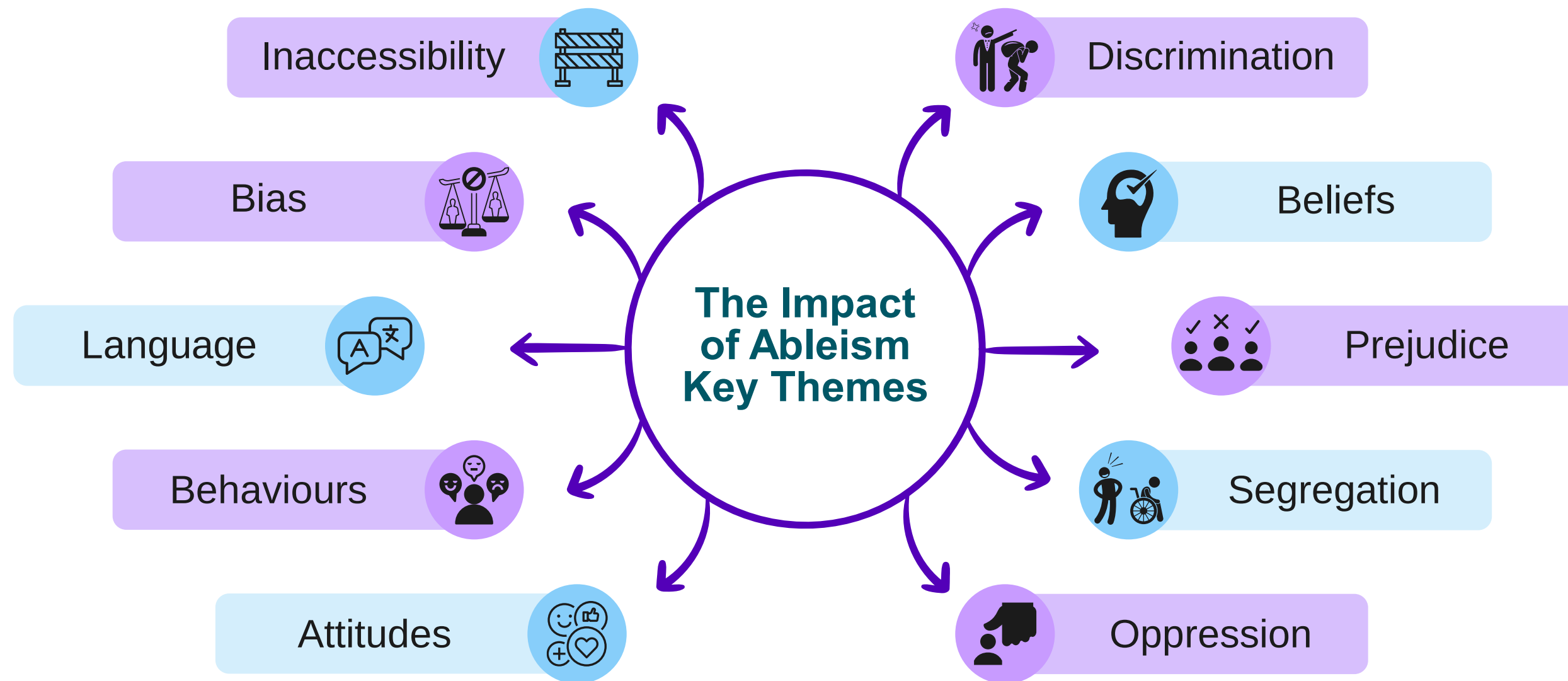
Kindness, understanding, prioritisation, awareness, care for self and others



