



Learning Disability England

# Being Seen, Being Heard

LEARNING DISABILITY ENGLAND'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026



**Jack Marshall**

**Kate Chate**

**Member Rep Co Chairs**

**Learning Disability England**

**Being Seen, Being Heard**

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**Gary Bourlet**

**Rachael Hall**

**Learning Disability England**

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GOOD LIVES

In



Learning Disability England



10

years time



# Shaping the next 10 years

At the in-person conference we asked people

**In 10 years' time, what would you like to see happening for yourself or others? How will we get there?**

Today, we want to build on this to help shape the work Learning Disability England focus's on for the next 10 years.



# What members have said so far



## **Inclusion and Visibility in Society**

- Society becomes fully inclusive, where people with learning disabilities are recognised as equal citizens.
  - Representation in politics, media, arts, and government and hold public leadership roles



## **Better Social Care and Support Systems**

- A reliable, well-resourced social care system that supports independence and wellbeing.
  - Creative and secure care packages
  - Valued and well paid support workers

# What members have said so far



## Community Living Instead of Institutional Care

- People with learning disabilities live in their communities with dignity and choice.
  - Homes not hospitals



## Health Equality and Longer Lives

- People with learning disabilities should live longer, healthier lives equal to the general population.

# What members have said so far



## Education, Employment and Opportunities

- Equal opportunities for learning, employment, and independence.
  - access to higher education and work placements, self employment opportunities.

## Rights, Advocacy and Political Voice

- People with learning disabilities shaping policies that affect their lives.
  - New legislation, strong lobbying groups and meaningful participation in policymaking

# What do you think?

Using Menti (or in the chat) we want to ask you all to share your thoughts on

**What is most important for Learning Disability England to focus on in the next 10 years?**

**What do we need to do to make this happen?**



# How will we use this?



It will be written up and shared with members after the conference.

What we hear will shape and inform the future work of Learning Disability England

It will help us to know what matters to people

We will share it with the government and other organisations





**Courtney and Imogen  
Advonet**

**Natasha and Sammy  
BeMix**

**Learning Disability England**

**Being Seen, Being Heard**

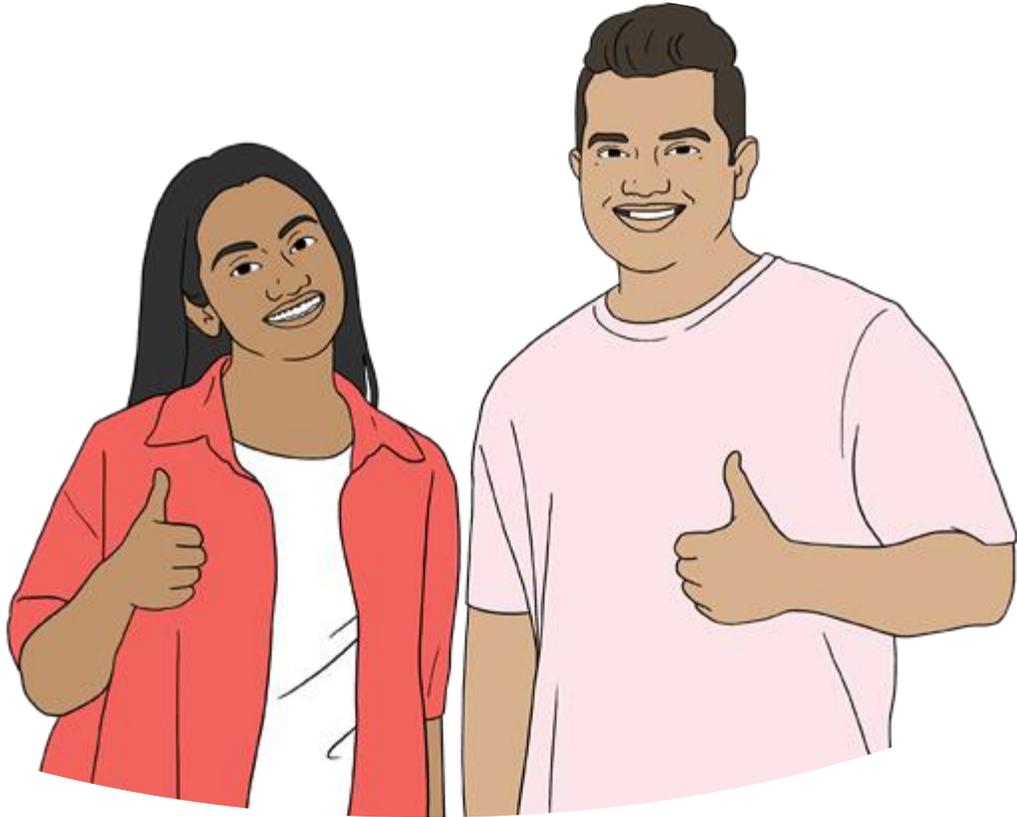
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# Creating Inclusive Employment Models Through Co-Production

