



NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DIVERSITY

WHAT EVERY SCHOOL AND PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW

Psychology in Schools Team, Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
Essex Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools - Essex Child
and Family Wellbeing Services

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDHOOD NEURODIVERSITY?



HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO ARE NEURODIVERGENT?



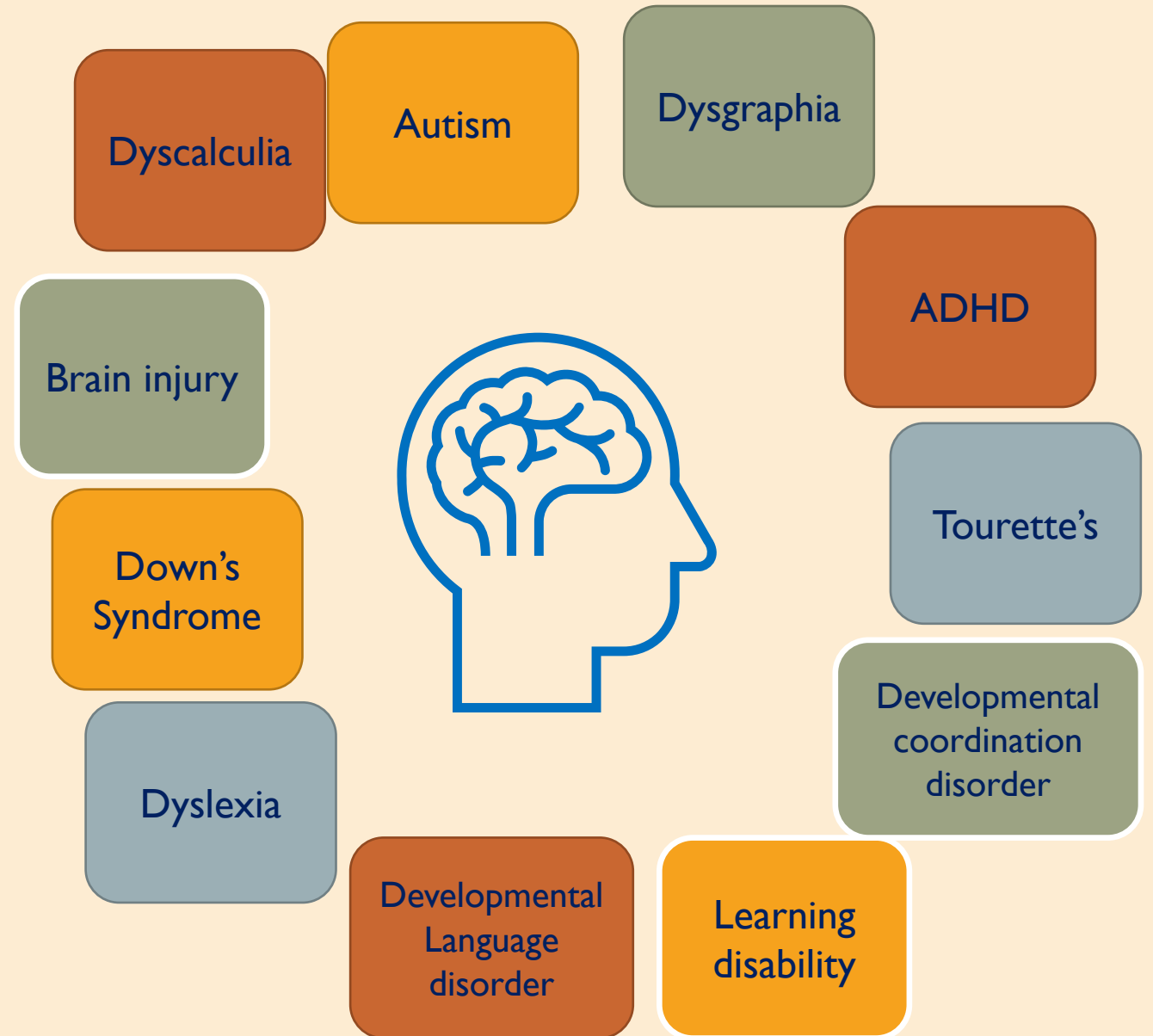


INTRODUCTION TO NEURODIVERSITY

- What is neurodiversity?
- Neurodevelopmental diagnoses
- Co-occurring challenges
- Talking to children about neurodiversity
- Ensuring a consistent approach between home and school
- Further support and resources

WHAT IS NEURODIVERSITY?

