



The Disability Rights UK newsletter co-edited with and for young people

**Stay informed with news and information on your journey
through education, training, and work**

National Apprenticeship Week

February 7- 13, 2022

The annual week-long celebration of apprenticeships, which takes place across England, will showcase how apprenticeships have helped employers of all sizes and sectors, and people of all ages and backgrounds. It highlights the many benefits apprenticeships bring to businesses of all sizes.



National Apprenticeship Week brings together Apprenticeship Ambassadors, MPs, training providers, EPAOs, apprentices, parents, and employers to celebrate the work being done across the whole apprenticeship community.

DR UK and our **Disabled Apprentice Network** (DAN) will be participating in National Apprenticeship Week, including a panel presence at the Big Assemble on February 8th, and a lunchtime webinar with DAN members and students at various colleges on the 10th of February - ***Please let us know if you want to join the webinar!***

The Big Assembly is a nationally recognized live broadcast that takes place during National Apprenticeship Week. It provides schools, parents, and students with practical, fun, and relevant information about apprenticeships.

More information on National Apprenticeship Week 2022 can be found on the GOV.UK website and on social media channels, @Apprenticeships on Twitter and National Apprenticeship Service on LinkedIn. To join the webinar, please contact **Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org**

Big Assembly Broadcast

The 2022 Big Assembly is being broadcast live from Pret a Manger, Victoria Street, London, on the 8 February at 11:10 am.

It will feature a panel made up of employers, current apprentices, former apprentices, and a representative from the **Disabled Apprentice Network**

As well as live Q&As and myth busting, there will also be segments showcasing the apprenticeship programmes at Bakkavor, the Cooperative Bank & Coca Cola.



You can sign up ahead of the event via this link: **The Big Assembly - NAW2022 - Workpays** and you'll be sent further instructions by email.

DR UK Conference: Get ahead: Post-16 options for Disabled young people

February 22nd, 2022 - 9:30am – 4pm

Annual Disability Rights UK/Disability and Skills Unit conference for Disabled young people, careers and enterprise advisers, coaches, teachers, employers, mentors, training providers, family carers and others working with Disabled young people.

This online event aims to:

- Provide information and relevant resources for Disabled young people to make informed choices on their post-16 journey.
- Share best practice on strategies and techniques that support Disabled young people in work, training, and education.

This is a free conference.

Register for the conference **here**



Inclusive employers: good for business - digital toolkit

Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) has launched a new 10-minute video.

In this video, employers from BT, Wired Magazine, KPMG, and Intelligent Energy discuss the benefits of a diverse workforce, the adaptations that can be made, support for those adjustments and advice to other organisations looking to employ blind and partially sighted people.

The video aims to show employers the positives of hiring blind and partially sighted people and how adaptations can be simple and low cost.

Watch the video: **Inclusive employers: good for business - Thomas Pocklington Trust (pocklington-trust.org.uk)**

Learning and Prepared for Work

Many young people are uncertain about their future in the workplace. One third of young people are worried about their future income, and a similar proportion are worried about being able to find employment.

Young people recognise the importance of soft skills, with most saying that developing skills such as communication and confidence is just, or more important, as getting good grades.

However, two-thirds of young workers feel that they did not receive enough support to develop these skills at school and almost three-quarters say that they did not have the soft skills needed to do well when they entered the workforce.

Young people are also concerned about their lack of work experience and report that employers often expect them to have experience.

In 2019, only half of all secondary school pupils were offered work experience. The vast majority of students who do take part in work experience report that it is helpful in making their next career step. Young people suggest that work experience should be a compulsory element of education, and that students should not be left to find opportunities on their own.

Related to this, young people report that the careers support they receive is from teachers or advisors who do not know them well and are unable to tailor the support to them individually.

[Youth Evidence Review rapid assessment findings \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



Super People – The Achieve Project

The Achieve Project was born at the end of 2020, during the COVID pandemic

With help from Disability Rights UK, Super People worked with over 70+ students from Arts University Bournemouth who were tasked with creating self-promotion products to help 14 young adults with additional needs to find employment. This documentary showcases the journey over the last year (2021).

Watch the documentary: **[Superpeople](#)**

The Achieve Project

Superpeople + Disability Rights UK + AUB Human

Slug Days, Penguin Days and Duck Days by Sara Leach

Book Review

By Aurelia

These books are about a girl called Lauren. A slug day for Lauren is where she can't process what is happening, and everyone acts like they hate her.