Sammy Lamb, Natasha Corcoran, Courtney Williams and Imogen Day



# Contents



- Welcome and Introductions
- Benefits of employing People with Learning Disabilities
- Building an Inclusive Society
- Barriers to Employment
- Case Studies
- Support for Employers
- Q and A

# About Asking You



Asking You is a self-advocacy organisation based in Leeds.

We run projects, have a day service and run evening events for adults with learning disabilities in Leeds.

In our Projects Team we are now 60% staffed by people with lived experience of a learning disability and/or autism.

# About bemix



be seen  
be heard  
belong

- Charity in Kent and Medway
- People who are Autistic and/ or have learning disabilities and other people all working together.
- Supported Education
- Supported Internships
- Training Provider - Oliver McGowan
- Advocacy
- Groups
- Leaders with Lived Experience

# Sammy Lamb



- Expert by Experience – Learning Disability
- OMMT Trainer
- Have done advocacy work to help others with Learning Disabilities.
- Enjoys Reading
- Been with bemix a long time! OMMT trainer about 14 months

# Natasha Corcoran



- Expert by Experience –Autistic
- OMMT Project Lead
- History of working in Housing and Social Care with other Autistic people and people with learning disabilities
- Enjoy walking in the countryside with my dog
- Been with bemix for 14 months

# Courtney Williams



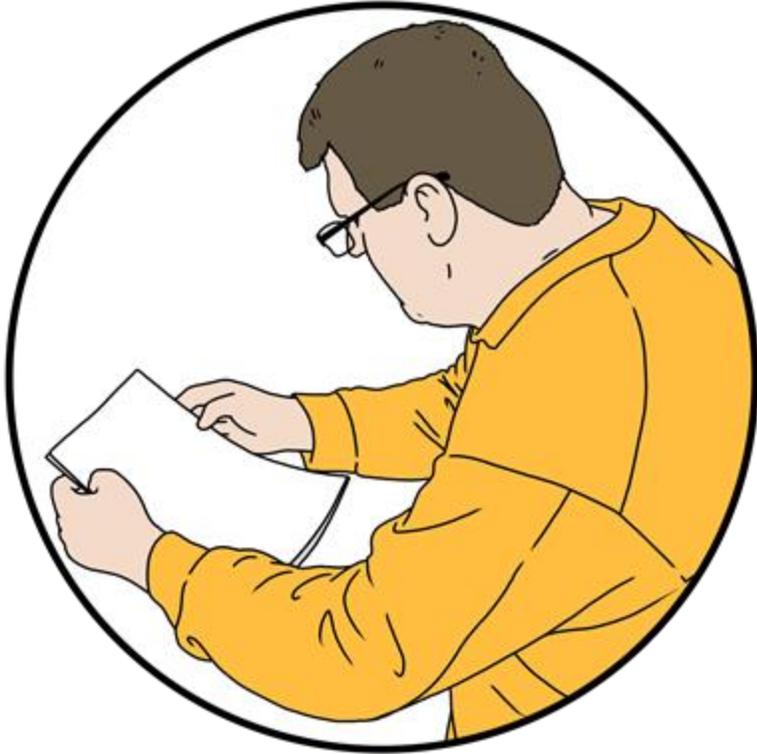
- Lived Experience Trainer.
- Worked for the Advonet Group for 18 months.
- I like socialising with my friends.
- I like networking.
- I like cooking and organising.

