

Neurodiversity in the criminal justice system



Hard words



In this report there are some hard words.

Here is what they mean:



Criminal justice system

Services like the:

- Police
- Courts
- Prison
- Probation

are the criminal justice system.



CJS

Many people say or write CJS when they mean the criminal justice system.

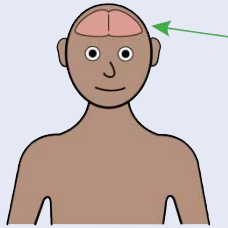
Because CJS is:

- Easier to read.
- What people often say.
- What is often written.

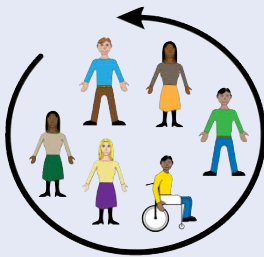
We say CJS in this report.



Neurodiversity

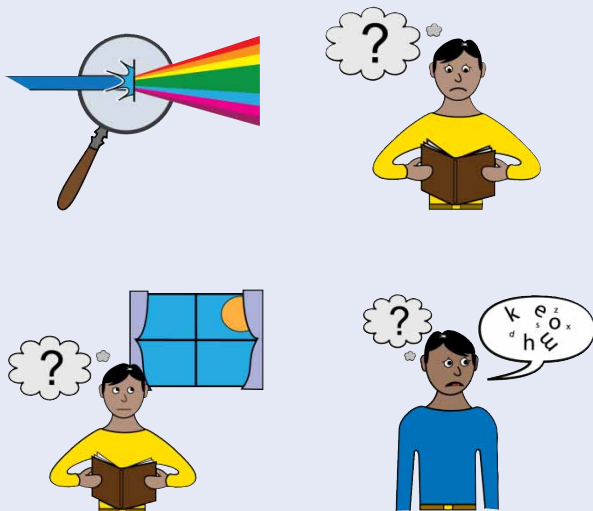


Neuro means about the brain.



Diversity is about a mix of different people.

Neurodiverse people may:



- Be autistic.
- Have learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Have ADHD.
- Have speech and language difficulties.
- Have tic disorders.
- Have brain injuries.



What is this report about?

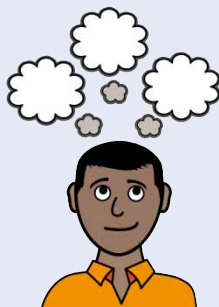


This is about a big report.

The big report is about how neurodivergent people are supported in the criminal justice system or CJS.



What do we mean by neurodivergent?



Someone who is neurodivergent thinks differently to most other people.



Some people don't like the word neurodivergent.



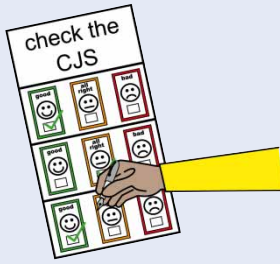
But we need a word to describe the group of people that we want to work with.



The report is about how to make sure that neurodivergent people get the right support in the CJS.



Who wrote this report?



The report was written by people who check that the police, prisons and probation are doing the right things.

They are called:



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

Who asked for this report?

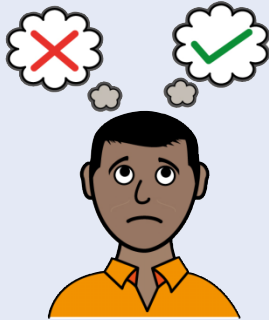


Lord Chancellor – The Secretary of State for Justice Robert Buckland asked for the report.

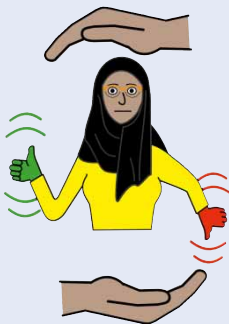
Rt Hon Robert Buckland MP:
www.members.parliament.uk



Why was the report asked for?



