

Autism & Housing Research Project 2020



Literature review of autism-friendly housing matters

Compiled by Grayson Bourke, Michael Brown, Genesis Marie R. Buendia, Zachary Fabos, Melissa Quimby, and Kendra Shaw, under the supervision of Frank Beck, PhD, of the Illinois State University Stevenson Center



Following is a compilation of literature research findings related to autism and housing.

Background: In January 2020, six graduate students from the Stevenson Center at Illinois State University were asked to conduct social research for Autism McLean. The objective was to conduct an applied research project that met Autism McLean's needs while providing an applied education to service-minded students.



The focus of their research was on housing assets and programs available in McLean County and how well those assets match the needs of people with autism. The following literature findings were compiled in support of this project. (See separate documentation for local research results.)



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Literature Review:

Findings:

- Case Studies
- Common Challenges and Statistics
- Trending Themes and Recommendations

Case Studies:

- People with ASD and their needs
- Successful housing models
- Provide voice to families and their members with ASD on their needs

Common Challenges and Statistics:

- Need for dynamic process in resource attainment
- Global need for autism-friendly housing
- Individuals with ASD are more likely to have and spend twice as much on healthcare

Trending Themes and Recommendations:

- Attribute differences of people with ASD and their housing needs
- Recommendations for assisted living, campus housing, and building accommodations

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Literature Review: Case Studies

Literature

- Charis Workhome (Mostafa 2010)
 - Architectural consideration of spatial attributes for housing for adults with ASD
- Social Living Complex (Doenyas 2016)
 - Five-year lease in "naturalistic learning environment" apartment with "buddy system" of children with and without ASD
- Sweetwater Spectrum (Holakiewicz)
 - Separation of accommodations and support service from housing so that if one falls through, the other does not

Key Findings

- Need to consider spatial: quality, organization, orientation, integration, and safety
- Need for: controlled visuals, lighting, sound, and odor as well as easy-to-use and easy-to-access amenities
- Success in "family-focused" model where neighborhood of families with and without ASD live nearby
- Success in "landlord and tenant" model where tenants find their own meal and transportation needs

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Literature Review: Case Studies, continued

Literature

- Scotland's collaborative knowledge exchange (Jenkins et al 2014)
 - Communicate between housing and services providers with academia
- The Housing Options Council (Morey and Woolrych 2002)
 - Review the wants and needs of existing and potential services as well as of service development and provision
- Australia's transforming homes (Owen and McCann 2018)
 - House needs related to protection, feelings, and the making and unmaking of home

Key Findings

- Connect housing and service providers with academia to learn more about assets and limits
- Give people with ASD a voice to represent and advocate for self
- Home needs look like:
 - locks and bells at the door,
 - emotional and psychological experience with sensory spatial factors, and
 - management of micro-decisions such as a chore list

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Literature Review: **Common Challenges**

Literature

- King and Bearman (2011)
 - Resource and diagnosis rates in California from 1992 to 2000
- Nagib and Williams (2017)
 - Found five design strategies for autism-friendly housing
- Rogge and Janssen (2019)
 - Economic challenges that families, individuals with ASD, and healthcare providers face

Key Findings

- Need to make the resource acquirement process “dynamic” and accommodating to the growing and changing population
- Need for housing design aspects of social and communication, sensory, imagination and perception, safety, and behavior
- Individuals with ASD are more likely to have and spend twice as much on healthcare within their lifetime

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Literature Review: **Statistics**

Literature

- Steele and Ahrentzen (2015)
 - Surveys from Canada, Japan, UK, and U.S. from 1960 to 1999
- Dudley et al (2019)
 - Survey from North Carolina found a correlation between an individual’s living situation and the unmet needs of adults with ASD
- Friedman, Erickson, Warfield and Parish (2013)
 - Adult with ASD transition from systems catered to children to ones for adults under the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Key Findings

- 1-48% of people with ASD live (semi-) independently, while 22-93% live with their parents, showing the global need for autism-friendly housing
- 67.4% of youth with ASD do not attend system transition meetings, in comparison to the 49% of youth with other impairments that do attend
- Adults with ASD not living with their family were two to five times more likely to receive assistance in unemployment training, allied health, mental health services, and independent living skills
- Healthcare costs for those with ASD are up to seven times as much of those that do not have ASD

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Literature Review: Trending Themes

Literature

- Robertson (2009)
 - Attribute differences of people with ASD
- Kinnaer, Baumers, and Heylighe (2014; 2016)
 - Attribute differences of housing in terms of neighborhood, housing type, layout, and interior

Key Findings

- **People:**
 - language, communication, and social interaction,
 - sensory processing,
 - motor skills execution,
 - goal oriented and reflexive thinking and planning
- **Housing:**
 - quietness versus reachability to other places,
 - detached housing versus apartments for privacy,
 - benefits between separate rooms versus a loft,
 - and keeping everything stowed away or displayed in the house.

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Literature Review: Recommendations

Literature

- Felce et al (2011)
 - Interviewed care-givers working in assisted housing
- Atsmon, Yaakobi, and Lowinge (2019)
 - Architectural recommendations of building a house for people with ASD
- Ackles, Fields, and Skinner (2013)
 - Recommended accommodations for university students with ASD in campus housing

Key Findings

- Assisted Living looked at: rigidity of routine, block treatment, social distance between staff and residents, and depersonalization
- Recommend to build houses with
 - 1) acoustics reduce internal/external noise
 - 2) spatial sequencing for daily routine
 - 3) escape spaces for sensory neutrality and accessibility
 - 4) compartmentalization rooms for different purposes
 - 5) transitional spaces between activities
 - 6) sensory zoning
 - 7) safety
- Campus Housing looked at: scheduling early move-in days, providing support personnel, developing ways to assist students who are not conscious of their condition

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For local information on housing...

- The Housing section of Bloomington's Comprehensive Plan
 - <https://mcplan.org/file/533/Chapter%203%20Housing.pdf>
- The Housing section of Normal's Comprehensive Plan
 - https://mcplan.org/file/226/Elements_Housing.pdf
- Executive Summary and Affordable Housing Study (p.37)
 - https://mcplan.org/file/493/2017_BN%20Home_Regional%20Housing%20Study_FINAL.pdf