

# Supporting Your Neurodiverse Teen in High School ADHD, Autism and Executive function difficulties

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# \* Welcome \*

Breakout sessions are provided by presenters who have volunteered to share their knowledge and experience with us today at the 2025 Family Summit.

Please remember that the information and experiences shared are understandings and perspectives of the presenters.



# Today's Agenda

Content

Kahoot: Truth and Myths

Understanding Your Teen's Needs

Preparing for the Transition to HS

Self-Advocacy Skills

Organization

Building Relationships

Academics

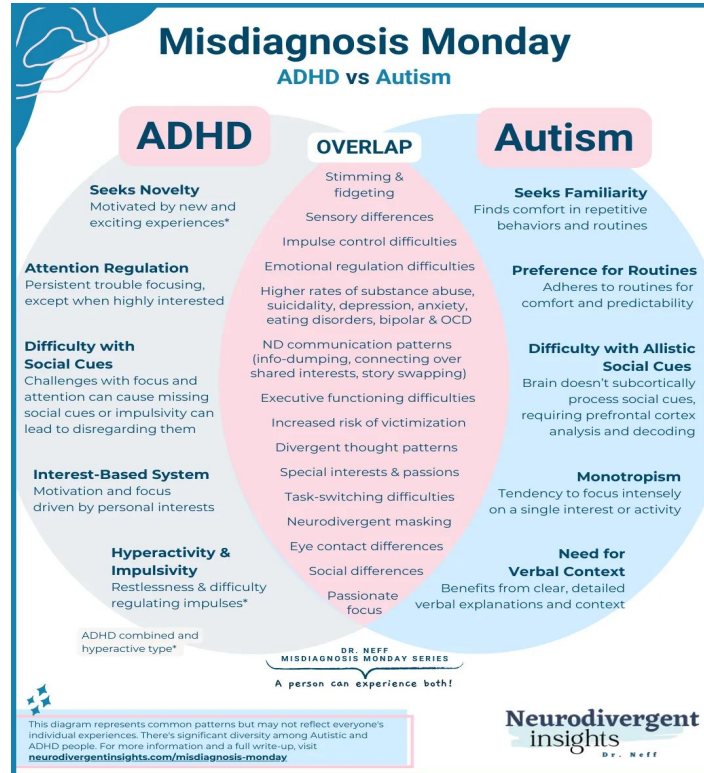
# Kahoot: Truths and Myths about Neurodiversity

# Understanding your Teens' Needs

- What is Neurodiversity
- Challenges and Strengths of Neurodiverse Teens
- Parental Support and Collaboration



# Understanding Your Teens' Needs



[www.neurodivergentinsights.com](https://www.neurodivergentinsights.com)

# Understanding Your Teens' Needs

## EXECUTIVE DYSFUNCTION INNER DIALOGUE



What did I forget to bring or think about? Do I need to cook something? Bring a gift?

Did I forget to ask them how they are doing? Why do they seem disappointed? What did I just say?

Am I going to embarrass myself again by not having done the thing I am supposed to do?

Do I have enough money? Are there groceries in my fridge? What bills are due? Do I have assignments to complete? How long does this stuff take?

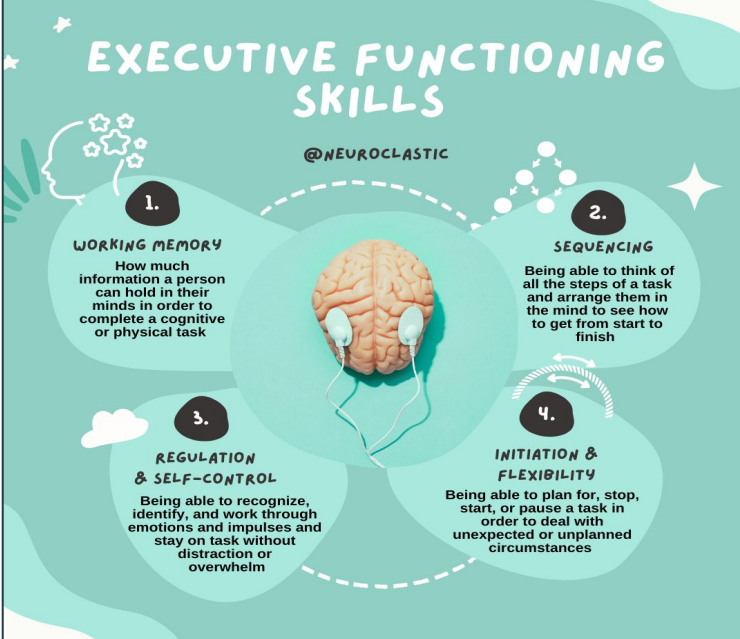
When I make this decision, and I forget something important, how much will I pay for it? In what ways?

How can I possibly be emotionally available when everything is behind, and I have no idea what to do or how to start getting it all done?

