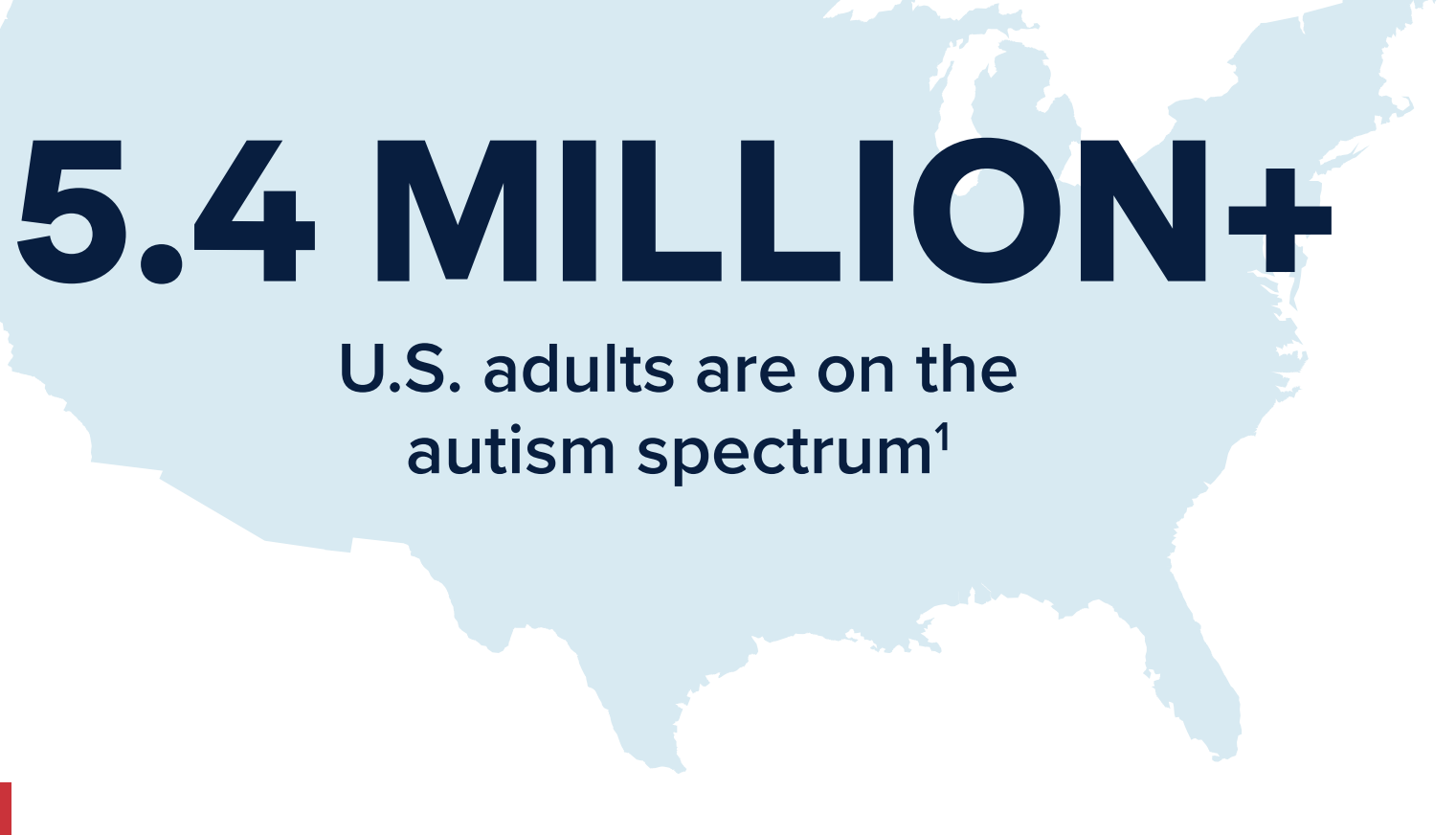


INSIDE THE AUTISTIC WORKFORCE

A National Survey of Autistic Employees on Their Workplace Experience – and What Employers Need to Know

