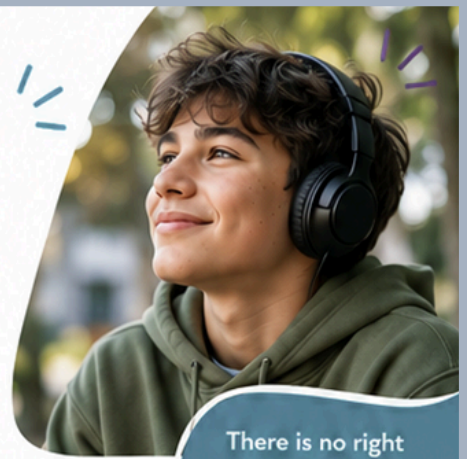




Understanding your young person

Neurodiversity & Sensory Needs



Every young person experiences the world differently. When we understand their unique differences, we can reduce stress, build connection and help them feel safe, supported and able to thrive.

There is no right or wrong way to be. There is only understanding.



What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity means that brains work in different ways. It includes autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette's and many other differences.

These differences are not deficits – they are different ways of thinking, feeling and experiencing the world.

Your young person is not 'too much'. They are making sense of their world in their own way.

Looking beneath behaviour

Behaviour is communication. When we look beneath what we see, we can understand what our young person might be feeling or trying to cope with.

- Overwhelmed by sensory input
- Struggling to cope with demands or change
- Needing connection, support or understanding
- Feeling anxious, tired or emotionally overloaded



Sensory differences can show up in many ways



Seeing

Bright lights, busy spaces, visual clutter or patterns may be overwhelming.

They may notice details that others don't.



Hearing

Loud noises, echoes or unexpected sounds may feel intense.

They may enjoy certain music or familiar sounds.



Touch

Clothing textures, tags or seams may feel uncomfortable.

They may seek certain textures or avoid others.



Smell

Strong smells (foods, perfumes, cleaning products) may be too intense.

They may be extra sensitive or less aware.



Taste

Flavours, textures and food preferences may be very specific.

They may have a strong sense of taste.



Movement & Body Awareness

The need for movement, deep pressure, fidgeting or space may be important.

They may seek movement or stillness.



How we can support our young person



Notice – Observe what helps and what is challenging in different environments and situations.



Connect – Build trust by listening, showing interest and respecting their perspective.



Collaborate – Work together to find strategies that help. What works today might change tomorrow.



Adjust – Make changes to the environment, expectations and routines where we can.



Strengthen – Focus on what they do well and celebrate their unique strengths.

Small adjustments can make a big difference.



You are making a difference every day.

Your patience, love and willingness to understand help your young person feel safe, seen and valued. Together, we can create a world that makes sense for them.

Let's keep learning. Let's keep connecting. Let's keep supporting.