Lauren is a child. She can't get a diagnosis, but she is autistic. She attends school but has no friends and gets in trouble for things that make no sense. One time, she dropped a pen in a spelling test and got in trouble for it and was told she was a 'very naughty girl'.



Lauren needs to stim to stay calm. Stimming is where a person repeats an action, normally based on a sensory activity. Lauren needs to throw a ball up and down because she likes how this feels. This gets her into trouble too. She is only allowed to squeeze her favourite rubber and ball at school.

Lauren has a counsellor, and she keeps asking her if she is the problem. The counsellor tells her that she isn't the problem. But the other children are mean to her. The teacher doesn't seem to be very understanding of her. And there is a boy called Dan who bullies her relentlessly. Lauren knows she is different, but she doesn't want to be. She just wants to be able to get on with things normally like other children.

All three books show us that the things around Lauren are really bad and need to change to accommodate Lauren.

Read the full review: **[Slug Days, Penguin Days and Duck Days by Sara Leach: book reviews by Aurelia Lloyd-Morell \(aged 11\) | Disability Rights UK](#)**

Autism at Work Programme

The programme, in association with the Bloomfield Trust, aims to increase the number of autistic people in sustainable paid employment by making employers aware of autistic talent and the benefits of a truly neurodiverse workforce.



Supporting employers to attract, recruit and retain autistic employees. Promoting accessible roles to autistic job seekers via our networks and support applicants through the recruitment process. Offering ongoing coaching support to successful candidates and to their managers, creating the best possible conditions for success.

If you have any questions about the Autism at Work programme, please contact: enterprise.team@nas.org.uk

The Support, Genders, and Sexualities Project



A new study on personal assistance is looking for participants. The study asks how young Disabled adults (age 18-30) choose who is the right personal assistant (PA) for them.

The project is looking to speak to young Disabled people (age 18-30) with a range of genders and sexualities about their experiences.

If you'd like to take part you must be aged between 18 and 30, live in England, and have about 6 months experience of managing your support arrangements. You do not have to have a PA right now. It doesn't matter what your gender or sexuality is.

Find out more in this [recruitment video](#) for the study. Findings will be used to develop resources for use by PAs, young disabled adults, and social care organisations. All participants will receive a £20 gift voucher for taking part.

For more information, please contact Ned Coleman-Fountain by emailing edmund.coleman-fountain@northumbria.ac.uk or via text message or WhatsApp on 07838664356,

or visit <https://supportingsexualitiesstudy.wordpress.com/>

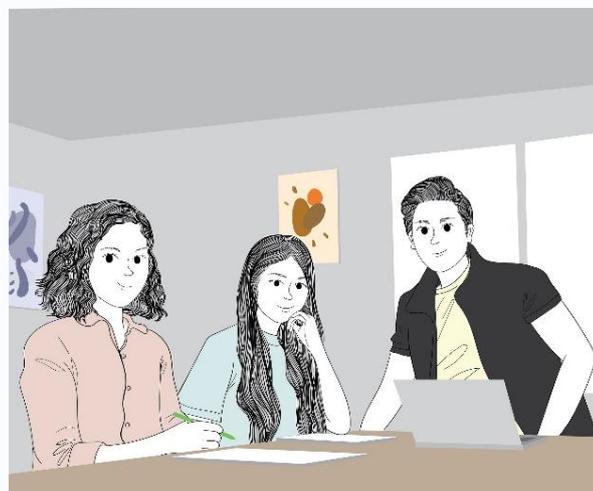
Leadership Academy Programme

The Leadership Academy Programme is a career development programme for disabled employees.

The Leadership Academy Programme (LAP) was developed after a group of disabled senior leaders found that, whilst disabled employees were managing to gain employment, their ability to excel up the corporate ladder appeared limited. LAP is now delivered online.

The benefits of moving the programme online include providing a modular format to encourage sustainable growth for LAP and being able to provide tailored options for employers. Participants can access the programme flexibly, without travel barriers.

The 2022 course comprises 14 sessions (of 2-4 hours) running from February 2022 to September 2022.



If you would like further information about LAP, please visit the website, or contact Katrina Morris: katrina.morris@disabilityrightsuk.org

2021: A year of personal growth and new opportunities



The consequences of the pandemic have once again mapped out another year for all of us in one way or another. Who knows what's in store for next year? No matter what happens, I know that we'll support each other, just like we always do. As we prepare to say goodbye to a turbulent 2021 and see in a new year, I thought I'd take the time to delve into the last 12 months.