For a long time people who work in the CJS have been worried that:



- The CJS doesn't always work well for neurodiverse people.

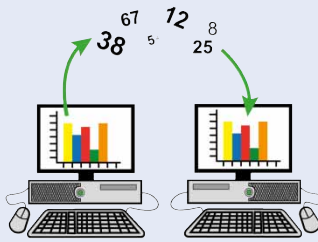


- What happens depends on where in the country people live.

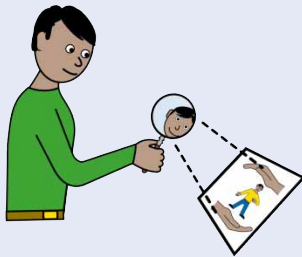


What was the aim of the report?

The aim was to:



- Find out what we know.



- Find out what is being done.

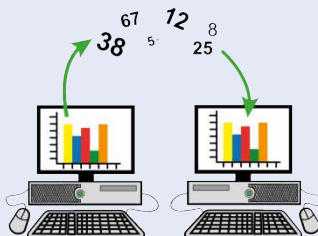


- Tell the Government what could be done to make things better.

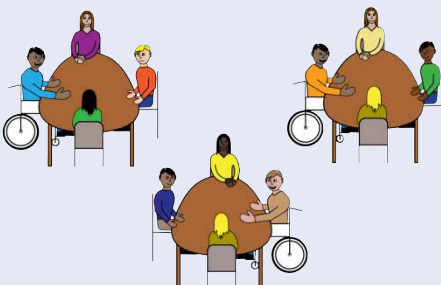


Where did information come from?

Information came from:



- What we already knew.



- Round table events with experts.

1.	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- A call for evidence. This is when anyone can say what they think.



- Talking to people who work in the police, probation and prisons.



- Talking to neurodivergent people who have experienced the CJS.

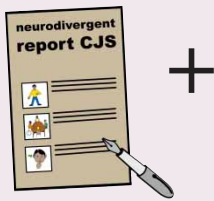


125 people with lived experience gave their views.

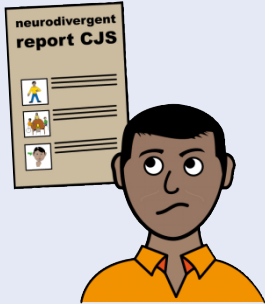
things that you need to do	
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

6

The report made 6 recommendations. These are on page 22.



More about the report



The report said neurodivergent people can find the CJS hard.

Here are some of the problems:



At arrest:



Neurodivergent people may behave differently and be more likely to be arrested.



The police may not know about their condition.

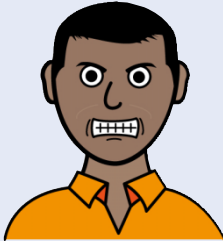


The way things are done can be hard to understand or unsettling.





Places like the police station can be unsettling.



This might make people act in a way that makes supporting them difficult.



In court:

Neurodivergent people:



++

- Might be more likely to be kept on remand.



- Might plead guilty because of the way they think, or to please people.



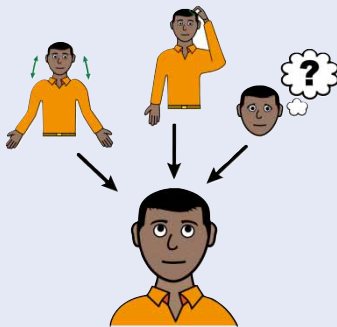
- Might not have their condition thought about when they are sentenced.



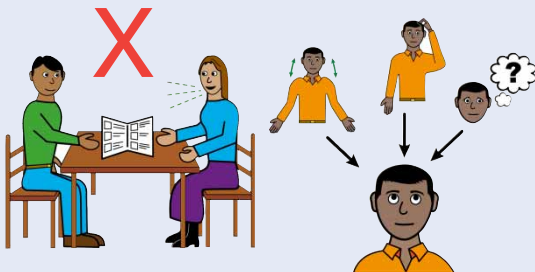
With community supervision:

Neurodivergent people might:

Not understand or stick to the rules of their community order.