# Imogen Day



- Asking You Projects Team Leader.
- Worked in advocacy and specialises in co-production.
- Loves knitting, reading and baking
- Has a dog and 2 cats.
- Worked for The Advonet Group for 6 years.

# Benefits of Employment



## People with Learning Disabilities:

- Stay in jobs longer
- Have less sick days
- Make excellent employees
- Improves their confidence
- Promotes their social inclusion
- Teams are happier and perform better!
- Supports your local community

# Benefits of Employment



# Benefits of Employment

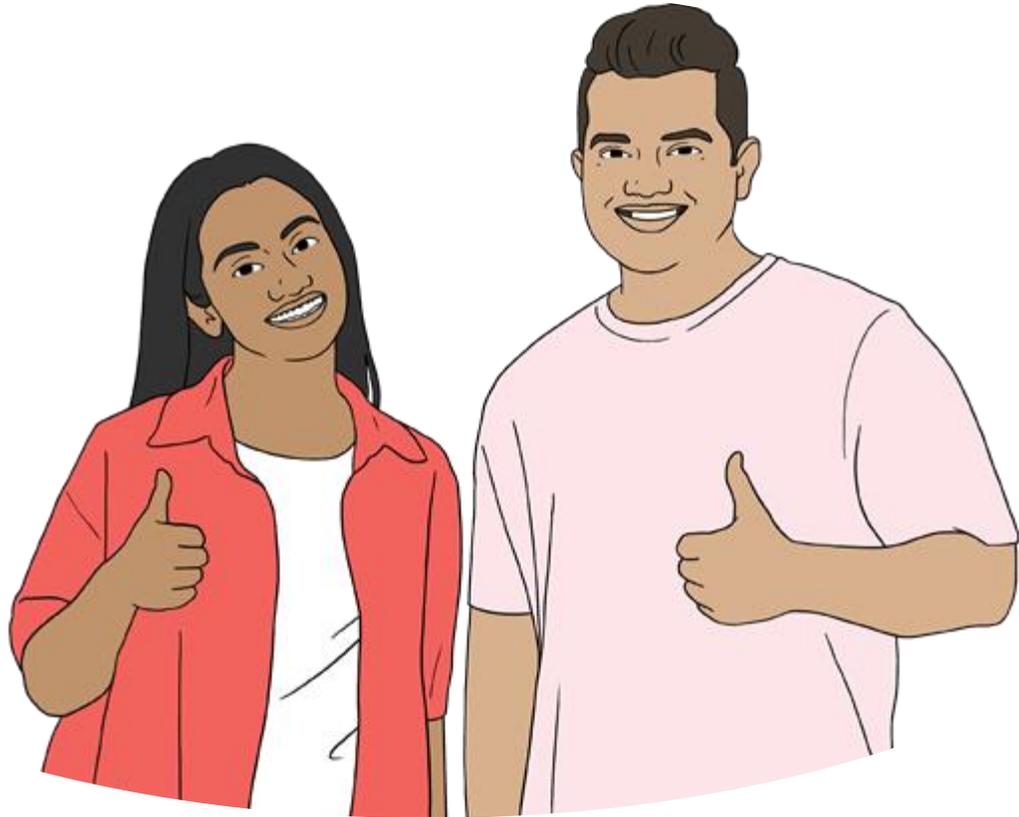


# Building an Inclusive Society

- Social vs Medical Model
- People with learning 'disabilities' are not naturally 'disabled' and do not always want to be 'cured'.
- Inaccessible Environments disable us!
- A lack of understanding and unclear information disables people e.g More people could access college, university and work if the right support and accessible information was available.