- An 'umbrella term'
- Part of normal human evolution
- Neurotypical and neurodivergent



LANGUAGE IS A PERSONAL CHOICE

- Language is a personal choice
- Neurodivergent community, sense of belonging



SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISE



WHAT IS NEURODIVERSITY?

- The world is typically designed by and for 'neurotypical' people
- Move from disorder/deficit to strengths and challenges
- Moving towards better understanding, acceptance and adaptations



NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DIAGNOSES

- Autism
- ADHD
- Learning disability
- Down's Syndrome
- Specific learning differences
- Speech and language differences including developmental language disorder

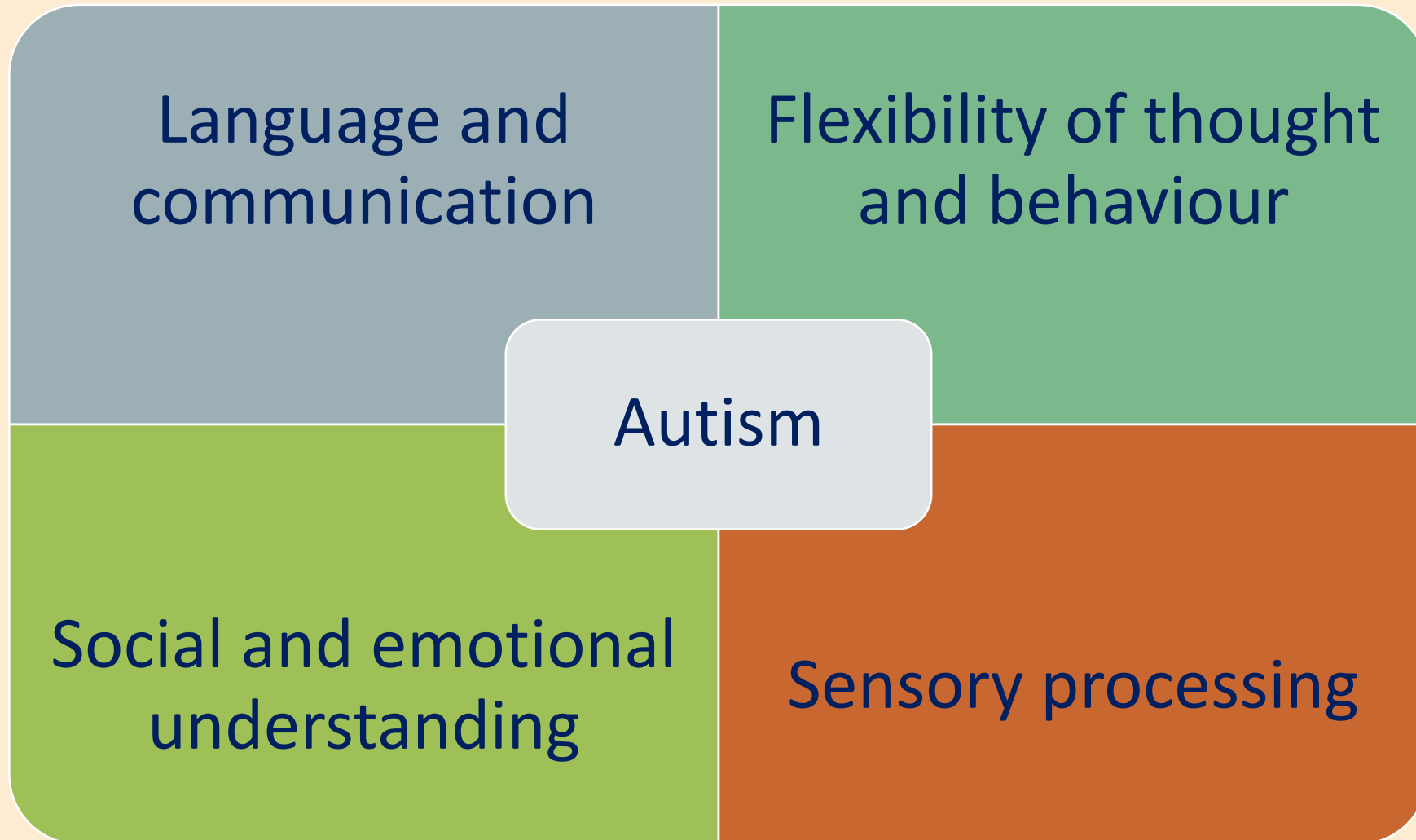


**ACTIVITY: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE STRENGTHS YOUR CHILDREN'S
NEURODIVERGENCE BRINGS TO THEM?**



ACTIVITY CONTINUED: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOUR CHILDREN'S NEURODIVERGENCE BRINGS TO THEM?





ACTIVITY: TRUE OR FALSE



TRUE OR FALSE? AUTISTIC PEOPLE DON'T LIKE SOCIALISING



TRUE OR FALSE? ALL AUTISTIC PEOPLE HAVE GENIUS ABILITIES



TRUE OR FALSE? AUTISTIC PEOPLE HAVE EMPATHY



AUTISM IN GIRLS

- Under-recognised
- More socially motivated
- Masking
- More likely struggle with emotional difficulties