Impact

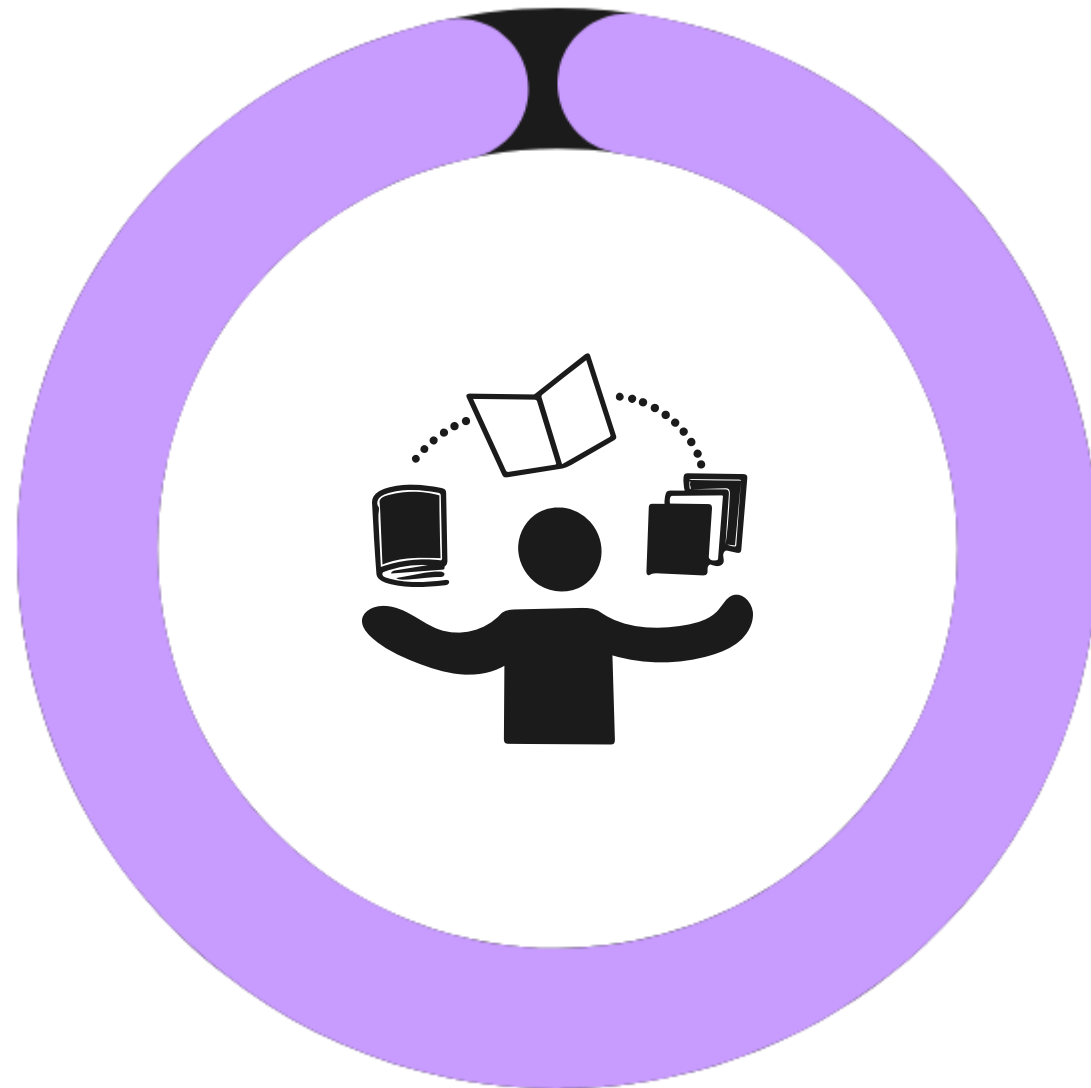


Respondents were asked to describe in their own words how Ableism impacts them as a Disabled person. These are the key themes.



The responses received have been redacted to preserve anonymity and respect for confidentiality. The responses make for shocking reading. Each Disabled person details how every single aspect of their life; work, education, friendships, relationships, access to health and care, community, finances etc... have been significantly negatively impacted because they are Disabled, not because of their Disability but because of a Disabling world. Each of these key themes encapsulates how Ableism takes many forms such as attitudinal, accessibility, stereotypes, segregation, prejudice and behaviours, and all with devastation consequences. Disabled people do not have equity. Disabled people do not have equity of participation and opportunity. The barriers for Disabled people exist behind every door of entry, with each Disabled person having a story to tell of how they have faced discrimination.

Ableism Awareness (Non-Disabled People)



**99% of Disabled people
believe that non-Disabled
people need more training
and education on Ableism**

1% answered that they were unsure

**Not a single Disabled person answered that non-Disabled
people did not need more training and education on Ableism**

The data collected from Unlearning Ableism's Big Ableism Survey proves beyond reasonable doubt that the state of play for Disabled people is still rampant with ableism, making up 16% of the Global population and the largest minority group in the world, the responsibility to eradicate ableism and break down barriers is on everybody. Disabled people unanimously agreed that everybody has to take accountability and responsibility for their actions and behaviours, and that everybody should have access to safe, honest and effective training and education on Ableism.

