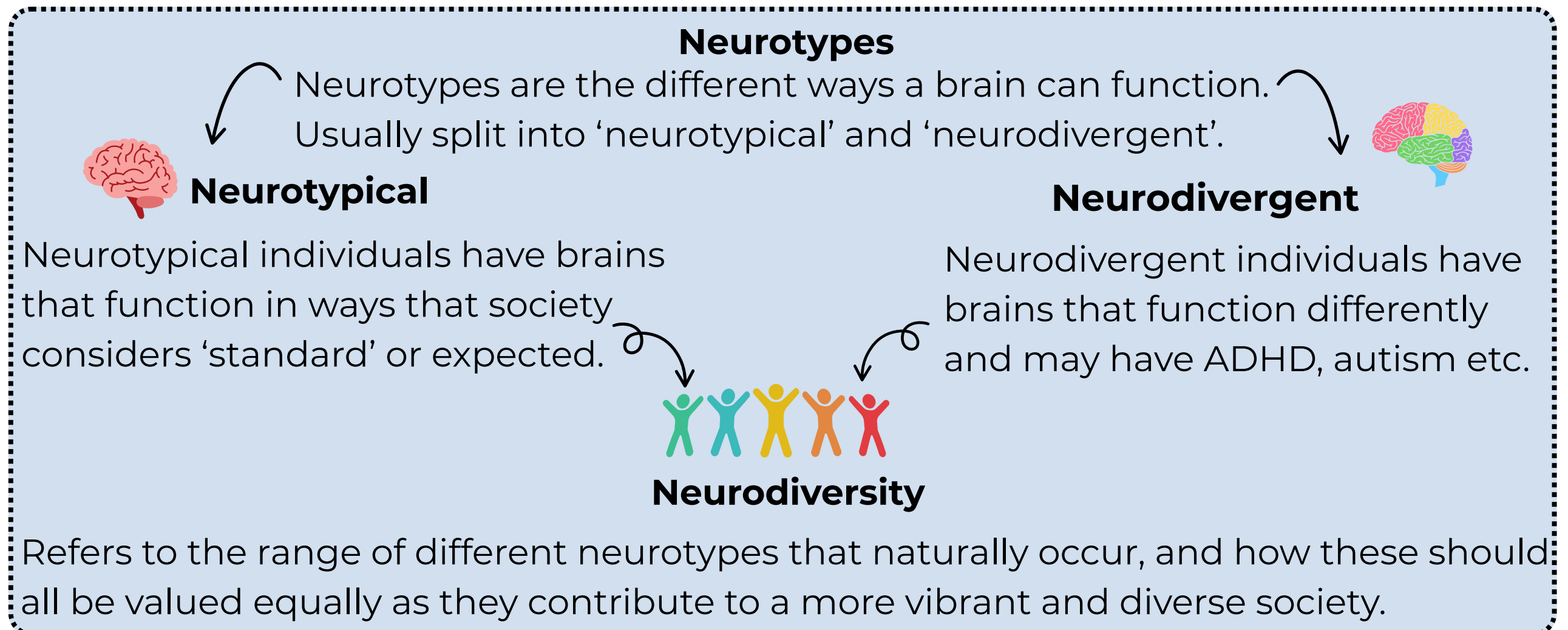


Neurodiversity

Understanding neurodiversity

You may have heard your child be described as ‘neurodivergent’ or have a certain ‘neurotype’, but what does this mean? Here are some simplified definitions:



Co-occurring neurotypes

ADHD’ers *may* also have co-occurring neurotypes. Some of these are:

- Autism
- Anxiety
- Dyslexia
- Tourettes
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Bipolar
- Dyspraxia
- Depression
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Giftedness

What does being ‘neuroaffirming’ mean?

Being neuroaffirming is the concept of celebrating the natural diversity of human brains, instead of seeing differences as ‘deficits.’ It’s about embracing the fact that everyone has unique strengths, needs and ways of interacting within the world.