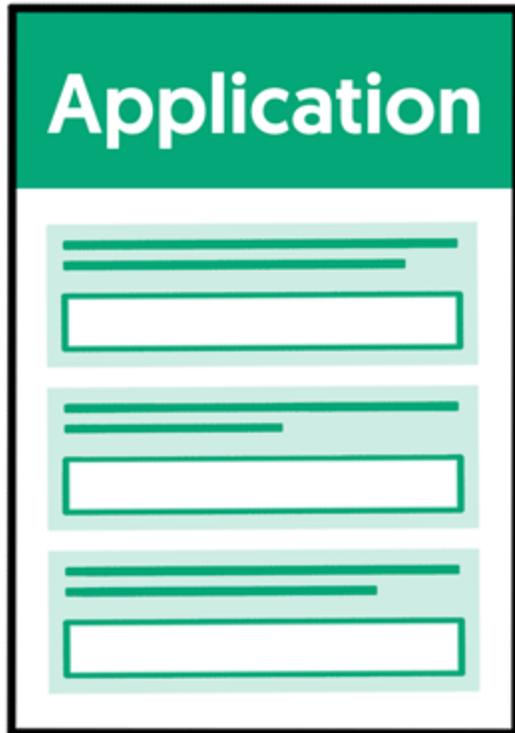


# Sammy's Story



- Employment
- PTLLS

# Barriers to Employment



**Application**

Form with three sections, each containing a header line and a text input field.

- Inaccessible transport
- Confusion and worry over benefits
- Lack of employment that works for people with learning disabilities
- Attitudes and discrimination

# Inclusive Employment Top Tips



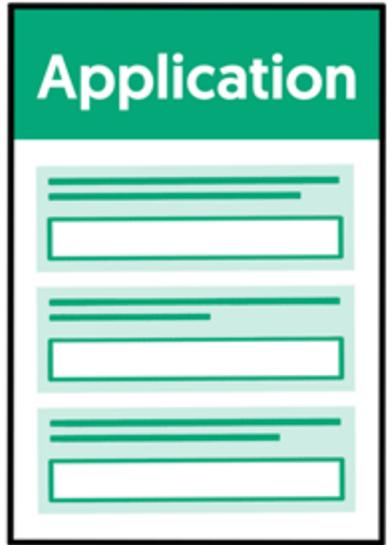
- Co-production of job packs and job descriptions.
- Application methods.
- Questions in advance.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Lived experience interview panels having support if needed and being involved in meaningful scoring.

# Inclusive Employment Top Tips



- Lived experience interview panels having support if needed and being involved in meaningful scoring.
- Access to Work applications.
- Signpost to financial advice on benefits.
- Easy Read with Plain English

# Recruitment



- Job descriptions and applications should be in easy read
- Advertise at local day opportunities, through social networks and local websites
- Indeed and other job sites are not always accessible
- Invite people to chat about the job first before applying

# Interviews



- Asking You use a workshop model for hiring
- Applicants are invited to come to a workshop based on the project they are interviewing for
- Range of activities including worksheets, teamwork and role play

# Case Studies



“It feels good working with people like me. I’m accepted and help other people out if needed.”

“I feel better working here. I think people understand me here and that’s nice.”

“I like working in this team, it’s caring and inclusive.”

# Case Studies - Sammy

- Travel support eg taxis for physical needs.
- Co-produced travel policy
- Somebody to support with emails and admin.
- Being able to get benefits advice when first started.
- Colleagues always on the end of a phone – team supports each other.
- Working with same people to build supportive relationships.



# Case Studies - Natasha

- Hybrid Working
- Clear agenda
- Good clear directions for getting places (social stories)
- Peer support (groups, 1-1, partner organisations)
- Flexibility when possible (changing meetings to not overwhelm/over schedule)
- Third party mental health support