<https://www.acamh.org/podcasts/how-autism-presents-differently-in-girls/>



AUTISM
STRENGTHS

Loyalty

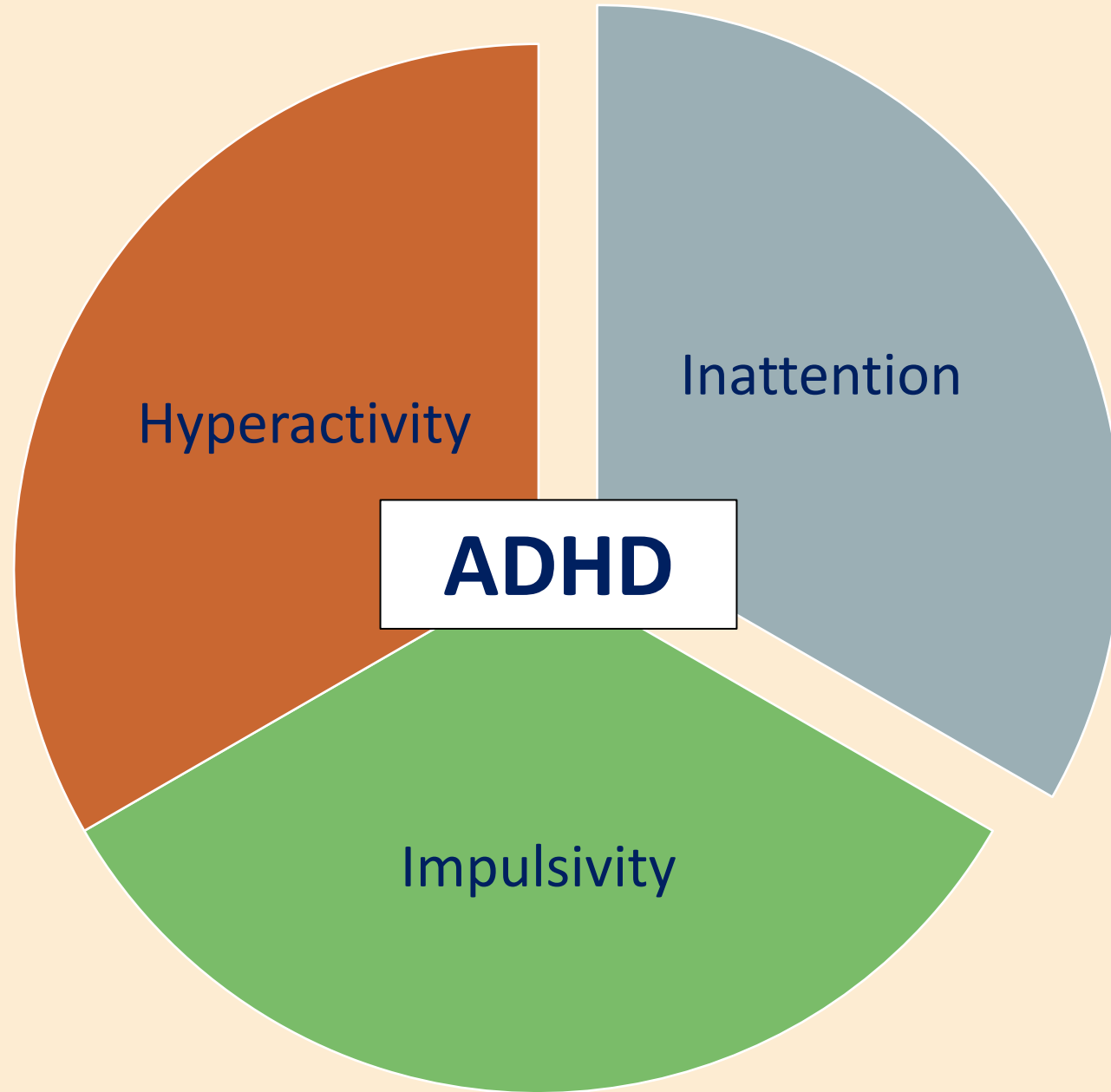
Morals

Attention to detail

Deep focus

In-depth knowledge

Resilience



ACTIVITY: TRUE OR FALSE



TRUE OR FALSE? ADHD DOESN'T EXIST, SOME CHILDREN ARE JUST NAUGHTY



TRUE OR FALSE? CHILDREN WITH ADHD CAN CONCENTRATE ON SOME THINGS



TRUE OR FALSE? ADHD ONLY AFFECTS BOYS



ADHD
STRENGTHS

Creativity

Courage

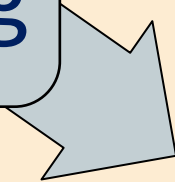
Spontaneous

Hyperfocus

Energetic

Resilience

Low
intellectual
functioning



Learning
Disability



Daily life
skills

ACTIVITY: TRUE OR FALSE



TRUE OR FALSE? AUTISM IS A LEARNING DISABILITY



TRUE OR FALSE? PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY CAN BE INDEPENDENT



LEARNING
DISABILITY
STRENGTHS

Friendly

Loving

Honesty

Interests and hobbies

Resilience

DOWN'S SYNDROME

- A genetic condition where young people are born with an additional chromosome
- This leads to developmental differences

Common Needs in Down's Syndrome

- Learning disability
- Speech, Language and Communication
- Vision and Hearing
- Often co-occurs with other neurodiverse conditions



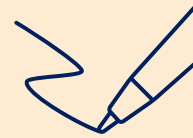
SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFERENCES



[Literacy Differences including Dyslexia](#)



[Dyscalculia](#)



[Dysgraphia](#)



[Developmental Coordination Disorder](#)