Not change the way they act after getting in trouble.



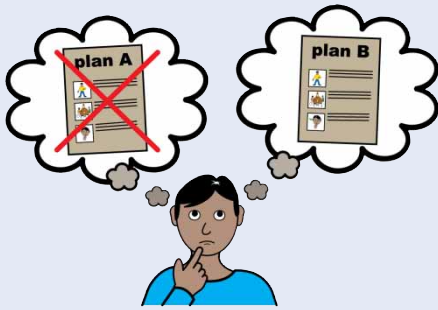
Not be able to take part in special courses to help them change the way they act.



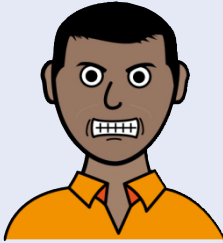
In prison:



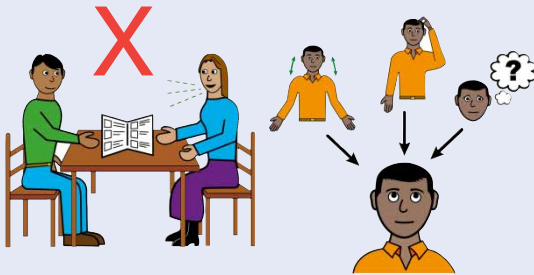
Prisons are noisy and busy places.



Routines may change suddenly.



This can cause neurodivergent people to act in a way that gets them into trouble.



Sometimes people can't take part in courses to help them change the way they behave.



The report looked at:



1. The number of neurodivergent people in the CJS who need support.



2. Screening to find out who is neurodivergent.



3. Training for staff.



4. The support neurodivergent people get.



5. Courses to help people stop getting into trouble.

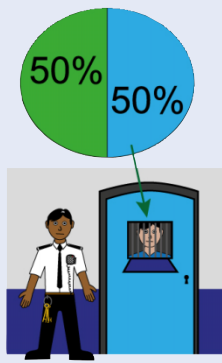


Here is what the report found:

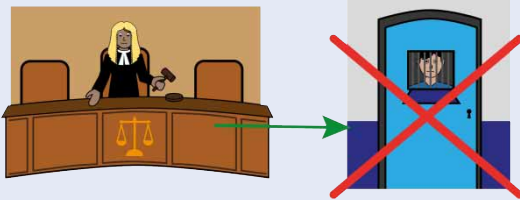
1. The number of neurodivergent people in the CJS who need support



We don't know how many people in the CJS are neurodivergent.



We think that up to half of everyone **in prison** might be neurodivergent.



Not everyone who gets into trouble goes to prison.



We don't know how many neurodivergent people get into trouble but don't go to prison.



We need to count people so that we can:



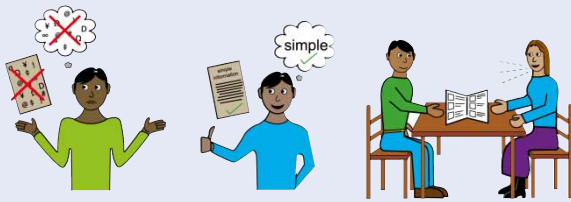
- Find out how many people need support.



- Plan this support across the country.



2. Screening



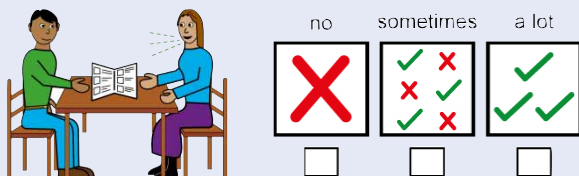
Screening is a simple test to see if someone might be neurodivergent.