@NeuroClastic

## EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SKILLS

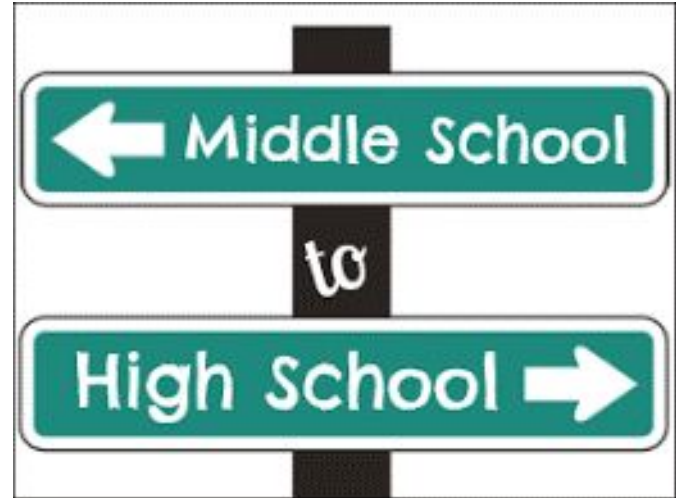
@NEUROCLASTIC



- 1. WORKING MEMORY**  
How much information a person can hold in their minds in order to complete a cognitive or physical task
- 2. SEQUENCING**  
Being able to think of all the steps of a task and arrange them in the mind to see how to get from start to finish
- 3. REGULATION & SELF-CONTROL**  
Being able to recognize, identify, and work through emotions and impulses and stay on task without distraction or overwhelm
- 4. INITIATION & FLEXIBILITY**  
Being able to plan for, stop, start, or pause a task in order to deal with unexpected or unplanned circumstances

# Preparing for High School

- Sign up for appropriate classes.
- Have a transition IEP and involve your student.
- Have appropriate accommodations and know how to access them. If something additional is needed advocate for it.
- Have trusted adults in the building.
- Open communication with your teen about what happens in class daily.
- Familiarize yourself with the school.
- Assist your teen with communicating with teachers.
- Be prepared to get involved socially.





# Self Advocacy Skills

Why Self-Advocacy?

Teaching your teen

Practice, practice, practice



# Organization

- Calendar/planner- deadlines
- Prioritize tasks- eat the frog- do the hardest task first
- Stay after school
- Use to-do lists, check lists
- Ask for help
- Have a routine
- Maintain materials in backpack and in a study space at home



# Building Relationships

- Acknowledge social challenges
- Emphasize the Importance of Social Connections
- Extracurricular Activities and Clubs
- Encourage Independence



# Academics

- Know your challenges and your strengths. Review assessments if needed.
- Talk to your teachers in person or in email.
- Stay after school for help.
- Do your work, don't let missing assignments pile up.
- Study for the test. Don't "plan" on retakes because you get busy and it gets stressful to go back.
- Don't avoid school
- Practice your resilience

# Social and Emotional

Acknowledge the unique social-emotional needs of neurodiverse teens

Emphasize the importance of social-emotional well-being

Promote strategies for supporting social-emotional health

Discuss the role of extracurricular activities and peer interactions

Address the potential need for professional support

# Social and Emotional-How You Can Help

## Autism

[Recharging Log](#)

Reduce Burnout/Meltdowns




Physical Toolbox

Planned

Coping

**Autistic Burnout**

The three primary characteristics include:

-  Chronic exhaustion (mental, emotional, and physical)
-  Reduced tolerance to stimulus
-  Loss of skills (e.g., reduced executive functioning, such as thinking, remembering, creating, and executing plans, performing basic self-care skills and activities in daily living)

Neurodivergent insights ...

## ADHD

Create a Supportive Environment

Encourage Mindfulness Practices

Encourage

Movement

Prompt to Eat

# Advice from a neurodiverse FCPS graduate

Don't be embarrassed about taking tests in a different room or having accommodations because it's what you need and sometimes people won't understand.

Surround yourself with people who are supportive of you and don't judge.

Making lists and having reminders on my phone helps.

Having different folders for every class is helpful.

Be consistent.

I would give myself incentives for studying or getting good grades.

# Recharging Log

Date and Time	Emotional Check-In (Before)	Recharging Activity	Emotional Check-In (After)



