



Neurodiversity Understood – Parent 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 adult to the child, the language used with the child, the way in which the child is approached, taught, valued, and presented with information about being neurodivergent. Affirming principles view neurodivergence as a difference not a deficit. Regardless of 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 accessed to make the child neurotypical. It is accessed to provide help for something that is a true need the child has such as dealing with depression, anxiety, poor self-worth, trauma, regulation struggles, social navigation, life adjustment challenges, etc. Parents can also learn more about neurodiversity affirming parenting approaches and how to advocate for neurodiversity affirming approaches in the therapy, programs, and education systems in which their child participates.

The following is a list of resources for parents to increase their knowledge of neurodiversity, neurodivergence, and neurodiversity affirming practices. As you dive into various resources, keep in mind that each neurodivergent person (including your child) has a neurodivergent spectrum of presentation. Not everything you explore will relate specifically to your child. As you explore information, think about how it applies to your child and your family.

It is helpful to gain information from actual neurodivergent trainers, writers, and professionals. If possible, have a neurodiversity affirming therapist in place to work with as you learn more. Your therapist may be helpful in navigating questions that arise and processing through new insights and awareness.

Overall, remember that you are a valuable and important part of your child’s life and your child’s neurodivergent development. Your affirming presence will help your child to gain their own internalized affirming recognition. Your knowledge and advocacy efforts will model for your child and help them along their own journey.

RESOURCES (Autistic Children)

Books for Parents

Start Here: A Guide for Parents of Autistic Kids by The Autistic Self Advocacy Network

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

Sincerely, Your Autistic Child: What People on the Autism Spectrum Wish Their Parents Knew About Growing Up, Acceptance, and Identity by Autistic Women and Nonbinary Network

I will Die on This Hill by Megan Ashburn and Jules Edwards

Children's Books

Congratulations You're Autistic by Katie and Alex Bassiri

The Secrete Life of Rose by Rose Smitten

The Autistic Boy in the Unruly Body by Gregory Tino

A Day With No Words by Tiffany Hammond

Other Resources

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

RESOURCES (ADHD Children)

Books for Parents

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

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

Children's Books

My Brain is a Race Car: A Children's Guide to a Neuro-Divergent Brain by Nell Harris

Love Me Love My ADHD by Chrissie Davies

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

Other Resources

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

RESOURCES (Sensory Different Children)

Books for Parents

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

Living Sensationally by Winnie Dunn

No Longer A Secret, 2nd edition: Unique Common Sense Strategies for Children with Sensory and Regulation Challenges by Lucy Jane Miller, Lisa M. Porter, and Doreit S. Bialer

Children's Books

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

Wiggles, Stomps, and Squeezes Calm My Jitters Down by Lindsey Parker

Rosalee the Seeker by Nicole Filippone

Other Resources

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

RESOURCES (General Neurodivergence)

Books for Parents

Different, Not Less: A neurodivergent's guide to embracing your true self and finding your happily ever after by Chloe Hayden

Raising Twice-Exceptional Children: A Handbook for Parents of Neurodivergent Gifted Kids by Emily Kircher-Morris

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

Children's Books

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

Neurodiversity! What's That? By Nadine Ramina Arthur

Some Brains: A Book Celebrating Neurodiversity by Nelly Thomas

Other Resources

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