Principles of neuroaffirming care:

- Focus on the strengths, values and self-worth of neurodiverse people.
- Many of the challenges faced by neurodivergent people are not from individual deficits, but from environments that aren’t built with them in mind.
- Therapy and supports should be focused on fostering safe and supportive environments that allow an ADHD’er to be themselves.
- The goal is not to dismiss the challenges faced by ADHD’ers, but rather to recognise the many strengths and benefits that come with neurodivergence.

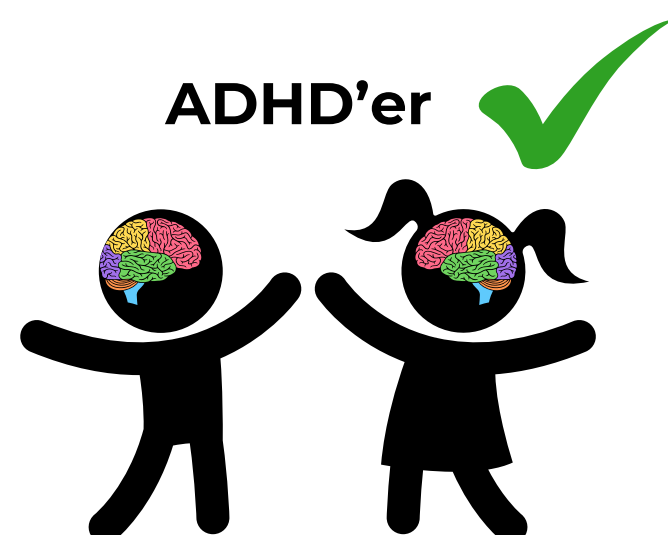


It is important for ADHD families to have a neuroaffirming mindset, as you will need to support your child and advocate for them in many different settings!