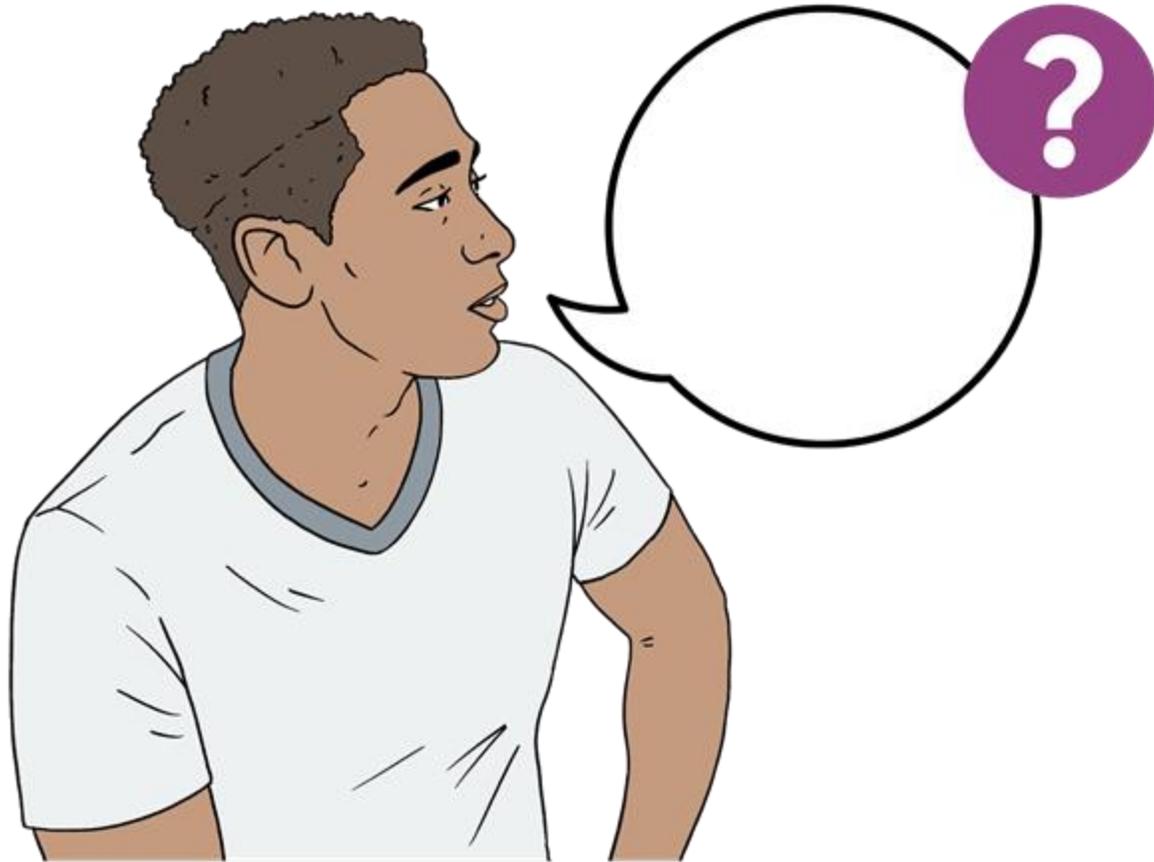


# Employer Support



- Supported internships
- MENCAP research and guides
- Partner with local learning disability organisations
- Find your local learning disability boards
- Ask local organisations who already employ people with learning disabilities for guidance
- Guides on inclusive hiring

# Any Questions?



# Thank you



**The  
Advonet  
Group**

Providing Independent Advocacy



be seen  
be heard  
belong



We are having a short  
break

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**Stephen Unwin**  
**Author**

Learning Disability England

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# The What to Do platform Community Integrated Care

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# WHAT TO DO

[www.What-To-Do.co.uk](http://www.What-To-Do.co.uk)

# Welcome to Community Integrated Care

- 8 million hours of care and support
- National presence
- 30+ year history and significant infrastructure in your core communities
- Supporting people with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, dementia and mental health concerns
- Working with many of the world's biggest sporting and cultural brands
- Charity of the Year and Care Innovators of the Year