There is no one lived experience, no one appearance, no one way to be Disabled and no two individuals with the same condition or neurological conditions. Disability can impact any anyone. Disability is part of the human experience. Society Disables Disabled people and so does the ableism of others, 99% of Disabled people agree that is for all of us to do and be better.



Thank You

We want to issue an enormous thank you to everybody who took the time to engage, promote and complete 'The Big Ableism Survey' and for your continued support to the work of Unlearning Ableism. With your help and contributions we are able to continue striving forward, empowering others, breaking down barriers and educating others to destroy ableism once and for all.

———— www.unlearningableism.com ————



Appendices

Methodology



Unlearning Ableism has conducted a comprehensive, groundbreaking and never-before-seen analysis of ableism in society today. This paper identifies and provides resolution to the palpable disparities, inequities and barriers to inclusion for Disabled people. This has been carried out in a number of manners including data captures through an online survey completed by 405 Disabled participants, LinkedIn Series, events, promotion and discussion. Unlearning Ableism in the formulation of this paper, have conducted an extensive and comprehensive analysis of existing literature and informational material, used in combination with it's own independent research, to ensure that the following paper reflects an accurate depiction of data, and produce precise evidence for the following review into ableism. To maintain independence any and all material used for the purpose of this paper is not politically affiliated or subject to bribery or bias.

In the formation of the following paper Unlearning Ableism have directly consulted through its LinkedIn Live series with Disability experts, including; researchers, policy analysts, diversity and inclusion specialists and accessibility architects. These individuals identified as Disabled themselves. The empirical evidence provided throughout this report demonstrates clearly the current state of play relating to Disability and ableism. This analysis was completed to ensure competency, effective consultation and the orchestrating of a successful data capture. The following study and collection of data included an online survey with individuals who identify as disabled entrepreneurs. Invitations to participate were open to all, including all continents and inter-sectioning identities.

The Unlearning Ableism data collection survey was made available online and open to all, and alternative accessible formats of the survey including large-print, audio and easy-read were also made available. The survey was advertised out in a number of manners, by both Unlearning Ableism directly and its internal and external supporters, including; direct emails, social media, word-of-mouth, in-person conversation and advertised at a number of public speaking events. All of the individuals whom participated in the survey chose to do so freely, independently and without undue pressure. All of the individuals whom participated in the survey also disclosed that they are Disabled or have a long-term health condition, or in a few incidences the interviewee was a carer completing the survey on behalf of another. All of the questions asked in the survey were optional in their completion to ensure the consideration of privacy, mental health and the right to withhold personal information. Before participating in the survey, individuals were made aware that their answers may be used within this report, however any answers which may be able to identify a particular individual would not be used. All interviewees and those who participated in the survey gave consent to participate and their answers to be used within the following paper, all of those surveyed consented to their anonymous answers being used within the following paper and Unlearning Ableism campaign. The names of those who have contributed to the following paper have been omitted to protect anonymity, except in the testimonies provided where prior permission and statement was taken. This has enabled Unlearning Ableism to conduct the survey and supporting interviews in an setting, which fostered an environment where an individual felt they were able to divulge openly and honestly about their past experiences and beliefs, without fear of repercussion, reputation damage, or loss of business opportunity. The questions asked of the survey participants ensured the receipt of first-hand accounts, examples, lived experiences, the collection of statistical data, and key information relating to the issue at hand, these questions are attached to the Appendixes of this paper, for the reader to clearly contextualise the questions which were asked of the data capture participants. All of those whom participated within contributing to this paper were pre-informed of the research being undertaken, the general theme of the survey questions and that their answers were to contribute to learnings.

Unlearning Ableism alongside host organisations, ensured that the necessary accessibility requirements of those contributing to the following paper or involved within the campaign were met. Therefore the circumstances of each interview may have differed, for example a British Sign Language interpreter being present, however the semi-structured nature of the interview and question basis remained consistent, to ensure the reliability and control of data collected. Unlearning Ableism also ensured that all materials, social media posts and the following paper have been made available in a multitude of accessible formats to ensure equality of engagement opportunity.