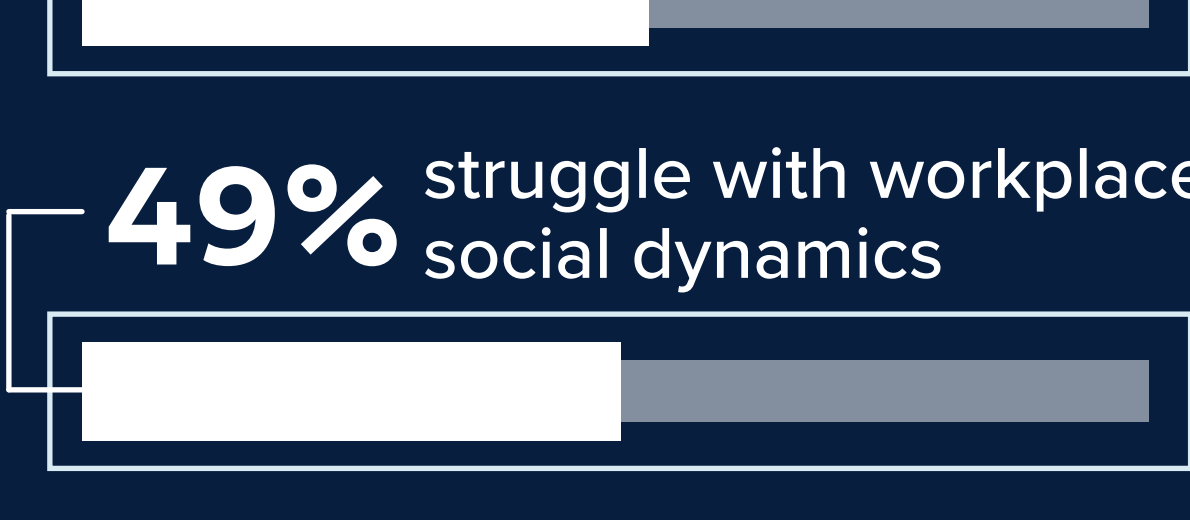
THE WORKFORCE IS CHANGING



The **workforce is evolving faster than most workplaces are adapting.** Progress depends on how employees are supported day-to-day.

CONTRIBUTING, BUT AT A COST

For many autistic employees, the workplace requires adaptation to systems that weren't designed for them.



Performance doesn't tell the whole story. The effort behind it does. **Reduce the strain. Unlock the talent.**

