



Understanding ASC and ADHD: A guide for parents

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What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

There are 3 different types of ADHD:

Inattentive **Type** (Used to be called ADD).

Hyperactive/Impulsive Type.

Combined Type (both hyperactive-impulsive symptoms)
(American Psychiatric Association, APA, 2013).

What is ADHD like?

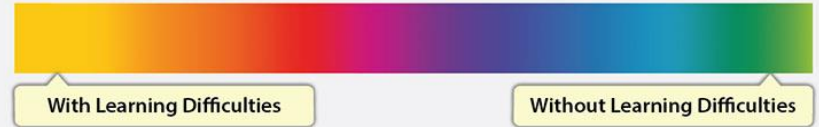




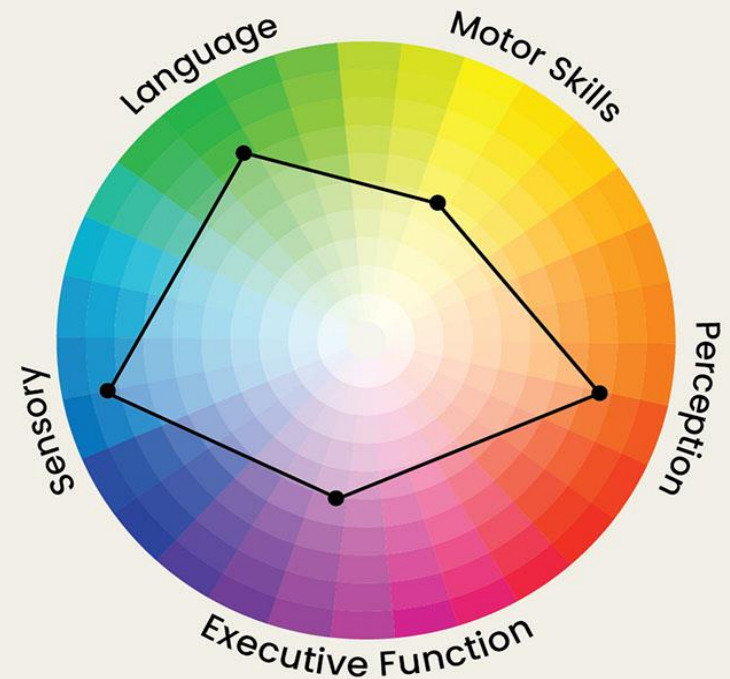
What is ASC?

Autism, or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), is a developmental condition that affects how individuals perceive and interact with the world. It's called a "spectrum" because it includes a wide range of characteristics, which can vary greatly in intensity from person to person. The main areas it affects include social communication, behaviour, and sensory processing.

What people think autism spectrum is like:



Autism spectrum looks more like:



Prevalence



ADHD Prevalence in the UK:

- *Current Rate*: Approximately 5% of children in the UK are diagnosed with ADHD.
- *Age Group Impact*: Most diagnoses are made during school-age years, though ADHD continues into adulthood for around 60% of those diagnosed.

Autism Prevalence in the UK:

