

Plain facts

People with learning difficulties getting jobs

Lots of people with learning difficulties don't have jobs, but would like to work.

Debby Watson, Val Williams and Claire Wickham worked with disabled people and people with learning difficulties on a project about jobs.

They talked with groups of disabled people and people with learning difficulties to find out what helps them get jobs. They also talked to services that help them to get jobs.

This is what they found out about people with learning difficulties:



There are lots of good services to help people with learning difficulties get and keep jobs.



There are lots of things that make it hard for people with learning difficulties to get jobs. They are often worried about their benefits. They think they will have less money if they work.



There needs to be more easy information about jobs.



People with learning difficulties need to know what it is like to have a job. Meeting with others who have jobs or doing work experience is good for this.

Good things about jobs

Jobs are changing so that people can work in different ways. Some people just work in the mornings or afternoons. Benefits are changing too. This makes it easier for people with learning difficulties to get work experience.

Some places like supermarkets are good at employing people with learning difficulties. These places understand the support that people need.

Some people with learning difficulties have good jobs. They are showing others that they can get and keep a job. Sometimes people with learning difficulties run their own firms together.

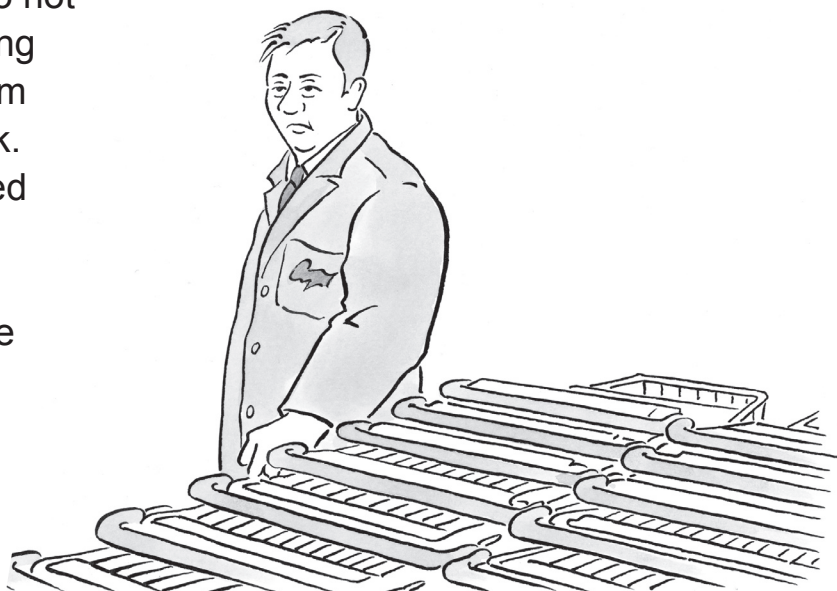


Problems for people with learning difficulties and jobs

There are lots of things that people with learning difficulties are not told about. They do not always know what their rights are. Some people think that working will cause problems with their benefits. There is not enough easy information about jobs.

Sometimes other workers and projects who help people to get jobs do not understand people with learning difficulties. They might tell them that they are not ready to work. Sometimes families are worried about people starting work.

Some people end up doing the same things all the time and don't get to learn new things. One person stayed working with the trolleys in a supermarket for years.



People need good support to get and keep jobs

People with learning difficulties sometimes meet other people with learning difficulties who have jobs. This helps them to think that they could work too. It is good if people can get work placements, or work experience to see what working is like.

Supported employment schemes can help people with learning difficulties get a job. It is good if the support goes on for a long time to help people keep their job and get better jobs when they are ready.



Things that should happen

Employers should make changes so that people with learning difficulties can have jobs. They need to know they can get help and money to do this. Other workers and employers need training so that they know more about people with learning difficulties.


Schools and colleges need money so that they can help people with learning difficulties get jobs.

There needs to be more easy information to help people with learning difficulties find out what jobs there are. It needs to tell them what support they can get and about their benefits.

The benefit system needs to carry on changing so that it is easier for people with learning difficulties to work.



Things to do

- You can look at **Plain Facts 5, 21, 24 and 28** to find out more about getting jobs.
- You can think about the type of job you would like. You can talk to your family, friends or your social worker. You could talk to a benefits advisor about how getting a job might affect your benefits.
- You can look at **Making it work. A guide to help you find and keep a job**. You can download this guide from the Mencap website. The guide is at www.mencap.org.uk/download/MIW_PWLD.pdf
- You can contact the **Disability Employment Advisor** at the **Job Centre Plus**. They help disabled people get jobs.
- You can find out about supported employment services. Supported employment services help you to get a job and help you to do the job. You can ring the **Association for Supported Employment** to find out where your nearest agency is. The number is  **0 1 8 2 9 7 4 0 3 9 1**
You will need to ask for the Association for Supported Employment.

About the Project



Claire




Val



Debby Watson, Val Williams and Claire Wickham work at the University of Bristol. They did a project about employment and disabled people. They have written a report called **A Valued part of the workforce**. You can download this at: www.surrey.ac.uk/politics/cse/sequel-final-reports.htm



Debby

If you would like a copy of the report or want to know more about the project you can contact Debby Watson on:  **0 1 1 7 3 3 1 0 9 8 8**

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