



Neurodiversity Understood – Professionals Resource Guide

Neurodiversity is the diversity that exists in neurotype among humans. It is understood as diversity recognition just as other forms of diversity (ethnic, gender, etc.) exist. Neurodivergent is a term that refers to individuals that diverge from societal constructed concepts of what is “typical” and “normal” in terms of navigating a society’s systems. Neurodivergent identity would include (but is not limited to) Autistic, ADHD, sensory differences, learning differences, intellectual development disorder, Tourette syndrome, etc.

Neurodiversity affirming is the application of viewing Neurodivergent children through an affirming lens. At its most basic, it promotes value, self-worth, strengths, and positive identity as a Neurodivergent person. This is done through the relationship of the professional to the child, the language used with the child, the way in which the child is approached, valued, and presented with information about being neurodivergent. Affirming principles view neurodivergence as a difference not a deficit. Regardless of therapy need areas, accommodations, or issues the child may have, the child is always affirmed in their neurodivergence and never addressed as being a mistake, less than, not as good as, or needing to be fixed or cured.

Therapy is not provided to make the child neurotypical. It is provided to help the Neurodivergent child with something that is a true need such as dealing with depression, anxiety, poor self-worth, trauma, attachment issues, regulation struggles, social navigation, life adjustment challenges, parent/child relationship strain, etc. Professionals can also help parents learn more about neurodiversity affirming parenting approaches and how to advocate for their child.

The following is a list of resources for professionals to increase their knowledge of neurodiversity, neurodivergence, and neurodiversity affirming practices. As you dive into various resources, keep in mind that each Neurodivergent child has a neurodivergent spectrum of presentation. Not everything you explore will relate specifically to every client. As you explore information, think about building your knowledge base to better support each Neurodivergent child you work with.

It is helpful to gain information from actual neurodivergent trainers, writers, and professionals. If possible, engage in consultation with a Neurodivergent professional as you learn about neurodiversity. A consultant can be helpful in navigating questions that arise and processing through new insights and awareness. The journey is a process and one that involves not only learning new information but intrinsic analysis and change. The neurodiversity paradigm is about shifting from an old and ableist way of viewing and working with Neurodivergent children to a better, affirming perspective.

RESOURCES (Trainings)

AutPlay Therapy (Robert Jason Grant) – <https://autplaytherapy.com/>

Katie Bassiri - <https://courses.jentaylorplaytherapy.com/collections/katie-bassiri>

Marshall Lyles - <https://www.marshalllyles.com/>

Kelly Mahler - <https://www.kelly-mahler.com/>

Dr. Christine Henry - <https://therapyforpetpeople.com/>

Play. Learn. Chat. - <https://playlearnchat.com/>

Bobbi-Jo Molokken - <https://www.embracethemuchness.com/>

RESOURCES (Books)

The AutPlay Therapy Handbook by Robert Jason Grant

Play Interventions for Neurodivergent Children and Adolescents: Promoting Growth, Empowerment, and Affirming Practices by Robert Jason Grant

Understanding Autism: A Neurodiversity Affirming Guidebook for Children and Teens by Robert Jason Grant

Understanding ADHD: A Neurodiversity Affirming Guidebook for Children and Teens by Robert Jason Grant

Understanding Sensory Differences: A Neurodiversity Affirming Guidebook for Children and Teens by Robert Jason Grant

The Awesome Autistic Go-To Guide: A Practical Handbook for Autistic Teens and Tweens by Yenn Purkis

The Neurodivergent Friendly Workbook of DBT Skills by Sonny Jane Wise

We're All Neurodiverse: How to Build a Neurodiversity-Affirming Future and Challenge Neuronormativity by Sonny Jane Wise

The Big Book of Interoception Games by Kelly Mahler

Art as a Language for Autism: Building Effective Therapeutic Relationships with Children and Adolescents by Jane Ferris Richardson

Living Sensationally by Winnie Dunn

The ADHD & Autism Unmasking Workbook by Emily Oliver

ADHD 2.0: New Science and Essential Strategies for Thriving with Distraction--from Childhood through Adulthood by Edward M. Hallowell and John J. Ratey