Screening helps us to:

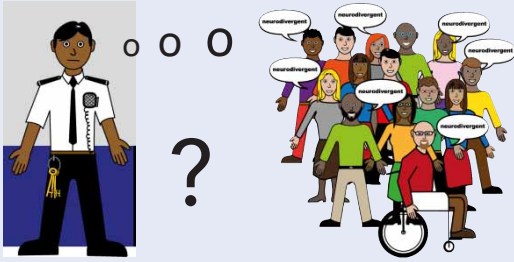
- Know who needs support.
- Count how many people need support.



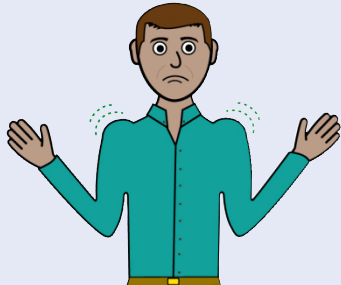
Screening is better in some places than others.



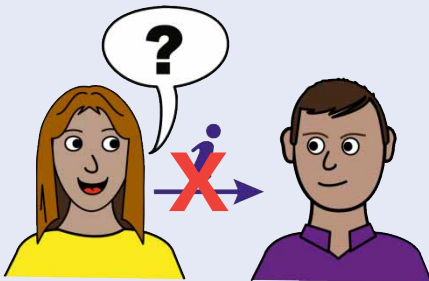
In some places screening doesn't happen at all.



Without screening CJS staff have to try to work out if someone is neurodivergent.



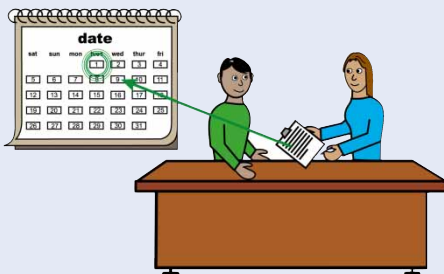
Often staff don't know how to tell if someone may be neurodivergent.



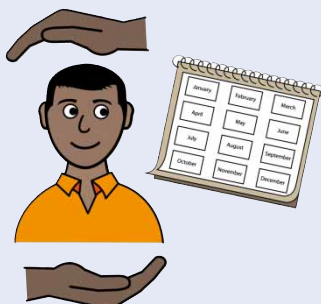
This means that the CJS may not find out about a person's neurodivergence.



If no one knows that a person is neurodivergent they might stay in the CJS instead of getting other support.



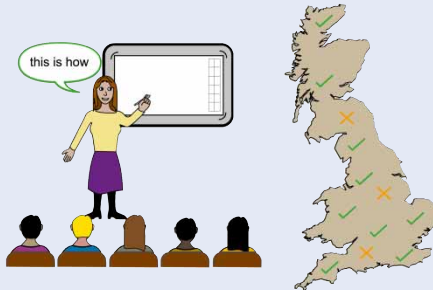
The report said that screening should happen when people first get into trouble.



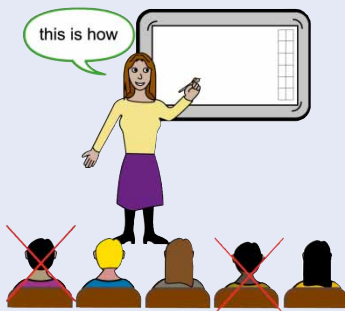
This would let us support people through all of their time with the CJS.



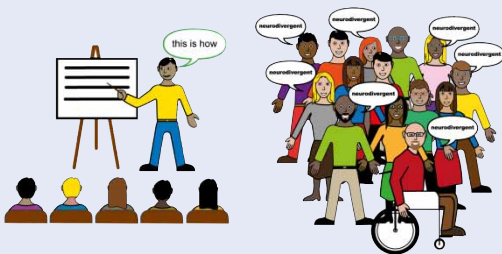
3. Training



Staff training on neurodiversity is different across the country.



