



Autism Education Series: Neurodiversity

What is Neurodiversity?

- An understanding that brain differences among people are a natural and valuable part of human diversity.
- Not a medical diagnosis; it's an umbrella 'term' or a broad term used to describe multiple things rather than something specific.
- An all-encompassing term that helps people explain that their brain functions differently and that they view, experience and interact with the world around them may be different from others.
- Includes: autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, learning and communication disorders, Tourette's syndrome, and more!

Embracing Neurodiversity and Neurodiversity-Affirming Support

- Embracing being 'different' can be empowering and positive.
- Focus on an individuals' strengths and recognize that we are all unique.
- Interact with neurodiverse individuals in a way that celebrates, understands, values and accepts them as they are.
- Recognize that there may be a need to adjust tasks, activities and expectations so that neurodivergent children can fully participate.
- Recognize that environments often have to change for neurodiverse individuals to have success in them.
- Focus not on trying to "fix" or "treat" different ways of thinking and existing.
- Acknowledge that neurodivergent children might do things differently from neurotypical children, and we need to give them the time and space to show us what they are capable of.
- Actively listen to neurodivergent communities to learn from many perspectives.
- Read books and articles written by neurodiverse people.
- Support organizations and businesses led by neurodivergent people.
- Seek out peer support and advocacy groups.
- Talk with your children about neurodiversity and acceptance.
- Advocate for your child to ensure they are getting the support they need.



What unique and special features does your child bring to your family? Consider the routines and settings in your child's life, why do some go better than others? What brings your child joy? Where do they need support?