



Halton
District
School
Board

Celebrating Neurodiversity

February 8th, 2025

Learn • Grow • Inspire



TOGETHER

www.hdsb.ca



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Today's Agenda

- What is Neurodiversity?
- Neurodiversity Terms
- Exploring Neurodiversity
- How HDSB Can Support Neurodivergent Students



WHY NOW?

Neurodivergent

Neurodivergent is an umbrella term for individuals who have a mind or brain that diverges from what is typical. It can be acquired or genetic, an innate part of you or not.

Neurodivergent just means having a mind that functions differently to what is considered the norm including learning, processing, interpreting, feeling, etc

Created by Kassieane
Asasumasu

Neuro-Normative

Neuro-Normative refers to having a mind or functioning that falls within the society standards of what is “typical”, “common” or “normal”.

Neuro-Normative is the opposite of the neurodivergent, someone who diverges, and is not a negative word at all but a neutral word.

Created by Judy Singer

Neurodiverse

Neurodiverse is a term to describe a group of individuals who represent the spectrum of diversity which includes neurotypical and neurodivergent individuals.

Remember, an individual cannot be neurodiverse. Individuals who aren't neurotypical would be neurodivergent.

Created by Kassieane
Asasumasu

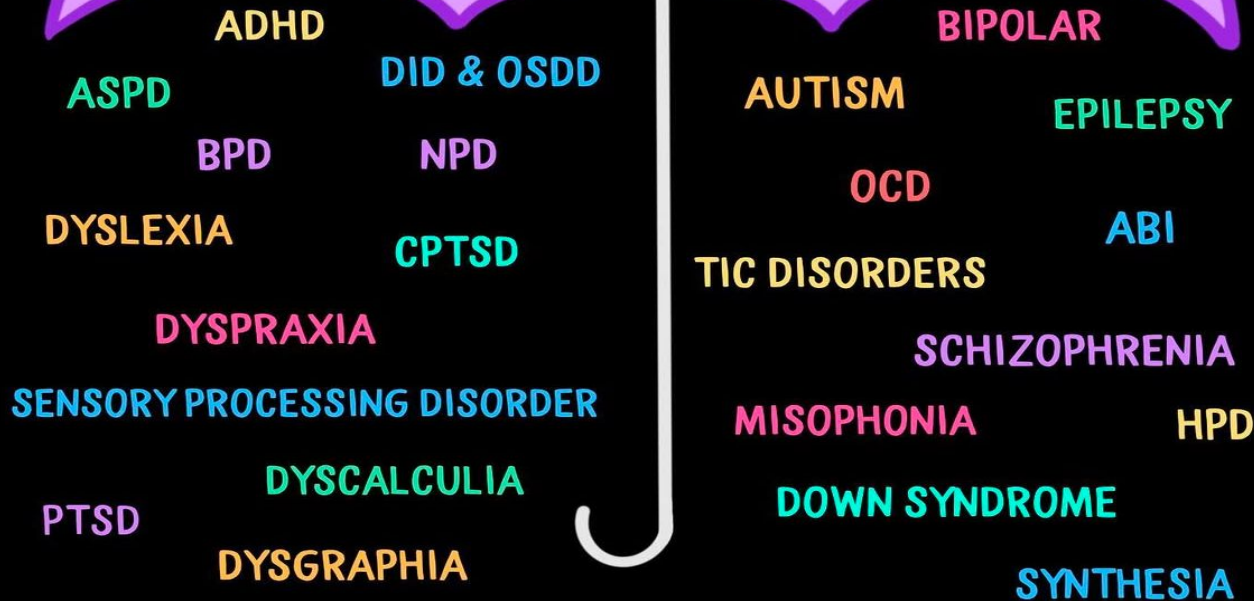
Neurodiversity

Refers to the natural diversity of the human minds. It is a biological fact that we are diverse in our minds just like we are diverse in our ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc

Neurodiversity acknowledges the whole spectrum of neurodiversity from neurodivergent individuals to neurotypical individuals

Created by Judy Singer

NEURODIVERGENT UMBRELLA*



*NON-EXHAUSTIVE LIST www.livedexperienceeducator.com @livedexperienceeducator

What is Neurodiversity?



we are all different!



Why is Understanding Neurodiversity Important?