Most staff don't get enough training about neurodiversity.



Staff need training about neurodiversity because they need to help:



- Make sure that people's needs are noted.



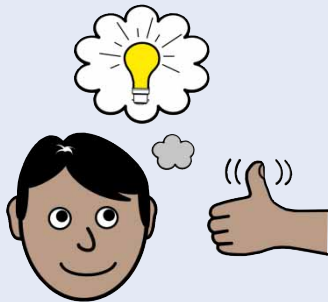
- Find ways to support people.



Staff know more about some conditions like autism.



Staff need to know more about all conditions that neurodivergent people might have.



There needs to be good training so that staff in all parts of the CJS know about neurodiversity.

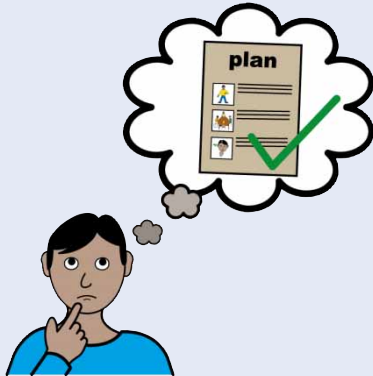


Neurodivergent people should help train staff.

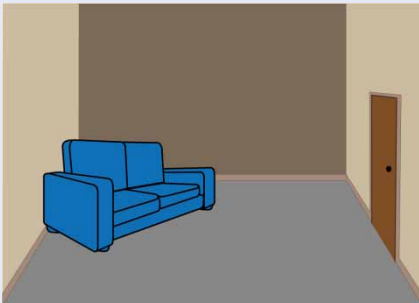


4. Support and adjustments

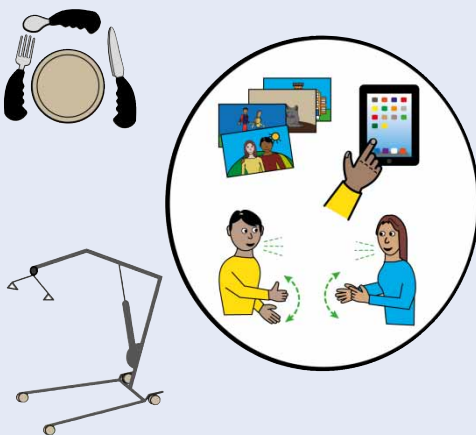
An adjustment is:



- A change to the way we work.



- A change to a building or room.



- Using tools to make things easier.

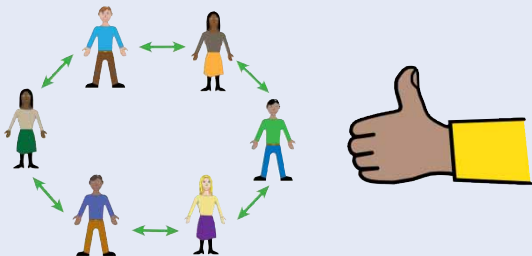
The report said that:



Simple adjustments can help neurodivergent people in the CJS.



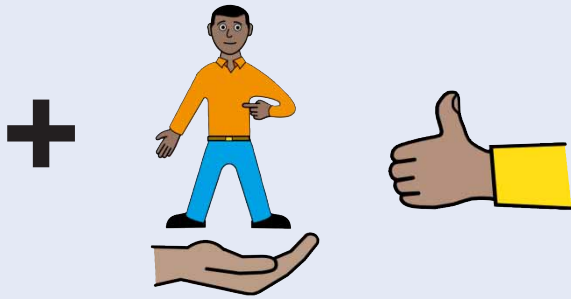
There is a lot of difference in what happens across the country.



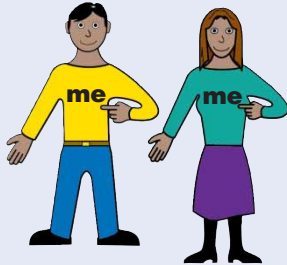
In some places people work together well and give people good support.