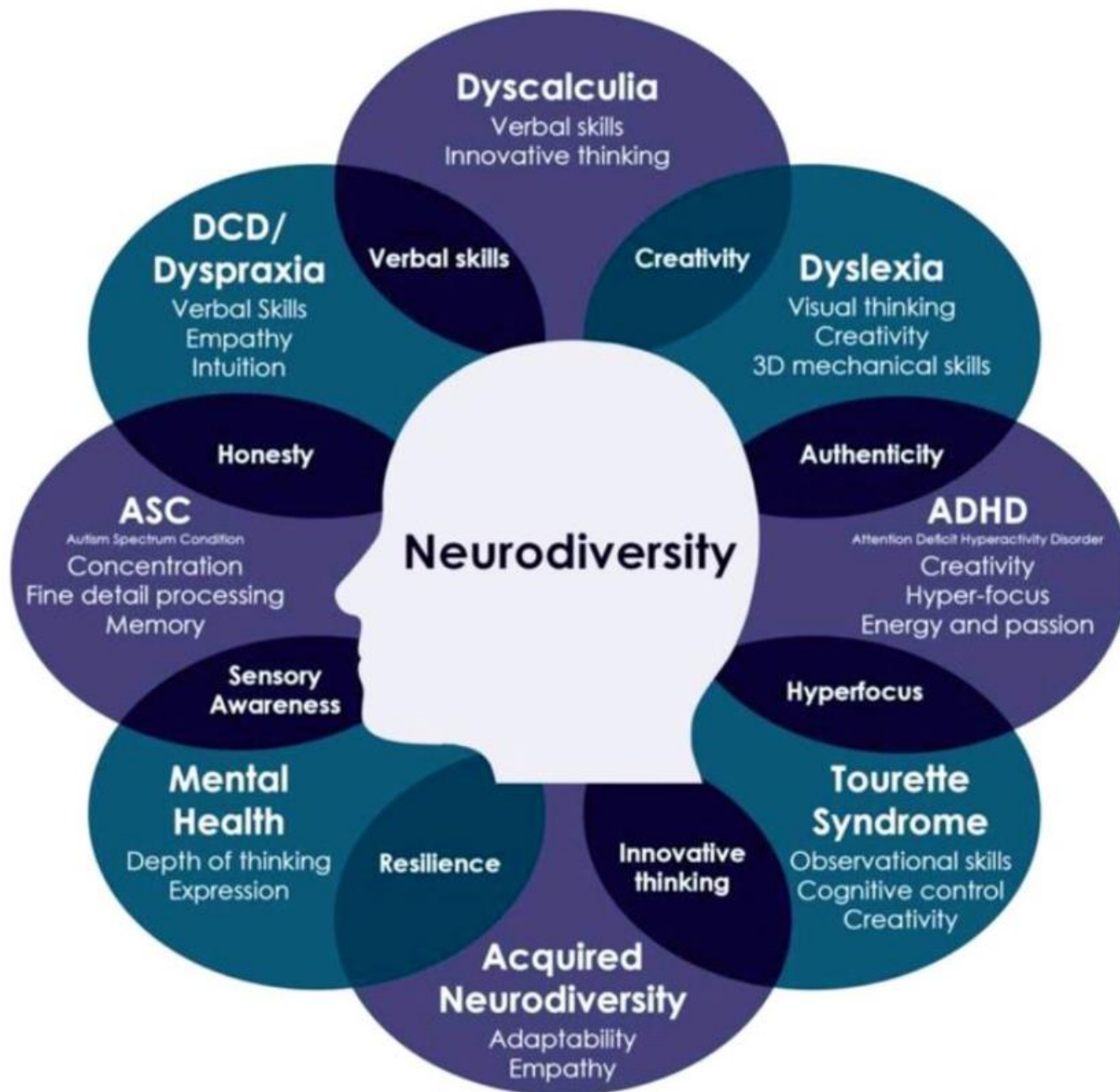
- *Current Rate*: About 1 in 57 children are diagnosed with autism in the UK.
- *Gender Statistics*: Boys are around 3-4 times more likely to be diagnosed than girls.
- *Increase in Diagnoses*: Diagnoses have been steadily rising over the past decade due to increased awareness and improved diagnostic practices.

Comorbidity Rate:

- Around 30–50% of children with autism also meet criteria for ADHD, showing a significant overlap.

Neurodiversity model: Embracing cognitive differences

- **Diversity, Not Deficit:** Views neurodivergent traits as natural human variations, not disorders.
- **Strengths-Based Approach:** Emphasizes unique abilities over challenges.
- **Inclusive Environments:** Advocates for supportive accommodations in schools and communities.
- **Reducing Stigma:** Promotes acceptance and empowerment by celebrating diverse ways of thinking.
- **Value to Society:** Neurodiverse individuals contribute unique perspectives, enriching problem-solving and innovation.