Unlearning Ableism has received global and notable praise for providing a space for discussion, data capture and action around the considered discussion of ableism.

Consistently throughout the data-capture, outreach and campaign, intersectionality representation has been at the forefront of ethos. Intersectionality diversity representation included; ethnicity, socio-economic status, nationality, sexual orientation, race, gender identity, religion and spirituality. Alongside intersectionality, throughout the data-capture, outreach and campaign, representation of the diversity of disability and health conditions has also been a forefront ethos, ensuring that the data capture, recommendation and subsequent campaign is applicable and inclusive of all individuals. Disability and long-term health condition diversity representation included; non-visible conditions, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, physical conditions, sensory conditions, neurodiversity, hearing conditions and others.

This has allowed for the data presented to accurately depict the consistency of Disability barriers across all communities, and ensure that Unlearning Ableism strives to always reflect an accurate depiction of the global Disabled community.

Burden of Responsibility



In adherence to the Social Model of Disability, methodology of this paper, ethos's of the organisations engaged with Unlearning Ableism and both ethical and legal obligations, Unlearning Ableism pushes and maintains that the 'burden of responsibility' for the improvement of opportunity and outcomes for Disabled people does not fall upon the Disabled people alone, but also wider society providing opportunities and outcomes, irregardless, stage, size, category or sector. Both accountability and responsibility, are to be upheld to the upmost degree by those responsible for the production of opportunity and outcomes, and not just by Disabled people, either individually or collectively.

Despite the use of the terminology 'burden' in line with 'common phrasing' in this instance, Unlearning Ableism and its associated entities and partners reaffirm that the duty for accessibility, usability, inclusivity and equity are not 'burdens' rather the installation and maintenance of legal, ethical and social responsibilities, which have been stipulated within this paper. Unlearning Ableism also reaffirms that Disabled people and access requirements are not to be associated with the terminology of 'burden' implying that the onus of responsibility has been unduly and unfairly placed. The narrative of Unlearning Ableism therefore continues this paper with the terminology accountability and responsibility, with the removal of 'burden' which insights negative connotations around disability.

Unlearning Ableism does acknowledge the existence of 'disproportionate burden,' where, in rare instances, exceptions to the provision of accessibility and reasonable adjustments may be permitted in accordance with both international law and the Equality Act 2010. Failure or inability to provide accessibility may be permitted in instances where 'requirements would entail a disproportionate burden, or where the websites and mobile applications are only designed for closed groups of users, for intranet and extranet networks, or for private Entities whose turnover is below the threshold provided by the Law'. These disproportionate burdens are only justifiable in stances where an accessibility measure would 'impede the ability to fulfil intended purpose'.

Although Unlearning Ableism does acknowledge the existence of disproportionate burden, it also however acknowledges that the likelihood of incidence or justification for the exclusion of accessibility, inclusivity and equitable parameters of operation is extremely low. Upon the collection and examination of data for the purpose of this paper, not one incidence mentioned by survey participants where accessibility quality was deemed a failure was disproportionate burden present as a reason for failure. The findings stipulated within this paper are not open to the argument of disproportionate burden and categorically adhere to the guiding principle of accessibility being a right and not a privilege for discussion. Unlearning Ableism maintains the premise of 'from the point of design', installing and sustaining accessibility across the end-to-end process from the point of opportunity and outcome being accessed.

Opportunity and Outcome

Unlearning Ableism is focused, and grounded upon the philosophy of transforming the opportunities and outcomes for Disabled people by breaking down the barriers of Ableism. Transforming opportunity refers to the equality of opportunity rhetoric. The equality of opportunity rhetoric is central to the removal of Disability barriers, improvement of equity and greater consideration of inclusion across society. The equality of opportunity rhetoric stipulates that all individuals, whether they are Disabled or not Disabled, are entitled to participate, contribute and engage in the same manner as one-another, through the creation and management of interacting opportunities that exist without barriers to Disabled people. Equality of opportunity, in line with the 2010 Equality's Act premise of positive action and active intervention, stipulates the necessary and sustained removal of materials which do, or may, pose barriers to participation, contribution and engagement for Disabled people. Equality of opportunity secures fair competition, to ensure that individuals are able to compete and participate at the same level without the existence of unfair advantage, unfair treatment, accessibility barriers or discrimination. The Journal of Political Philosophy summarises the equality of opportunity rhetoric as "equalising where people end up rather than where or how they begin," regardless of Disability (beginning), an individual is entitled to the same political elective opportunities (ending), through the removal of equality of opportunity barriers such as financial implications, perceptions and accessibility barriers.