It is important for staff to understand the person they are working with.

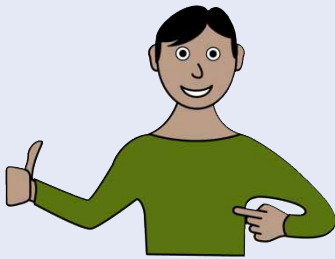


More needs to be done to support people well.



By:

- Finding out what people need.



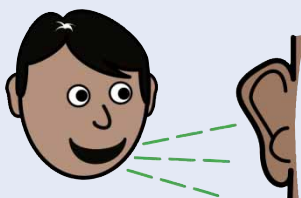
- Adapting services.



- Training staff.



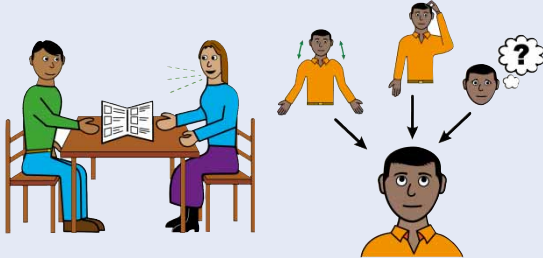
It is possible to support neurodivergent people to stop getting into trouble sometimes.



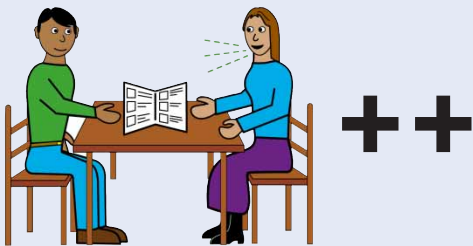
Listening to someone and taking time to understand their needs can make a big difference.



5. Courses



In the CJS there are special courses to help people stop the behaviour that got them into trouble.

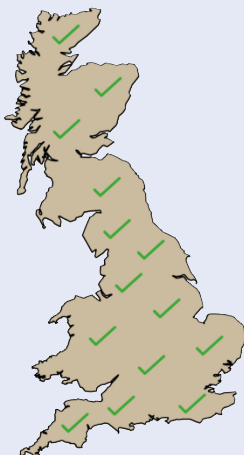


We need more courses that are right for neurodivergent people.

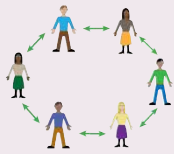
These courses need to:



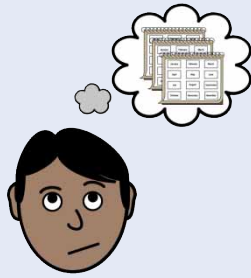
- Cover more subjects.



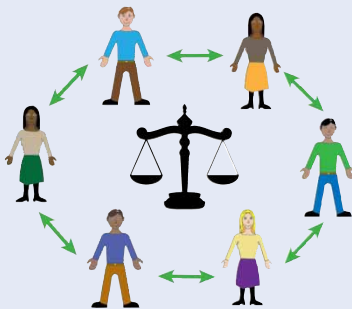
- Run in all parts of the country.



Working together



Some people do not get the long-term support they need.



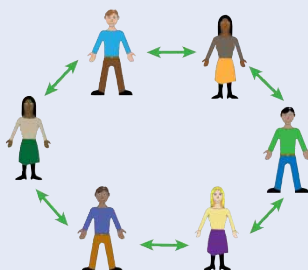
Sometimes long-term support is good. This is because the CJS has worked well with other partners.



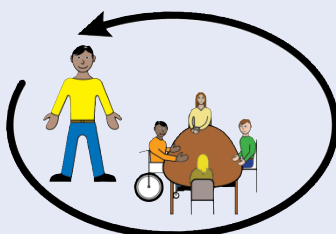
The report told the Government how to make things better



What did the report say should be done?