As 2020 drew to a close, I think we were all ready for a new year. I entered 2021 feeling hopeful and optimistic about the year ahead. Unfortunately, that soon started to disappear. If 2020 was a record, it felt like it would be on loop for another 12 months.

During the first quarter of 2021, I had a couple of virtual job interviews. That's something I never would have expected a few years ago. However, it resulted in far less stress.

It also meant that it didn't play havoc with my ME/CFS symptoms. Sometimes the smallest adjustments make the world of difference. Perhaps most significantly, the interviews were the start of creating those changes that I knew I needed. If there was one way to describe the last 12 months, it would be a year of pushing myself out of my comfort zone.

In February, I **became a radio presenter**, co-hosting the Happy Hour on RNIB Connect Radio – a show dedicated to discussing vision impairment, mental health and over all wellbeing. I'd spent a number of months gearing up to the show, so it was an amazing feeling when we were finally on air! Learning the art of radio has been brilliant so far. Presenting is something that's out of my comfort zone for sure. 10 months in, and I'm happy to report that it feels much more natural now.

I think the take away point from the whole thing is how incredible broadening your horizons can be.

2021: A year of personal growth and new opportunities - Life of a Blind Girl

Upcoming Events January

January 5 - January 22-Big Schools Birdwatch 2022 **RSPB's Big Schools' Birdwatch 2022 - Event Info and Resources (twinkl.co.uk)**

January 17- Brew Monday 2022- **Brew Monday 2022 | #BrewMonday | Stay connected with a virtual cuppa (samaritans.org)**

January 18-Winnie the Pooh Day 2022- One of the cuddliest holidays around has to be Winnie the Pooh Day, celebrated on the birthday of author A A Milne

January 21-National Hug Day 2022





Greater London Authority Projects

Do you live in London?
Are you currently NEET?

Then Genius Within may be able to help!

Genius Within CIC is a social enterprise that has helped hundreds of people out of unemployment through personalised coaching programmes tailored specifically for each client.

Genius Within are currently working in 3 projects within the Greater London Authority (GLA).

These programmes are focused on supporting individuals into employment, education, or training. All participants must not be in employment or education to join. The projects are:

Employ Me London (MENCAP)

- 16-24 year olds
- With physical disability and/or long term health conditions.
- Covering all boroughs.

Email: EmployMeLondon@GeniusWithin.org

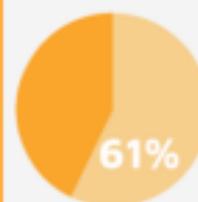


Over 95% of clients retook jobs one year after coaching p

Able2 (Barnet and Southgate College)

- 16-24 year olds
- With physical disability and/or long term health conditions.
- Covering all boroughs.

Email: Able2@GeniusWithin.org

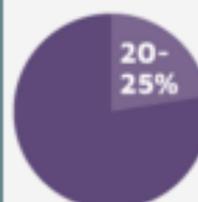


On average clients reported 61% improvement in their topic

Youth Employment Skills (REED in Partnership)

- 18-24 year olds
- With social, emotional and Mental Health needs
- Hounslow, Croydon, and Wandsworth

Email: YES@GeniusWithin.org



20-25% of clients are within one coaching p

To find out more information on all of these projects, please visit our website:
www.GeniusWithin.org/Employability-programmes

Advice and Information for Disabled young people in education, apprenticeships, traineeships, or Supported Internships is available from the DR UK Student Helpline

- Opening hours: 11am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Telephone: 0330 995 0414
- Email: students@disabilityrightsuk.org



Photographs by Jimmy

Contact Us

 Email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

 Twitter: [@GetAheadDRUK](https://twitter.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 Instagram: [@GetAheadDRUK](https://www.instagram.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 Videos: [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 [Get Ahead webpage](https://www.getahead.org.uk)



[DR UK website](https://www.dr.uk)

We like to hear from you!

Give us your feedback and contact:

Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

For a text-only and large-print version of the Get Ahead newsletter:

email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

Access the Get Ahead newsletters and magazines on our [Get Ahead webpage](https://www.getahead.org.uk)

To receive notifications about the Get Ahead publications please sign up [here](#)

Disability Rights UK

We are Disabled people leading change, and the voice of young Disabled people has to be central to that change.