As demonstrated by the data captured by Unlearning Ableism there currently exists a clear bias against Disabled people. Encompassed within the equality of opportunity rhetoric is equality of process, perception and autonomy. A Disabled person must be perceived as equal value, worth, talent and ability as a person without a Disability. A Disabled person must be treated in the same non-discriminatory manner and receive fair treatment, process and management as a person without a Disability. An improvement in the equality of opportunity creates transformation of improved outcome. The equality of opportunity gap has closed the gap of outcome, the ground-breaking data collected by Unlearning Ableism actively and authoritatively demonstrates the current state of Ableism for Disabled people. In reference to 'transforming opportunities and outcomes for disabled entrepreneurs,' the following paper is therefore referring to the necessity of securing and enforcing the guided ethos of equality in opportunity which consequentially removes the palpable disparities between Disabled and non-disabled people.

Terminology



Throughout this report the terminology 'Disability' and 'Disabled' have been adopted. Unlearning Ableism in an entity itself, and all of its contributing parties, uphold the upmost respect for the right of an individual to choose to identify and use the language of their preference in description of their own characteristics. Unlearning Ableism, and all of its contributing parties also acknowledge and respect the existence of difference in language and self-identification, for example preference between identifying as a Disabled person or a person with Disabilities. For the purpose of this paper and Unlearning Ableism campaign, to ensure succinct, consistent, safe, supportive and inclusive practices, the terms 'Disability', 'Disabled' and 'Disabled person' are being used in reference to any person whom either identifies (either singularly or collectively), with; Disabled, a long term health condition, physical health condition, mental health condition, chronic health condition, neurodivergent, sensory condition, non-visible condition, visual condition, hearing condition or any other condition.

The Social Model

The following paper has been commissioned, researched, written and published in its entirety by Unlearning Ableism. The reader is to acknowledge that the following paper has been written and researched in line with the Social Model of Disability and not the Medical Model of Disability.

This has been consciously written acknowledging that The Medical Model of Disability places first focus on a Disability itself, and states that an individual's Disability is because of an inability to participate and engage fully within society. The Social Model of Disability however dictates that the inaccessibility of the social environment is the cause of any inability to participate and engage, not a Disability itself. Unlearning Ableism operates with the unanimous ethos that society must take and hold responsibility, to adapt and allow for Disabled people to flourish. The Social Model also emphasises the talents, aspirations, intelligence and skills of disabled persons and does not adhere to negative stereotypes laid out within the Medical Model, which places sole focus on the 'impairments' and 'limitations' of Disabled persons.

The Social Model, which emerged in the United Kingdom in the 1980's, at its core empathises the potential societal and economic contributions of disabled people and the need for society to foster an inclusive, accessible and diverse community. Unlearning Ableism since its founding, alongside all organisations involved with it's progression and development, recognises all personal identifications around disability and long-term health conditions with equal validity, importance and qualification, in line with The Equality Act 2010.

Unlearning Ableism and The Social Model promotes that Disabled people are being prevented from engagement, opportunity and participation as a direct result of a disabling society, and not solely as a consequence of the medical limitations of their Disability or long term health condition. The Social Model of Disability is therefore continually adopted for the purpose of this paper and as a guiding philosophy across the organisation.

Accountability and Responsibility



The following Unlearning Ableism paper, campaign and data collection is multifaceted in its intentions but driven by the purpose of unlearning Ableism and breaking down barriers for Disabled people across every aspect of society.

Despite being interlinked in their nature, responsibility and accountability are two separate definable premises, which coupled together are fundamental to ensuring the effective identification and removal of ableism for the improvement of opportunity and participation for Disabled people. The creation of responsibility and accountability are therefore a constant and centralised theme of the following paper, to contextualise and highlight the importance of this terminology, it is vital that proprietors of investment across the private, public and third sector have a thorough grasp of the following terminology.

