



IMPACT REPORT 2024

Empower Autism has been working with the autistic community to create positive social change for over 30 years. Our vision is to enable autistic people to live with confidence and self-belief, whilst our mission is to empower autistic people to reach their potential through programs and services that are based on inclusiveness, self-development and self-advocacy. We have an unequivocal commitment to autistic inclusion, collaboration, authentic co-design and to empowering autistic people to increase community & economic participation.

Empower Autism designs and delivers programs and services in three (3) key impact areas;

*1. **Empowerment** of autistic people and their carers/family*

*2. **Education** of the mainstream community (including employers)*

*3. **Information** and practical advice and support*

1. EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

- Peer Support Groups
- Peer Mentoring Programs
- Life Skills Programs
- Employment Coaching Programs

2. EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Employer Education & Support
- Inclusion Consultancy
- Workshops, Training & Professional Development
- Accessible Volunteering

3. INFORMATION SERVICES

- Autism Connect (as Queensland Partners of Amaze)
- Information, Support & Referral Services





FEEDBACK FROM OUR COMMUNITY AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

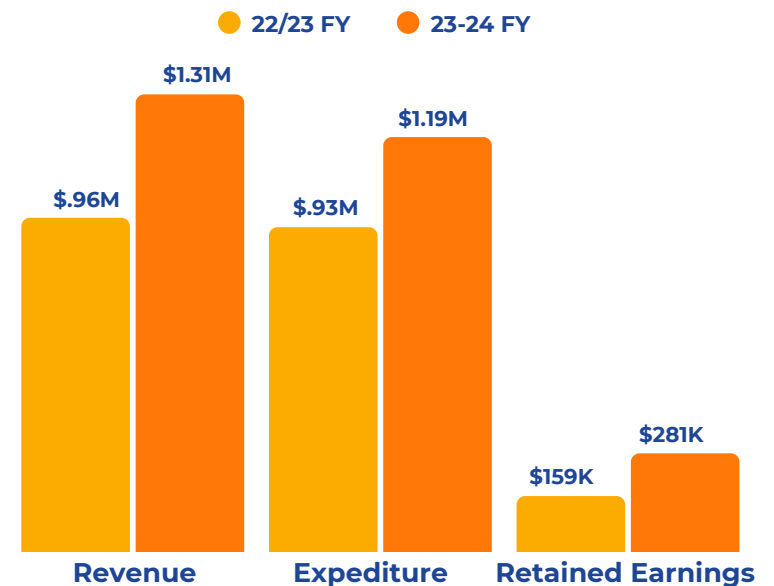
“What a beautiful service you run. Nothing has been too much trouble and everyone we’ve spoken to has been so lovely and helpful” **-Participant**

“Empower Autism has helped me find confidence and acceptance in who I am now, and the potential for growth into the future. I am much more aware of the help and services that are available to me as an autistic person.”
-emPower Up: Life Skills Participant

“Empowered Minds was insightful, impactful and engaging. It has allowed me to foster better connections with my whole team and those who I engage with in the community.” **-Empowered Minds Participant**

“Its the first time I’ve been in an environment where everyone is understanding, supportive and accommodating of autistic people’s needs and offered support without needing to ask for it. It’s been helpful for me to know that it’s possible for all workplace to be like this.”
-Volunteer

FINANCIAL SUMMARY





Empower
Autism

HOW WE'VE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN 2024

Our strategic priorities are the empowerment of autistic people, education of the mainstream community, connection and collaboration to extend our reach and capacity, and the wellbeing of our community.