Click on the links to find more information

DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER

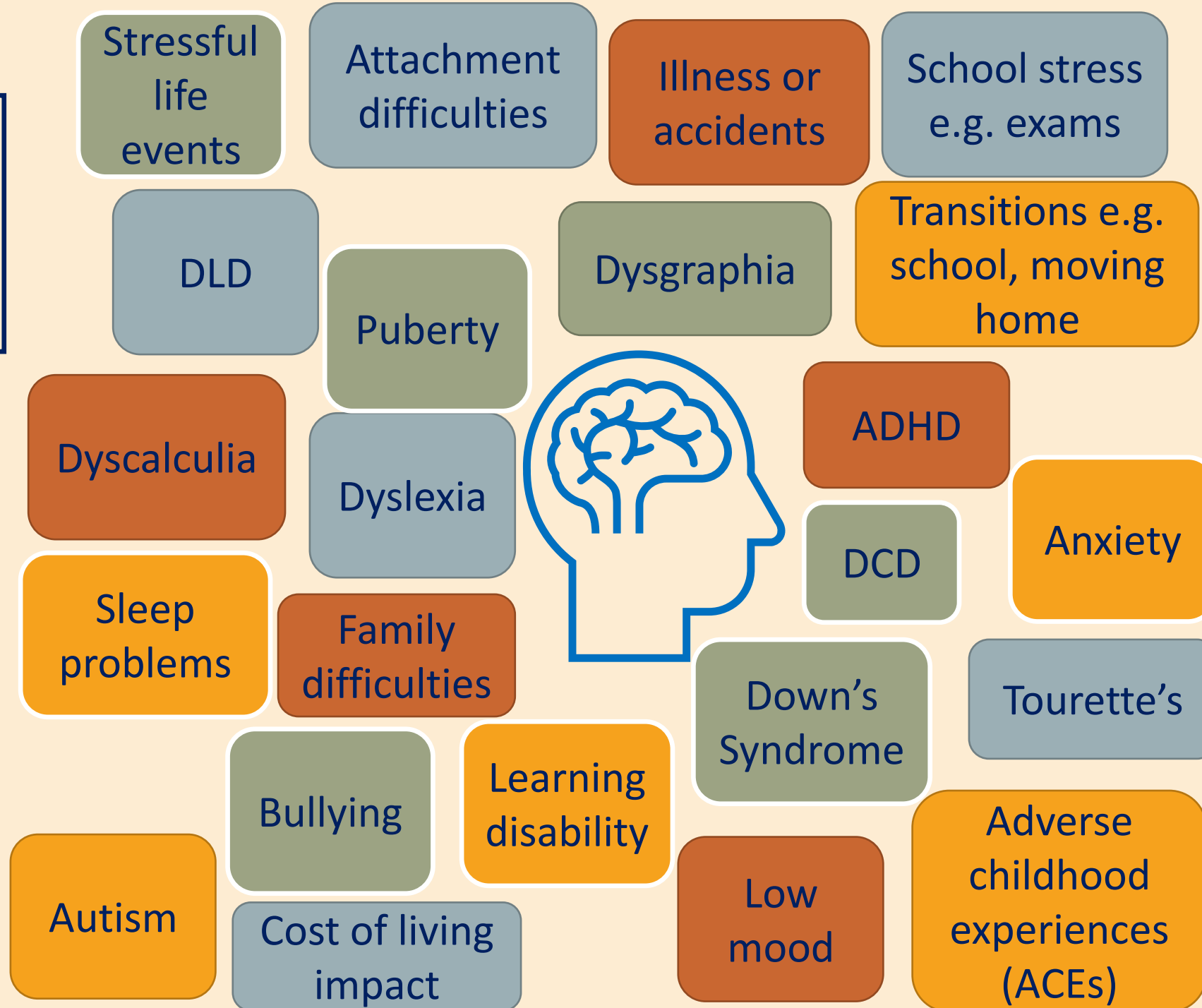
Persistent difficulties in the acquisition, understanding, production or use of language

DLD

Significant limitations in communication, with **functional impact** on daily life at home, school

POSSIBLE CO-OCCURRING CHALLENGES

- High co-occurrence between neurodivergent conditions
- Impact of other factors on children's lives



