

Neurodiversity 101: Types of Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is an umbrella term that doesn't just include Autism Spectrum Disorders. It covers all aspects of variation (diversity) in how our brains (neuro-) work.

Social interactivity and communication

This trait describes how well you can 'read' emotions in other people and how you interact and communicate with other people (and see the world socially and sense it).

Some people may have more restricted interests than others.

People who are less socially interactive than the 'norm' and communicate differently may have an Autism Spectrum Disorder/Condition or it could be related to a Developmental Language Disorder

Language

This trait describes how well you can understand, communicate and produce spoken language.

People who find understanding and/or producing spoken language difficult may have Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Tics

This trait describes whether and to what extent you have tics – sudden, involuntary, repetitive movements and/or vocalisations.

People who have tics for over a year may have a Tic Disorder.

Intellect

This trait describes your overall intellectual functioning, i.e. your ability to reason, learn and problem-solve and can impact on day to day functioning

People who have difficulties with intellectual functioning may have an Intellectual or Learning Disability.

There are several key traits that are usually considered when talking about neurodiversity. These correspond to medical disorders/conditions, all of which are fairly common but some of which are less well known.

Attention, focus levels and impulsivity

These traits describe the way you focus and pay attention, how easy it is for you to think before acting and whether you are fidgety and restless.

People who are less attentive and/or more hyperactive and/or more impulsive than the 'norm' may have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder(ADHD)

Movement and Coordination

This trait describes how well you can make small and large movements (e.g. tying shoelaces or running) and how well you can balance.

People who have challenges with movements and/or balance may have Developmental Coordination Disorder, sometimes also called Dyspraxia.

Reading, writing and spelling

This trait describes how accurately and fluently you can read, write and spell.

People who struggle with reading, writing and/or spelling skills may have Dyslexia.

Mathematics

This trait describes how accurately and fluently you can use mathematics concepts.

People who struggle with mathematics are sometimes considered to have Dyscalculia.