EMPOWERMENT *of autistic people*



4 New Peer Support Groups opened

↑ 36%

174 Participants attended **244** Peer Support Sessions

↑ 45%

80 Parents and carers attended **142** Parent and Carer Support Sessions

↑ 22%

47 Volunteers donated **2,000+ hrs** to facilitate Peer Support Groups

"The environment fostered by the Empower Autism team is inclusive, supportive, neuro-affirming and fun."
-Peer Support Groups Volunteer

48 Participants attended **13** Life Skills Programs

↑ 85%

17 Mentees attended **227** sessions, run by **11** volunteer mentors

"The connection with my mentor is the highlight of my week. We end up talking for ages and sharing experiences. She is very knowledgeable and tries to help me improve my life." -Mentee

EDUCATION *of mainstream community*



Increased the capacity of **6** employer partners, to attract and retain autistic talent

"This program has given us insight into how we can create access for all employees - we are better prepared to attract and recruit neurodivergent talent."
-Owner/ Director of Employer Partner

Delivered education sessions to **64** staff of our employer partners

"I was able to better communicate with my supervisor thanks to having sessions with Empower Autism Staff, I feel more confident to do my job because of it."
-Employee of Employer Partner

Empowered Minds presentations and workshops delivered to **8** organisations and **120** people

"Attending the Empower Autism Workshop was a transformative experience. The facilitators bring both knowledge and empathy, creating a welcoming and supportive environment. They provide practical strategies tailored for real-life situations, making it easier for participants to build confidence and skills in empowering autistic individuals. The workshop equips you with an understanding to foster more effective communication, understanding, and positive interactions. I walked away with a deeper insight into autism that has continued to offer support long after the workshop ended. Empower Autism truly empowers not only individuals but also families and communities to create inclusive and understanding environments" -Empowered Minds Attendee

CONNECTION

to further our reach and capacity



Collaborated with **Amaze**, as Queensland Partners for delivery of Autism Connect, with our advisors assisting **900+** callers.

"The ongoing partnership between Amaze and Empower Autism to support the delivery of Autism Connect, the National Autism Helpline, has been fantastic. The partnership is a true collaboration and regular engagement on other projects has proved a significant benefit for the whole community. I can't thank Empower Autism and the team enough for the ongoing dedication and support."

-David Tonge, Amaze CEO



Connected with **Autie Talk** to design and deliver autism-affirming training

"Empower Autism makes a meaningful and powerful impact by equipping autistic individuals and their communities with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to foster inclusion, confidence and empowerment. Their dedication to creating positive change is truly commendable, and it was a privilege to contribute to their important work."

-Kory Sherland, Autie Talk Founder



Queensland Government

Collaborated with **Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads** to provide Autism Accessibility feedback on **SEQ's** next train fleet.

"Neurodivergent people have often been under-represented in co-design processes in the past. We're delighted that we've been able to include them through organisations like Empower Autism. We've learned so much from these participants, and hope that future projects will expand membership of reference groups to reflect the diversity of our society."

-Frances Dodd, Strategy, Corporate Affairs and Governance Lead, Queensland Train Manufacturing Program



Collaborated with **Volunteering Queensland** to promote accessible volunteering.

WELLBEING

of our community



Launched our **3 Year Strategic Plan (2024-2026)**

"Our strategic priorities recognise that change starts with us. To impact social change, everything that we do must be done in an autism affirming manner, with a view to reduction of barriers for autistic connection and involvement. This starts with our own recruitment, onboarding, management and retention strategies for our staff, our volunteers, our participants and our community, and includes all our programs and services."

-Tom Moss, Empower Autism CEO

Launched Empower Autism's **Theory of Change**

"Committing to the creation of an accessible community that celebrates neurodiversity is imperative, as it fosters an inclusive environment where the unique perspectives and abilities of neurodivergent individuals are not only recognised, but valued."

-Chris Edwards, Research Fellow

Implemented **Autism Affirming Practices Training** for all staff, volunteers and board members

Increased Empower Autism's neurodivergent staff representation to **74%**

"I think this is a fantastic place to work, the mission of the organisation and the attitude and approach of the employees genuinely makes this the most soul-nourishing company I have worked with."

-Staff Member

"The best thing about volunteering for Empower Autism is the change in knowing my true self and being completely accepted and valued for it."

-Volunteer

Celebrated **30 years** working with the autistic community