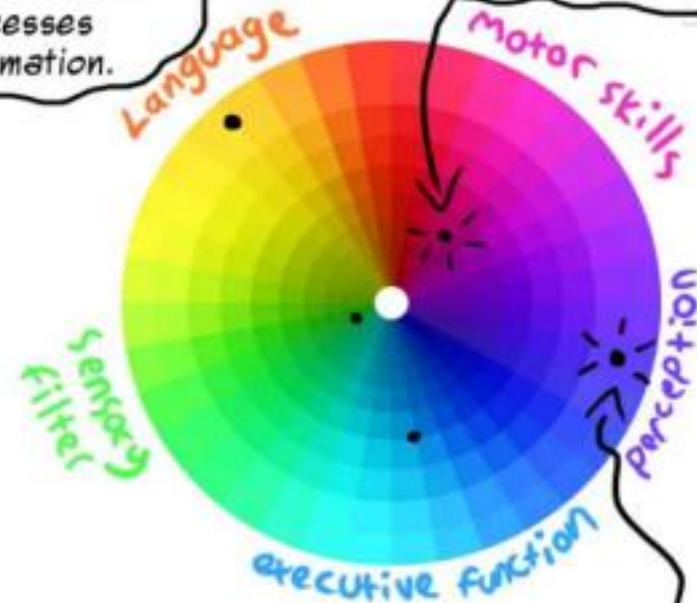
NEURODIVERGENT PROFILE

The truth is though, someone who is neurodivergent in some areas of their brain, will also be no different to your average person in other areas of their brain.



The spectrum consists of many different 'traits', or ways in which the brain processes information.

Some traits create difficulties in every day life. (hence being diagnosed)



But also many traits are useful in every day life.



ACCESS TO SUPPORT IS NEEDS-BASED NOT
DIAGNOSTIC

TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT NEURODIVERSITY

- [The Umbrella Gang Comics](#)
- [Newsround video: What is Neurodiversity?](#)
- NAS video on autism [Amazing Things Happen](#)
- [Comic book on understanding the autism spectrum](#)
- Fun workbook for kids – [Detectives Elena and Ruben Learn All About ADHD'](#)
- [A Teenager's Guide to ADHD](#)



THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONSISTENT APPROACH BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

- Who schools speak to?
 - Early Help [Early help support for families: Early help consultation | Essex Schools Infolink](#) (weekly online drop in sessions for professionals)
 - Educational Psychologist helpline Monday 1:00pm-5:00pm 01245 433293
 - Inclusion partners
 - <https://schools.essex.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>
- Learning About Neurodiversity in School (LEANS) curriculum free for primary schools

Everyone's Included:

Talking to your child's school about neurodiversity

[Parent and Carer Information Sheet and FAQs](#)



[LEANS Everyone is Included Talking to your child's school about neurodiversity.pdf](#)

THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONSISTENT APPROACH BETWEEN HOME AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS



How I communicate



I have a communication book.
The pages are colour-coded for each
thing I want to talk about.

I can select by picture to tell you what I am saying.

I prefer to talk using single words, but my speech is
not very clear. My body language and facial
expression may let you know how I feel.