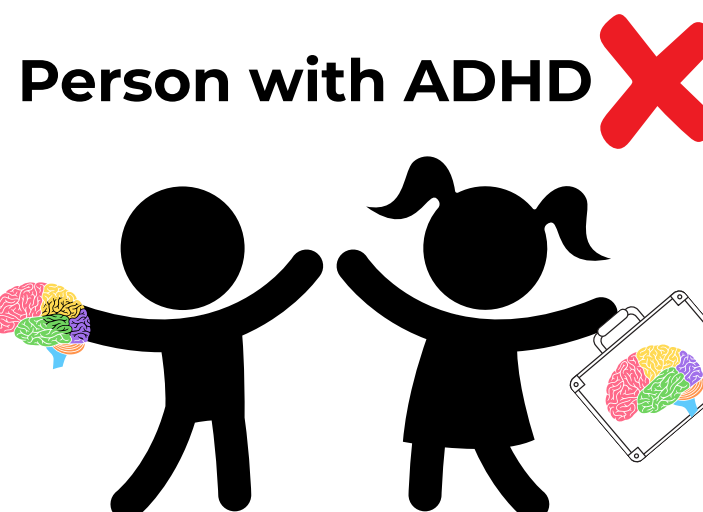
How to be neuroaffirming

1

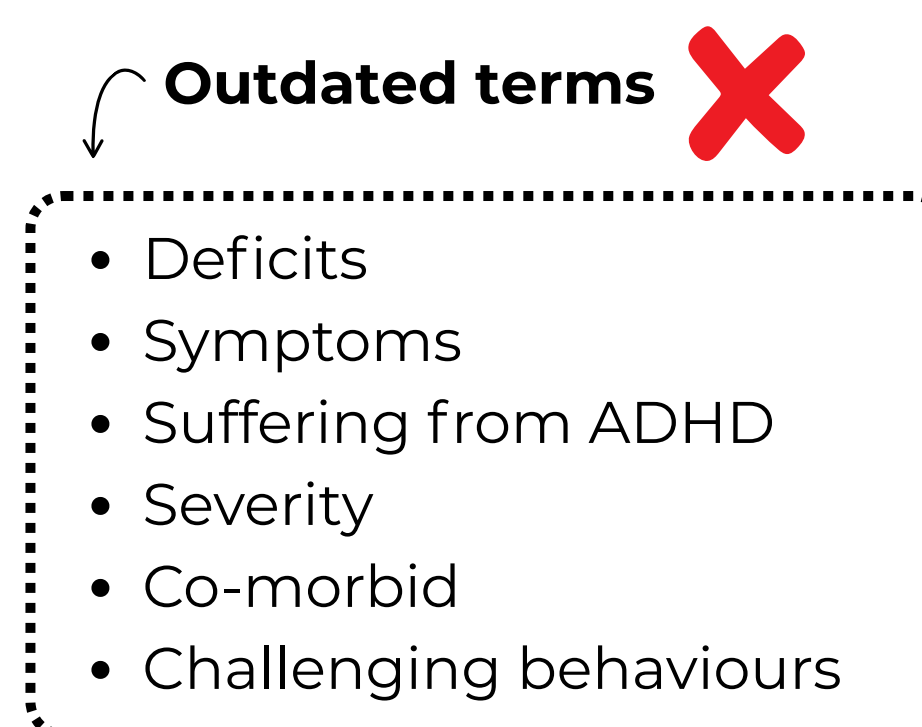
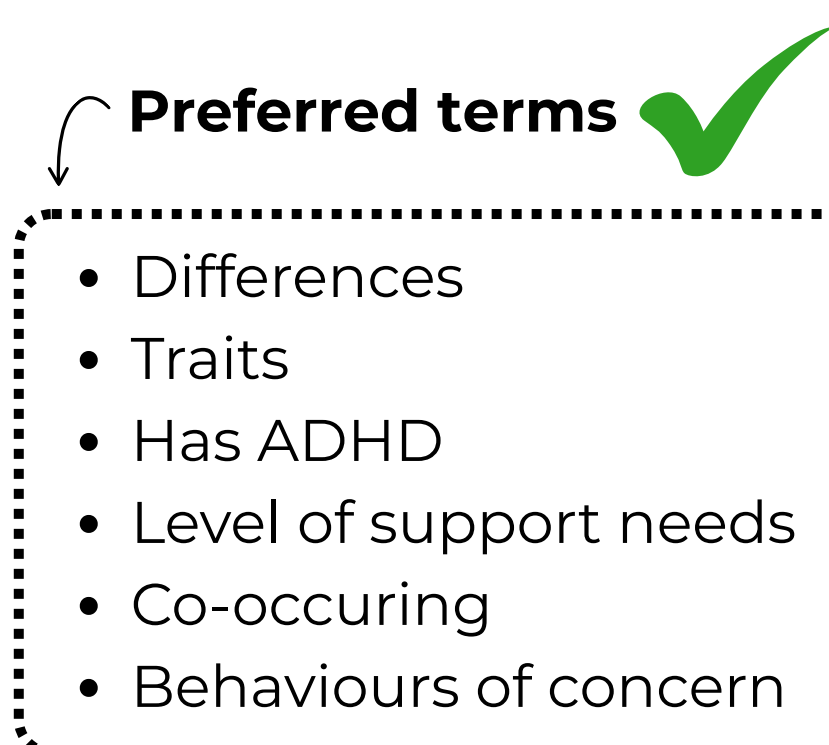
Use neuroaffirming language when referring to neurodivergent individuals to convey respect and inclusivity. As a guide, see below for the current preferred terminology of the ADHD community:



ADHD'ers often prefer this term as ADHD is a part of their identity that they are proud of.



This is less preferred, as it can make ADHD sound like unwanted baggage.



2

Embrace your child's neurodiversity by letting them know that you accept them exactly as they are, and that there is nothing 'wrong' with them.

3

Celebrate your child's interests and show interest in the things your child enjoys e.g. ask them questions about their favourite movies, ask to play their favourite game with them, or celebrate when they are proud of their work in their favourite school subject.

4

Focus on your child's strengths and interests and use them when possible during tasks to boost enjoyment and success e.g. incorporate music or movement into their morning routine if they enjoy extra sensory input.

5

Compliment your child when they put effort in to boost self-esteem e.g. "I love how you didn't give up on your homework even when it got tricky".

6

Adjust your child's environment to match their needs and set them up for success e.g. provide quiet spaces if your child gets over-stimulated easily.

7

Be flexible and understand that each day may be different, and your routines may look different to neurotypical households. This is okay!

8

Talk to your OT who can provide further resources and support.