# Autism: The Perspective of a Teen Artist with Neurodivergence | Arianna Marin

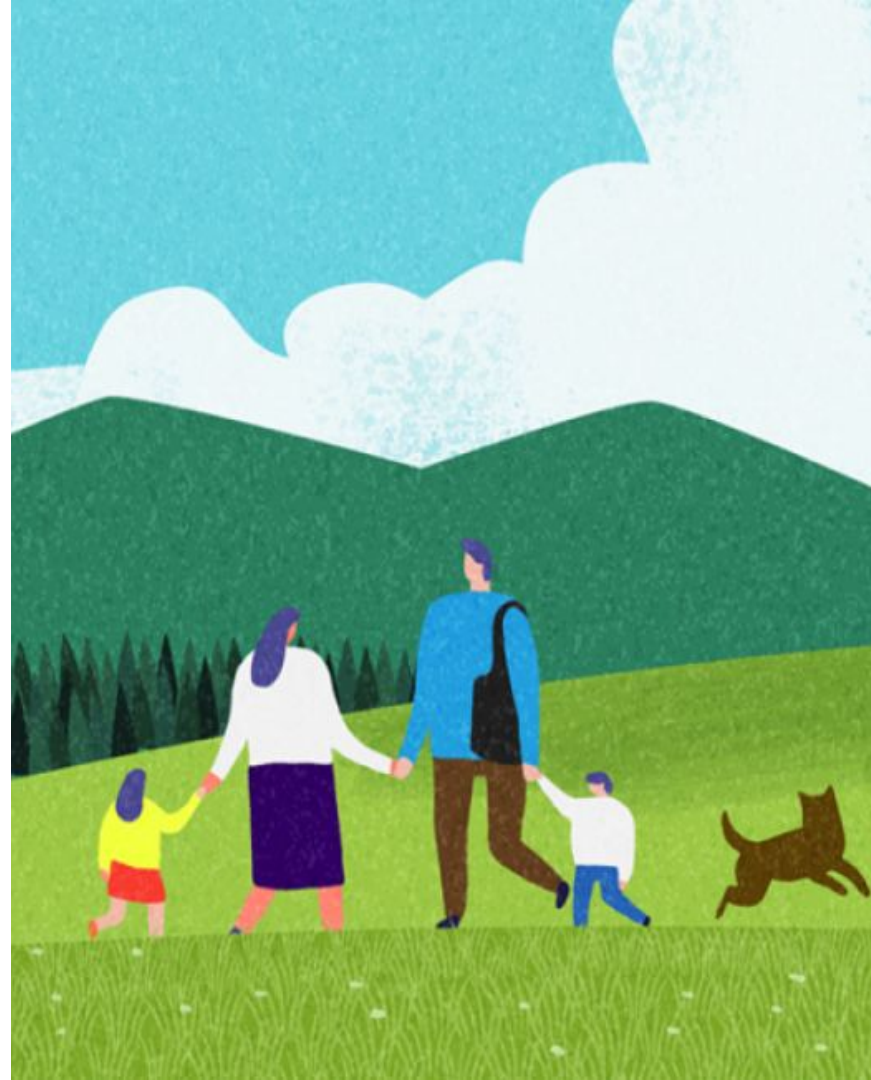


# References and Resources

- [Chadd.org](https://www.chadd.org)
- [Neurodivergentinsights.com](https://www.neurodivergentinsights.com)
- [Neuroclastic.com](https://www.neuroclastic.com)
- Marschall, Amy. *A Clinician's Guide to Supporting Autistic Clients*. Eau Claire, WI: PESI Publishing, 2024.
- Marston, Daniel. *Autism and Independence*. Eau Claire, WI: PESI Publishing, 2019.

# Thank You!

Please take a moment  
to fill out this brief  
feedback survey:



“When a flower doesn’t bloom you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower”

–Alexander den Heijer



...What you need to not just survive... but THRIVE!

What are your STRENGTHS?

**NEURO = Cognition** + **DIVERSITY =**

The process of learning, thinking, perception, communicating, etc. through thought, experiences, & senses

The variation of different characteristics in a group of people. No characteristic is better or worse; different is value neutral



**= NEURODIVERSITY**

Infinite variation in human cognitive functioning and behavior; every human has unique genetics & experiences & identities that shape cognition

Do you see others for who they are? What might they be experiencing or communicating?

Be a DETECTIVE not a JUDGE!

**INCLUSION**

Umbrella Term



All arrows represent continuums

**NEUROTYPICAL**

**NEURODIVERGENT**

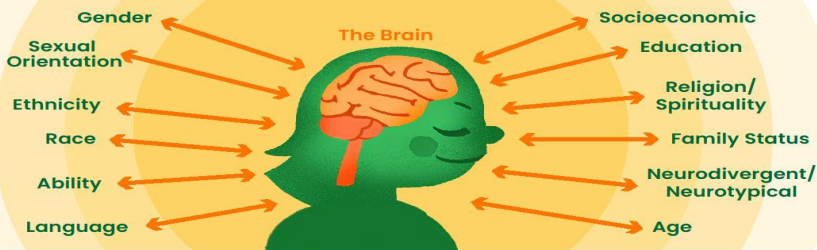
**NEURO = COGNITION** + **TYPICAL = Most commonly occurring**  
 - Most commonly occurring neurocognitive functioning  
 - No identified disorders

**NEURO = COGNITION** + **DIVERGENT = DIFFERENT (not better or worse... different!)**  
 - Natural genetic and/or environmental difference(s) in cognitive functioning identified as disorders

- OCD
- ADHD
- Autism
- PTSD
- Dyslexia
- Tourette Syndrome
- Twice Exceptional (2e)
- (Not an Exhaustive List)

**Identities & Experiences**

(Double ended arrows signify may change over time)



\*Asasumasa, 2000; Singer, 2019; Walker, 2021