Neuro-Normative Vs Neurodiverse

Understanding

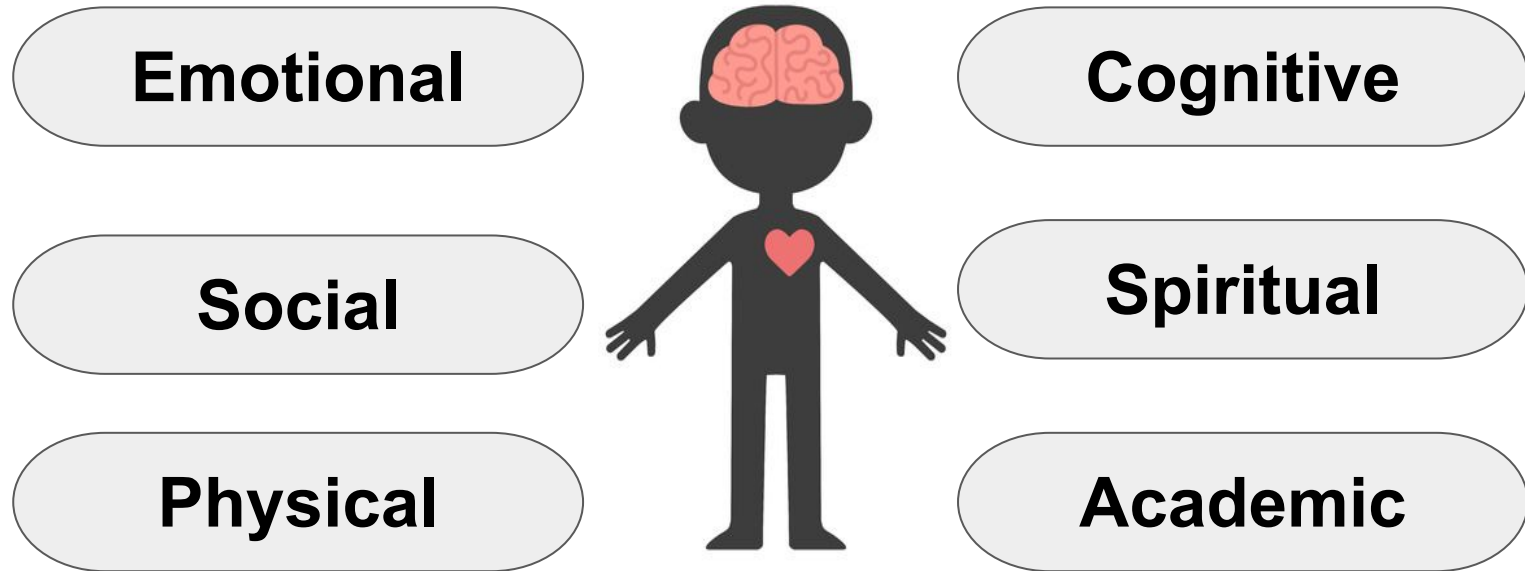
Appreciation and
autonomy

Individualize Supports

Intersectionality



Whole Person Approach



Special Interests Matter

**Technology, e.g.,
gaming, programming,
software**



**Factual information,
e.g., history, science,
mathematics**



**Collecting, e.g.,
stamps, toys, crystals**



**Animals, e.g., specific
species, animal
behavior, conservation**



**Arts, e.g., drawing,
books, music, films**



**Transportation, e.g.,
trains, planes, cars**



Strengths Based Approach



Circle of Support



Circle of Support

for student Mental Health & Well Being

At Promotion

- Classroom Teacher
- Student
- Parent/Guardian

At Intervention

At Prevention

At Promotion



A Circle of Support... begins with the classroom teacher, student and parent. When a student is struggling with their mental health and well-being, the circle of support widens to include members of ST/SRT and/or the community.

At Prevention

- Classroom teacher
- Student
- Parent/Guardian
- + **School Team (ST)**
- + **School Resource Team (SRT)**

At Intervention

- Classroom teacher
- Student
- Parent/Guardian
- School Team (ST)
- School Resource Team (SRT)
- + **Community providers**

Affirming Considerations for Our Neurodiverse Students

Creating a Neurodivergent friendly space

- Predictability and Structure
- Recognizing sensory differences
- Engagement/Inclusion
- Communication and Social Communication

Predictability and Structure

- **Agendas: Verbal, visual, written**
- **Lists for routines**
- **Unambiguous steps**
- **Increase their level of control and access to accommodations**
- **Additional preparation prior to social situations**

WHAT IS SENSORY PROCESSING



Co Regulation

It's like being emotional teammates,
helping each other stay cool, calm and collected.