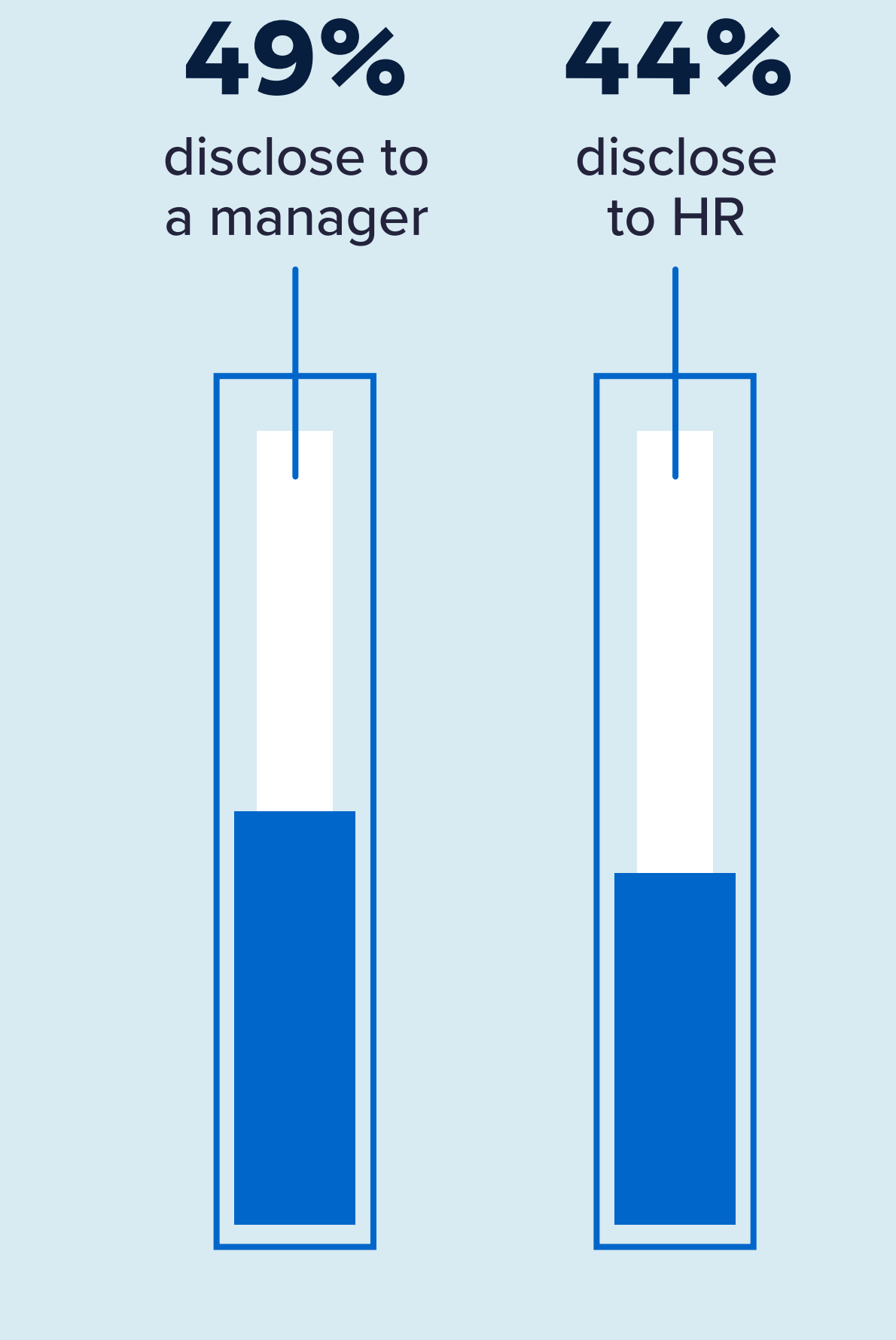
THE MANAGER EFFECT

One person shapes the day-to-day experience: **The Manager**

- 79%** say their manager trusts them
- 69%** say their manager respects how they work
- 61%** say their manager understands their autism

- WHEN MANAGERS GET IT RIGHT**
- Employees feel safe**
 - Performance improves**
 - Retention increases**

Managers – not HR – are the primary point of trust



THE HIDDEN GAP IN WORKPLACE SUPPORT

Many employees don't know what support exists – or how to access it.

- 41%** don't know what supports are available without disclosing
- 36%** are unfamiliar with the range of workplace accommodations once hired
- 31%** are unfamiliar with legal rights to reasonable accommodations

Accommodations are often simple, everyday adjustments

Those most requested include:

- FLEXIBLE HOURS**
- BREAKS**
- ADJUSTED WORKLOAD**

But they're not consistently built into how work gets done.

NOT ONE SIZE FITS ALL

The same workplace does not work the same for everyone.

- Women report lower comfort requesting support
- Late-diagnosed adults face higher uncertainty
- AuDHD (autism + ADHD) employees report consistently higher strain

Workplace supports need to be **flexible, adaptable and accessible.**

THE WORKAROUND

Employees are building their own support systems

- NEARLY 70%** rely on support outside of work
- Social media is used at similar rates as therapists
- HR is among the least-used resources (21%)

A parallel support system is filling the gaps workplaces leave behind, at the cost of the autistic employee.

DESIGNING WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE

The most effective changes are often simple and consistent.

- Clear expectations
- Written communication
- Flexible structures
- Managers who listen and adapt

WHEN THESE ARE IN PLACE

- Burnout decreases
- Retention improves
- Teams communicate better
- Employees contribute more fully

When workplaces work better for autistic employees, **they work better for everyone.**

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

National survey by NEXT for AUTISM of 417 currently and recently employed autistic adults across the U.S. Respondents reflect a wide range of communication styles and support needs, and spans a broad mix of industries, roles, career stages, and diagnostic histories, including many diagnosed in adulthood.

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all data points are from the NEXT for AUTISM survey.

Additional sources:
1: The 2015 National Autism Indicators Report (Roux et al., Drexel)
2: ZenBusiness Commissioned Survey (Pollfish, 2023)