Responsibility refers to the duty held by global society to ensure the execution of positive action both collectively and individually, with the intended mindset of an expected and desired consequence. Through responsibility there exists the active pursuit of action with intention for the fulfilment of commitment. Effective responsibility creates action for the benefit of Disabled people, to unlearn ableism. Responsibility therefore paves the path for accountability.

Accountability refers not the dutiful action itself, but draws focus to the consequence of action, the active pursuit from society to hold ownership of the resulting affects of their actions. Accountability fosters an environment where the effectiveness of action is examined, in its implementation, management and supporting policies. Effective accountability creates long term, sustained implementation of disability, inclusion and accessibility measures as society learns and develops from their previous actions. As laid out within legislation, ethical manifestos and policy, there is a global demand for inclusive and accessible opportunities which represent the diversity of Disability, the data collected for this report however demonstrates how Disabled people are being left-out of this diversity conversation, and that greater responsibility and accountability must be taken to ensure the improvement of opportunities and outcomes for Disabled people.

Accountability is multi-faceted in its benefits, with each of these benefits contributing to the achievement of better opportunities and outcomes for Disabled people. Firstly, accountability embeds responsibility, ensuring that goals and desired achievements are set, monitored and executed such as adopting accessibility provisions ameliorating accessible experiences across the end-to-end process. Secondly, accountability is crucial for the promotion of productivity, sustainability of action, and long-term dedication to defined responsibilities, this dedication creates excellency of performance, ensuring that disability measures imposed are as effective as possible and widespread in their implementation.

Thirdly, accountability provides context and transparency to responsibilities, and propose of action, assisting in the effective achievement of results. Through the active promotion of the purpose of action the global investment community generate greater awareness for the necessity of inclusivity and accessibility, alongside the motivation for this desired increase, this contextual background encourages greater participation from the community as a whole to the cause if the concern for the lack of accessibility and diversity is further understood. For example ameliorating data by capturing the correct data in the correct manner for the correct purpose.

Fourthly, accountability sets and maintains expectations for the promotion of success, ameliorating opportunities to remove ableism. Accountability, and as a consequence responsibility with their interlinked nature, responsibility, is therefore vital in its removal contribution to the improvement of Ableism, and are held as a core value for Unlearning Ableism.

The Big Ableism Survey Questionnaire



Do you identify as a Disabled Person/ Neurodivergent Person/ (Insert preferred self identity language)?

Yes/No

Are you aware of what ableism is?

Yes/No never heard of it/I have somewhat of an idea

Have you ever experienced ableism?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Have you ever witnessed ableism against another person?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

How regularly do you experience ableism?

At least once a week/At least once a month/Once every couple of months/At least once a year/Other

Were you ever taught about ableism?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

If yes to the answer above, where were you taught about ableism?

I taught myself/In education (such as school, university, college)/By another Disabled person/By a family or friend/At work (such as during training, volunteering)/Not applicable/Other

How do you feel about the definition of ableism; 'the less favourable treatment of Disabled people'?

I like it/It needs updating or extending/I don't have an opinion on it

If applicable, how does ableism impact you?

Text answer

Do you get support from others when you experience ableism?

Yes/No/Sometimes/Not applicable

Would you feel able or comfortable to challenge ableism?

Always/Sometimes/Rarely/No

Do you think we need more training and education on ableism for Disabled people?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Do you think we need more training and education on ableism for non-disabled people?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Do you think enough is being done to address ableism within workplaces?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Do you feel there is sufficient education about Disability and ableism in education?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Do you think enough is being done to address ableism within our society?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Where do you think more can be done to address ableism? (Check all that apply)

In education (schools, universities, colleges)/In the workplace/By the Government/By individuals and self-advocacy/Other

Were you ever taught about internalised ableism?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Have you ever experienced mental health challenges as a result of internalised ableism?

Yes/No/I'm not sure/Not applicable/Prefer not to share

How regularly do you experience internalised ableism?

At least once a week/At least once a month/Once every couple of months/At least once a year/I'm not sure/Never/Other

Do you feel comfortable communicating about your experiences of ableism and internalised ableism?

Yes/No/I'm not sure

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add?

Text answer

The Big Ableism Survey

Data and Results

From Unlearning Ableism

Disability Pride Month 2024