- Build strong relationships
- Practice strategies
- Create a sense of safety

3 Reasons that Co-Regulation is Important for Kids and Teens:



Co-regulation helps kids and teens feel calm, helping them to problem-solve and make better choices.

www.thepathway2success.com

Co-regulation is a bridge to help strengthen self-regulation skills over time.



Co-regulation strengthens relationships, reminding kids that we care, and that they are safe.

Calming Breaks

When energy is high/ transitioning into focused work task

- Calming music and mindful colouring; alternative lighting
- Mindful minute activity/ mindfulness 5-4-3-2-1
- Positive self-talk statements
- I.e. This could be helpful in managing transitions near the end of the day or into sleep routines

THE 5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

Feeling overwhelmed or pacing? This countdown method can help you calm your mind.



Find **5** things you can
SEE around you



Find **4** things you can
TOUCH around you



Find **3** things you can
HEAR around you

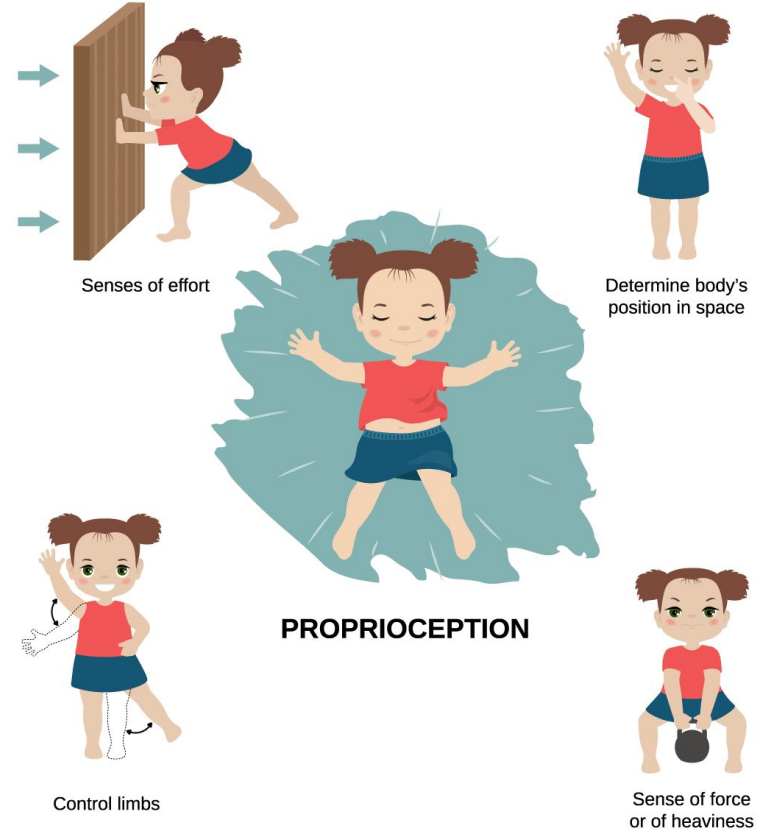
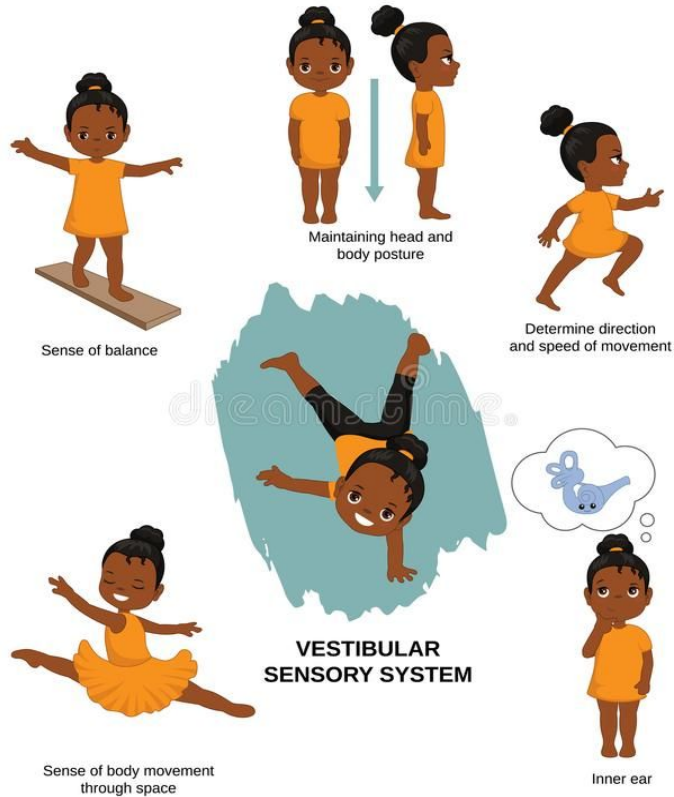