Beyond Behaviors: Using Brain Science and Compassion to Understand and Solve Children's Behavioral Challenges by Mona Delahooke

Neuroqueer Heresies: Notes on the Neurodiversity Paradigm, Autistic Empowerment, and Postnormal Possibilities by Nick Walker

Addressing Ableism: Philosophical Questions Via Disability Studies by Jennifer Scuro

RESOURCES (Websites)

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network - <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>

AutPlay Therapy - <https://autplaytherapy.com/>

How To ADHD Website and YouTube Channel - <https://howtoadhd.com/>

STAR Institute - <https://sensoryhealth.org/>

Different Brains - <https://differentbrains.org/>

PDA Society - <https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/>

Autism Level Up - <https://www.autismlevelup.com/>

Play. Learn. Chat - <https://playlearnchat.com/>

I Can Network - <https://icannetwork.online/>

Ed Wiley Autism Acceptance Lending Library - <https://neurodiversitylibrary.org/>

Institute of Neurodiversity - <https://ioneurodiversity.org/>

RESOURCES (Children's Books for the Playroom)

My Brain is a Race Car: A Children's Guide to a Neuro-Divergent Brain by Nell Harris (ADHD, neurodiversity)

Love Me Love My ADHD by Chrissie Davies (ADHD)

Miss Piper's Playroom Supporting Autistic Ava by Lynn Louise Wonders and Lesi Bacon (Autism)

Journal of an ADHD Kid: The Good, the Bad, and the Useful by Tobias Stump (ADHD)

Congratulations You're Autistic by Katie and Alex Bassiri (Autism)

The Autistic Boy in the Unruly Body by Gregory Tino (Autism)

A Day With No Words by Tiffany Hammond (Non-speaking, Autism)

Every Bunny Can Learn: A Tail of Inclusion by Amy Nelson (Inclusion)

Sensory Ninja: A Children's Book About Sensory Superpowers and SPD, Sensory Processing Disorder by Mary Nhin (Sensory Differences)

Wiggles, Stomps, and Squeezes Calm My Jitters Down by Lindsey Parker (ADHD, Neurodiversity)

Rosalee the Seeker by Nicole Filippone (Sensory Differences)

Alexander the Avider by Nicole Filippone (Sensory Differences)

Neurodivergent Ninja: A Children's Book About the Gifts of Neurodiversity by Mary Nhin (Neurodivergence)

Neurodiversity! What's That? By Nadine Ramina Arthur (Neurodiversity)

Some Brains: A Book Celebrating Neurodiversity by Nelly Thomas (Neurodiversity)

The Secret Life of Rose by Rose Smitten (Autism)

The Panda on PDA: A Children's Introduction to Pathological Demand Avoidance by Gloria Duravila (PDA)

Pretty Darn Awesome: Divergent not Deficient: Understanding Pathological Demand Avoidance on the Autism Spectrum by Lauren O'Grady (PDA)

I Talk Like a River by Jordan Scott (Stuttering, Apraxia)

My Whirling Twirling Motor by Merriam Sarcia Saunders (ADHD)

Diversity Is Our Superpower by Adrian Laurent (Diversity)

Talking is Not My Thing by Rose Robbins (Non-speaking)

Wonderfully Wired Brains: An Introduction to the World of Neurodiversity by Louise Gooding (Neurodiversity)

Albert is My Friend by Jan Luck and Linda Barboa (Autism)

Albert Thinks About His Future by Linda Barboa and Jan Luck (Autism)

My Brain Is Magic: A Sensory-Seeking Celebration by Prasha Sooful (Sensory Differences)

Brilliant Bea: A Story for Kids With Dyslexia and Learning Differences by Shaina Rudolph (Dyslexia, Learning Differences)

Don't Hug Doug: (He Doesn't Like It) by Carrie Finison (Sensory Differences)

You're So Clumsy Charley by Jan Binnion (Dyspraxia)