



# How to use neurodivergent-affirming strategies to support child mental health

## Online Courses

### [Understanding autistic and ADHDer children's mental health](#)

This new course from Emerging Minds is designed for practitioners who engage with autistic and ADHDer children and/or their caregivers. It may be especially useful for early career professionals and those looking to grow their confidence in working with neurodivergent clients. Teachers and early childcare workers may also find the neuro-affirming principles helpful in their day-to-day interactions with children and parents.

## Websites

### [Neurowild Website](#)

A neurodiversity-affirming resource hub by Sonny Jane Wise, offering educational content, infographics and advocacy materials focused on autism, ADHD and disability justice.

### [Autism Level Up Website](#)

A collaborative initiative offering neuro-affirming tools, visuals and strategies designed to help individuals, families and professionals support autistic self-regulation and well-being.

### [Therapist Neurodiversity Collective Website](#)

A collective of neurodiversity-affirming therapists advocating for ethical, strengths-based approaches and rejecting ABA-based interventions.

### [PDA Society](#)

A UK-based organisation providing resources and guidance on Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), including the PANDA model and lived-experience insights.

### [LEANS Project \(Learning About Neurodiversity at School\)](#)

A structured school program designed to introduce primary-aged students to neurodiversity concepts in an affirming and accessible way.

### [Neurodivergent Insights](#)

A platform providing infographics, articles, and resources on neurodivergence, sensory processing, and mental health from a strengths-based perspective.

### [Sonny Jane Wise - Lived Experience Educator](#)

An autistic, ADHD and non-binary advocate sharing useful infographics, books, courses, and consulting services on neurodivergence and disability justice.

### [Spectrum news](#)

A website that includes current research and up-to-date information on autism.

### [Embrace Autism](#)

A website that provides educational materials, self-screeners and global autism assessments to support self-discovery and advocacy.

### [Autistic Self-Advocacy Network \(ASAN\)](#)

A website that offers toolkits, policy updates and resources to empower self-advocacy and community support.

### [Onwards & Upwards Psychology Resources](#)

A neurodiversity-affirming resource directory.

### [NeuroInclusion Resources](#)

A neurodiversity-affirming resource directory

## Practice Papers

### [Supporting children with neurodiversity](#)

This practice paper from the Australian Institute of Family Studies provides an overview of principles and strategies that can help practitioners to support children with neurodiversity to engage in counselling and reflective learning.

## Podcasts

### [A neurodivergent-affirming approach to children's mental health](#)

This podcast from Emerging Minds explores how a neurodivergent-affirming approach supports both children's and parents' mental health, what this approach looks like in practice, and how it can help you to feel more confident in working with this cohort. Webinar panellists Esther Fidock, Jaisen Mahne and Jacquie Lee are featured in the podcast.

### [Working with families in neuro-affirming ways](#)

This podcast from Emerging Minds explores ways to build children's self-regulation and advocacy skills, promote acceptance of their neurodivergent identity, and uncover the 'why' behind their behaviour.

## Practical Tools and Assistive Technology

### [Autentik.ai](#)

An AI-powered plugin developed by autistic individuals to decode allistic (non-autistic) speech, making social communication more accessible.

### [Goblin Tools](#)

A suite of AI-powered tools designed to assist neurodivergent individuals with executive functioning tasks, such as breaking down projects and estimating time.

### [Universal Sandpit](#)

An AI tool to generate ideas and strategies to support a few common inclusive learning needs.

### [Diffit – Differentiation Tool for Educators](#)

An AI-powered tool that adapts educational content to different reading levels, making learning more accessible for diverse learners.

## Journal articles

### [Camouflaging in Autism: A Systematic Review](#)

A systematic review exploring autistic masking, its psychological impacts and the link to trauma and burnout.

### [Annual Research Review: Shifting from 'normal science' to neurodiversity in autism science](#)

A critical review advocating for a neurodiversity paradigm shift in autism research, moving away from deficit-based models.

### [The Measurement of Demand Avoidance in Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)

Research validating the distinct profile of PDA and its characteristics in autistic individuals.

## Education Resources

### [School and Educator Practice](#)

#### [National Council for Special Education \(NCSE\)](#)

A suite of resources including summaries, explainers, tip-sheets, checklists and printable tools to support the implementation of neurodivergent-affirming inclusive practices in education settings.

#### [NCSE Relate - A Regulation-First Approach to Reframing Behaviour and Supporting Student Engagement and Participation](#)

This online resource for schools and educators focusses on an inclusive and relational approach. Relate includes eight principles to support school staff in understanding behaviour. The resources section includes new tools, resources and videos. A [full copy of the Relate](#) is also available.

#### [Learning About Neurodiversity at School \(LEANS\)](#)

This free programme for mainstream primary schools can assist in introducing pupils aged 8-11 years to the concept of neurodiversity, and how it impacts our experiences at school. It contains lesson plans, supportive resources and classroom activities

## Environment

### [Sensory Spaces in Schools](#)

This resource from NCSE adopts a strengths-based, student-centred approach to looking at the sensory environments within a school. It focuses on establishing a cultural practice within a school where sensory spaces and sensory strategies are utilised throughout the school day. It offers guidelines for teachers and school staff to holistically support students, by collaboratively creating and using sensory spaces with their students.

### [The Physical Classroom Environment: Creating Universal Learning Spaces](#)

This resource from NCSE has been developed to assist teachers to review and make changes to their physical classroom environment that will support meaningful student participation in learning. The best way you can interact with this booklet is to.

### [Classroom Sensory Screening Tool](#)

The sensory qualities of our classrooms have a direct influence on student participation and learning. Learning spaces that have too much or too little sensory stimulation can serve as a barrier to student energy regulation, attention and readiness to engage in learning. Students have differences in how they process their sensory world and for many, the classroom can be a very busy and overwhelming place. This resource from NCSE is intended to assist educators conduct a sensory audit of their classroom or learning space.

### [Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment](#)

Visual supports are integral to Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a Total Communication Approach (TCA), and creating an inclusive learning environment. A TCA involves modelling, accepting and validating all means of communication, including manual sign, objects, gestures, symbols and devices. A TCA is neurodiversity-affirmative and aligns with the social model of disability. It promotes inclusivity, is person-centred and builds on existing strengths. This resource from NCSE provides tips on how educators and schools can implement visual supports.

## Other Resources

### [Advanced practice certificate in child mental health and trauma](#)

This free 28-week facilitated training package from Emerging Minds will be delivered online through five key modules. During the course you will hear from experienced practitioners as they reflect on their work and watch improvised video demonstrations featuring practitioners working with child and parent actors. Each week, you will have the opportunity to reflect on your own practice, and to consider which skills, ideas and understandings you might use.