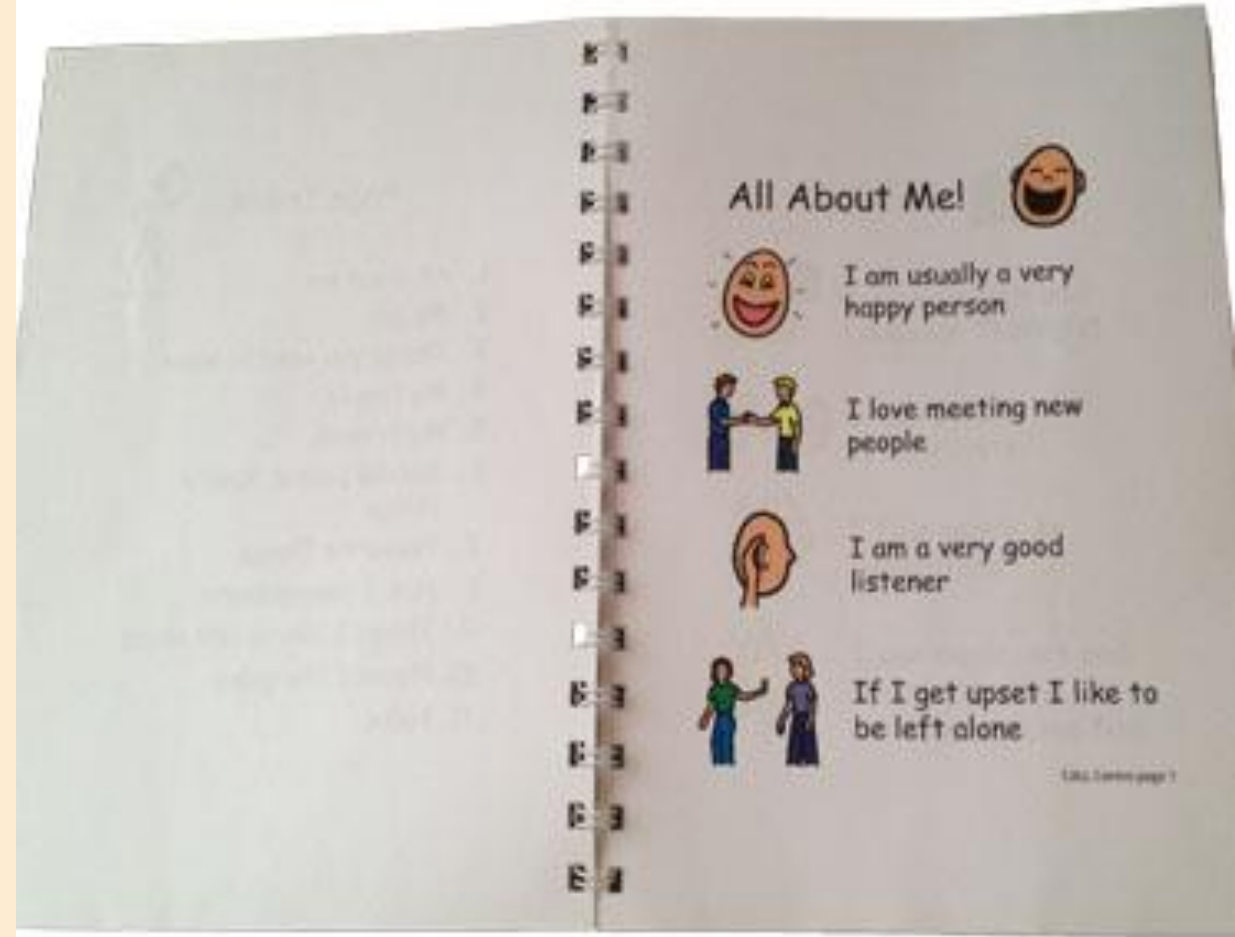
**Please listen carefully to me and encourage me to
use my communication book as well.**



It helps me if you give me time to respond
to your questions and comments.



If I'm in pain, I hit my wheelchair arm
with my fist!




SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION: HOW CAN WE PROMOTE A CONSISTENT APPROACH BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL?



HOLDING HOPE