The main thing is that everyone needs to work together to make a big plan so that things get better.



Neurodivergent people should be involved in writing this plan.

Other recommendations:

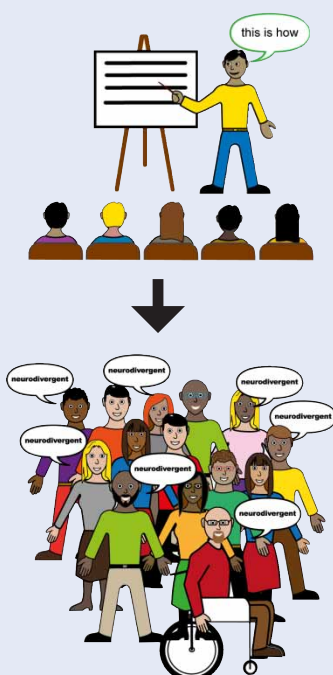


Screening - We need a way to find out if people are neurodivergent.



Counting - We need to know how many neurodivergent people use the CJS.

This will help us to plan support for people who need it.

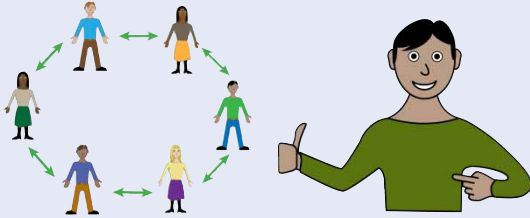


Training - People who work in the CJS need the right training for their job.

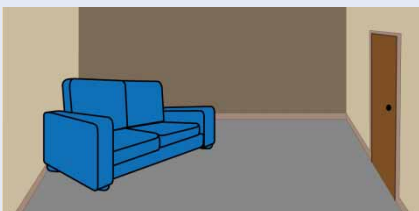
Neurodivergent people should help with this training.



Adjustments - The CJS needs to be ready to support neurodivergent people.



Everyone should work together to improve:



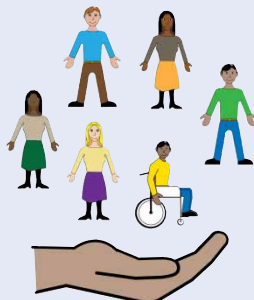
- Places.



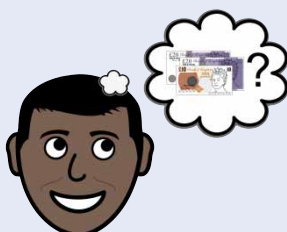
- Communication.



- The way people think and behave when they're working in the CJS.



These changes will help everyone, not just neurodivergent people.



Most changes will be easy to make and cheap.



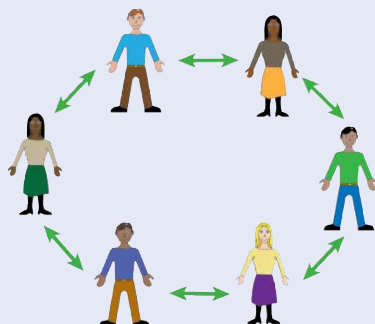
Working together - The CJS and community services should work together.



They should meet the needs of neurodivergent people living in the community.

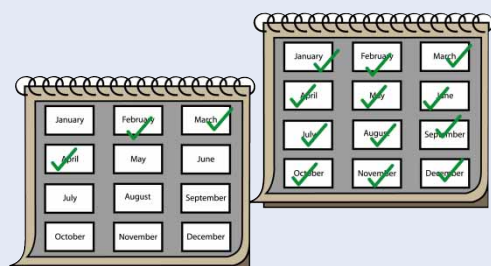


This could stop people getting into trouble in the first place.



If people do get into trouble, services should work together to help them stay out of trouble in the future.

What should happen now?



In the next 3 months the Ministry of Justice should write a plan to say how these things can be done.

The Ministry of Justice should say what they have done after 6 months and 12 months.