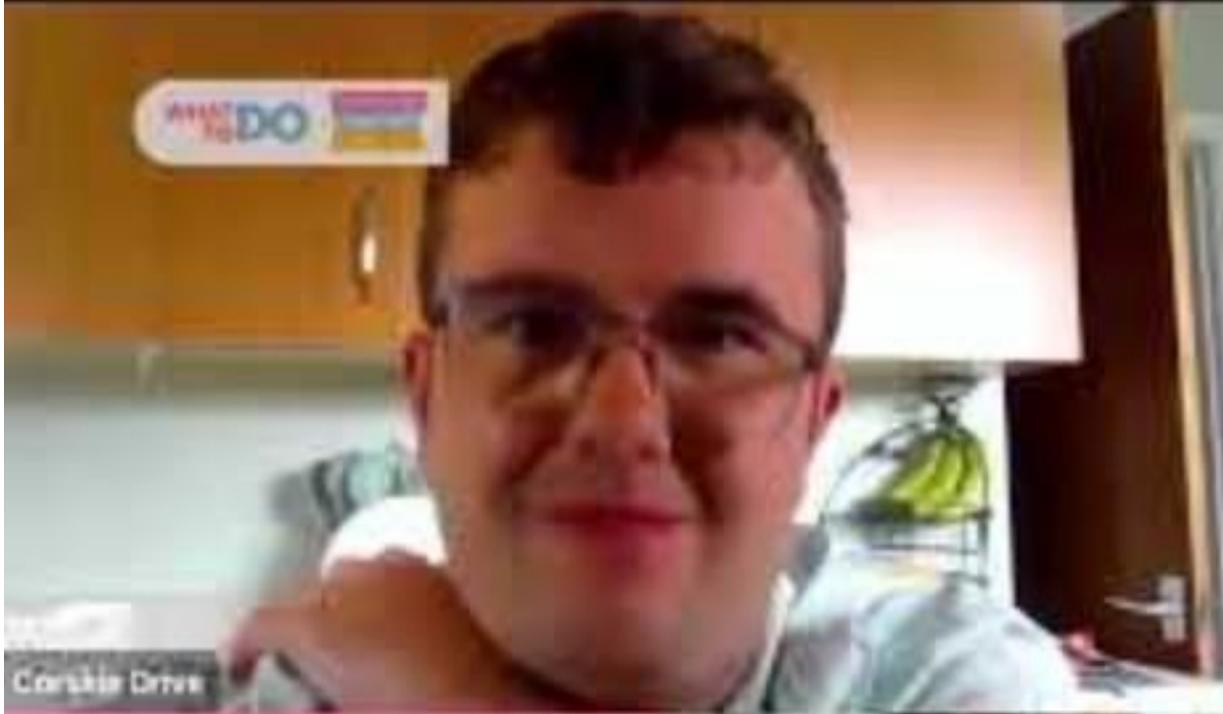
20th Anniversary  
2019  
charitytimes Awards  
**Winner**



# WHAT TO DO

- Award-winning online platform providing accessible, engaging and joyful experiences for those who access care and support.
- Sessions are designed to build the skills and confidence of people with learning disabilities, autism, and mental health challenges.
- We offer a range of activities including performances with live artists, dancing with celebrities, cooking with famous chefs, arts and crafts, and accessible physical activity with sports stars.
- Providing a safe, empowering, and vibrant community for people with learning disabilities.





Conkie Drive



Ed Clancy and Amdiffe



Well done you!

Joemary Strager

# WHY What To Do?

- ▶ Introduce people to new experiences and ideas
- ▶ Build and develop skills and confidence
- ▶ Inspire support workers and family carers
- ▶ Connect brands and businesses to new audiences
- ▶ Spark new opportunities and aspirations
- ▶ Offers support and hope to a sector in crisis



WHAT  
TO DO

Community  
Integrated  
Care

Flavia Cacace

The logo for 'CARE TO COOK' is presented on a white, torn-edge paper background. The word 'CARE' is in pink, with the 'A' replaced by a pink Christmas tree icon. 'TO' is in yellow with a horizontal line underneath. 'COOK' is in blue, with the 'O' replaced by a blue tomato icon. The entire logo is set against a background of colorful, curved lines in shades of blue, pink, and orange.

**CARE TO COOK**

[www.CareToCook.co.uk](http://www.CareToCook.co.uk)

Community  
Integrated  
Care<sup>®</sup>

The logo for 'CARE TO PLAY' features the text in white on a blue background. The word 'PLAY' is partially obscured by a red table tennis paddle with a yellow ball on its surface.

**CARE TO PLAY**

Enjoying Table Tennis  
in Social Care

[www.CareToPlay.co.uk](http://www.CareToPlay.co.uk)

The logo for 'TAKING CHARGE' is displayed in white, bold, uppercase letters within a blue, cloud-like shape with an orange outline. The letter 'I' in 'TAKING' contains a lightning bolt icon, and the letter 'A' in 'CHARGE' contains a flame icon.

**TAKING CHARGE**

[www.TakingChargeEnergy.co.uk](http://www.TakingChargeEnergy.co.uk)

Please take a moment to let us know how you found today here:



[www.surveymonkey.com/r/CX5FGHY](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CX5FGHY)



Thank you

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