Find **2** things you can
SMELL around you



Find **1** thing you can
TASTE. (Swallow)

Types of movement breaks





Online Options for Movement Breaks



[Go Noodle](https://www.go-noodle.com/)



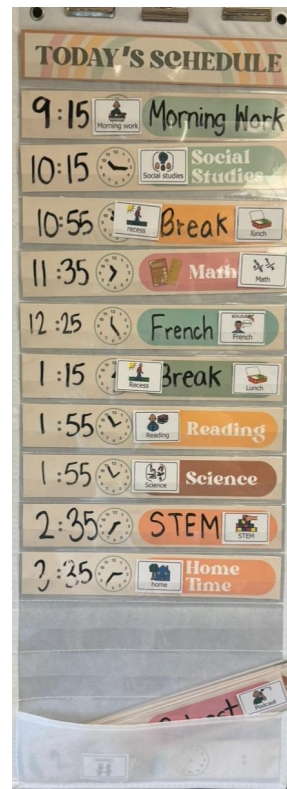
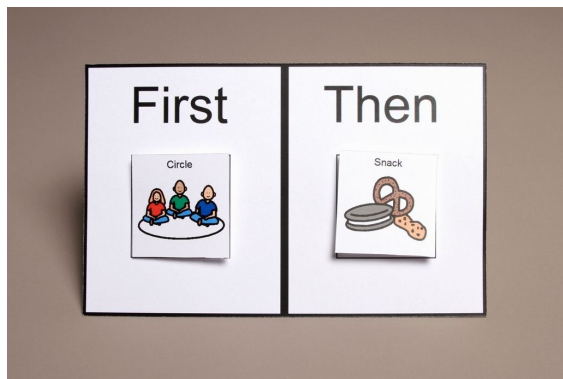
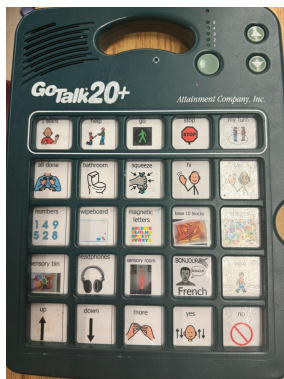
[Generation Healthy](https://www.generationhealthy.ca/)

Communication & Social Communication

It can be straightforward (noun-verb), non-verbal or via AAT

Examples:

Stressors	Feelings	Body Clues



Engagement/Inclusion





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PEERS

(Program for the Education
& Enrichment of
Relational Skills)



www.semel.ucla.edu/peers

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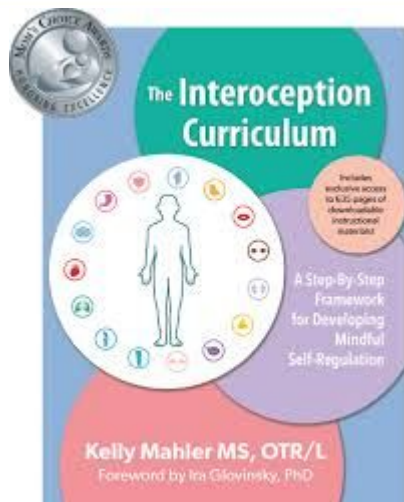
NEURO AFFIRMING CLUB

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INTEROCEPTION CURRICULUM

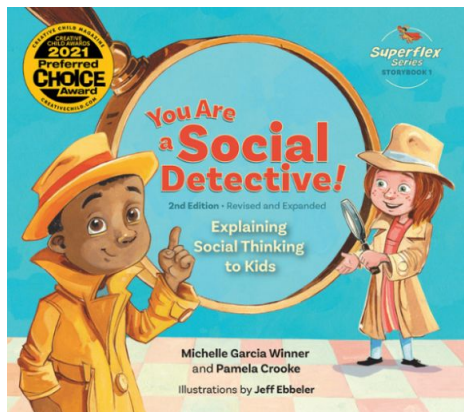


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Social Detective



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Social Detective Video

From a Parental Viewpoint

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jNWwRrBKPfGbDjcSgd4mL0sZ91XNNnqh/view>

Thanks so much for joining us today!



Questions or Comments