“Keep being curious, become the detective and stay resilient. Be your child’s Ambassador, give them a voice. Everyday is a learning day. Talk to Others and ask for support, remember to take 5 minutes for yourself. Create a WOW board, take a photo of every achievement, don’t try and solve everything at once”



“Every child is different. You’ve just got to find what works”

“Embrace who your child is. Let them be them”

“Ask for support. Do not try to do things alone”

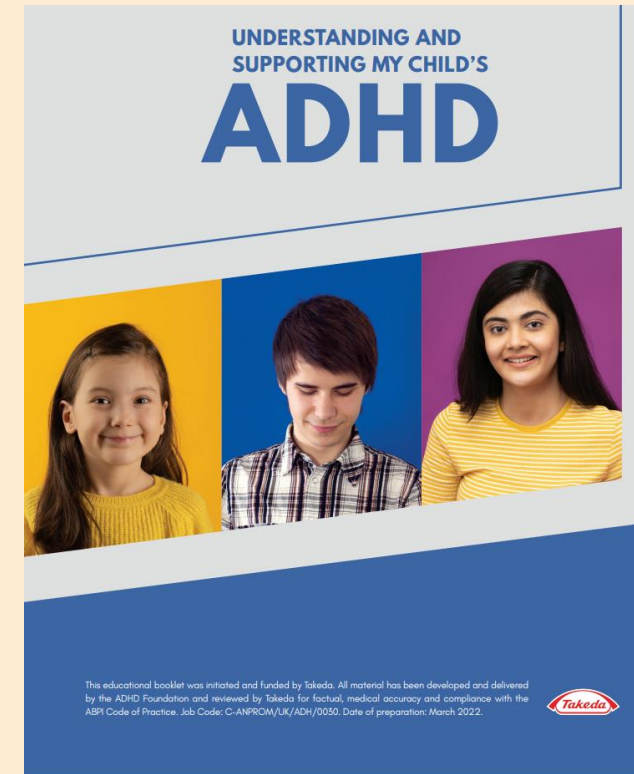
“You are not alone”

KEY SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND RESOURCES IN ESSEX

- Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child [Neurodiversity | Essex Family Forum](#)
- Essex Family Forum [Home | Essex Family Forum](#)
- Multi Schools Council [Home - Multi Schools Council](#)
- Essex Local Offer Roadshows [Essex Local Offer Roadshows | Essex Local Offer](#)
- Ordinarily Available Targeted Support Framework [What good support in school looks like | Essex Local Offer](#)
- EXTRA [Extra Support for Families | Welcome to Extra Support for Families](#)
- MAZE [The MAZE Group | SEND Parenting Support Group in Essex](#)
- SNAP [SNAP Charity - Registered Charity No.1077787](#)
- Families in Focus Essex [Home - Families InFocus Essex](#)
- KIDS Autism Hub [Kids Autism Hub – A new support service for Essex, Southend, and Thurrock](#)
Aimed at 12–25-year-olds but families of younger children can be referred by their school
- Autism Central [East of England delivered by Essex County Council | Autism Central](#)
- Essex Short Breaks [What are Essex Short Breaks?](#)
- Essex SEND IASS [Essex SEND - Information, Advice and Support Service](#)
- STRM Support [STRM Support – Send the Right Message](#)
- PACT [Autism Support | PACT For Autism | England](#)

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

- [What is autism?](#)
- [Understanding and supporting my child's ADHD](#)
- [What is a learning disability? | Mencap](#)
- [What are Specific Learning Difficulties \(SpLDs\)?
- The Dyslexia Association - The Dyslexia Association](#)



USEFUL WEBSITES

- [National Autistic Society](#)
- [The ADHD Foundation](#)
- [Learning Disability Matters](#)
- [Contact](#) (for families of disabled children)

PSYCHOLOGY IN SCHOOLS' TEAM FREE WORKSHOPS

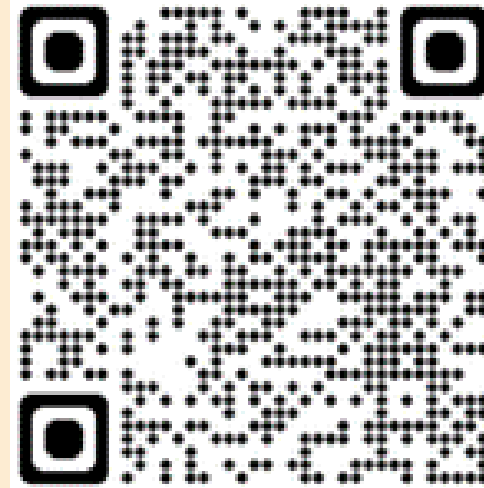
From our childhood neurodiversity series

- [Understanding and Supporting Sleep Difficulties](#)
- [Understanding and Supporting Eating Difficulties](#)
- [Understanding and Managing Behaviour](#)
- [How the Brain Develops](#)
- [The Impact of Early Life Stress](#)
- [Supporting Social Relationships](#)
- [Supporting Language and Communication](#)
- [Understanding and Supporting Sensory Needs](#)
- [The Benefits and Problems with Using Technology](#)

From our mental health series...

- [Building Resilience and Managing the Next Steps](#)
- [Building Understanding and Supporting Your Child with Tourette's Syndrome/Tics](#)

Upcoming live parent/carer workshops:



www.nsft.uk/workshops
Eventbrite page

[Parent workshops | Norfolk and Suffolk NHS](#)

WHAT TWO THINGS WILL YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THE SESSION?



HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDHOOD NEURODIVERSITY?



HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO ARE NEURODIVERGENT?



FEEDBACK FORM

PINS Feedback Survey



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