Impact of ADHD/ASC in school settings



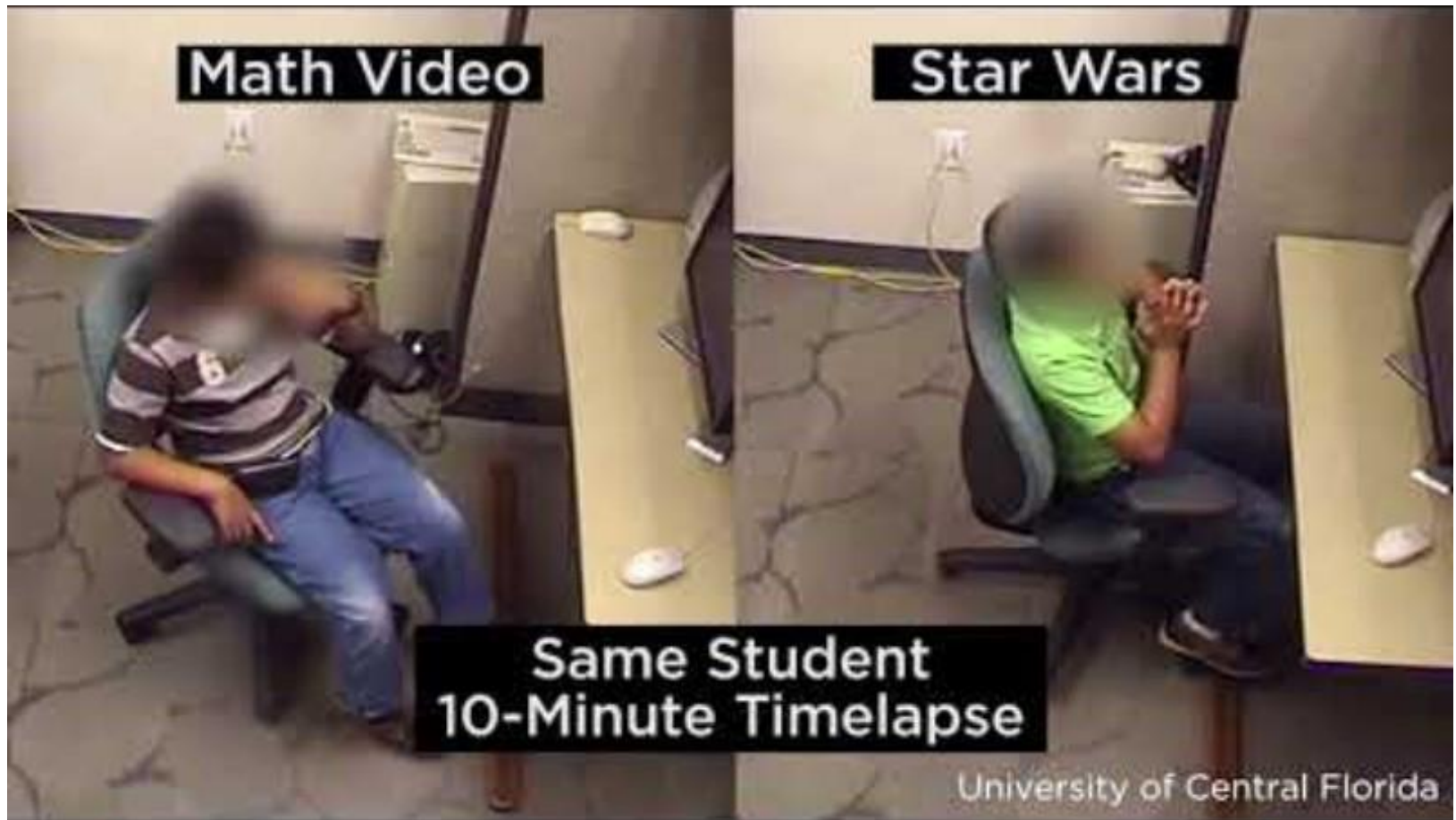
Academic performance and concentration

Behavior and peer relationships

Self-Esteem

Creativity and problem-solving

Focus on interests



BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATION

@kwiens62

UNEXPECTED
BEHAVIOUR



SOME PEOPLE SEE "MISBEHAVIOUR".
THEY USE REWARDS AND
PUNISHMENT TO TRY TO GET
COMPLIANCE. THIS DOES NOT
ADDRESS UNDERLYING REASONS
FOR THE BEHAVIOUR.

BIOLOGICAL

EMOTIONAL

COGNITIVE

SOCIAL

PROSOCIAL

FIVE DOMAINS
OF
SELF-REG

STRESS BEHAVIOURS

"STRESS DETECTIVES" REFRAME A
CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR AS "STRESS
BEHAVIOUR." THEY ATTEMPT TO
IDENTIFY AND REDUCE STRESSORS
WHILE TEACHING THE CHILD
SKILLS TO RESPOND TO STRESSORS.

Kristin Wiener 2016

visit: www.self-reg.ca

THE AUTISM SIMULATOR



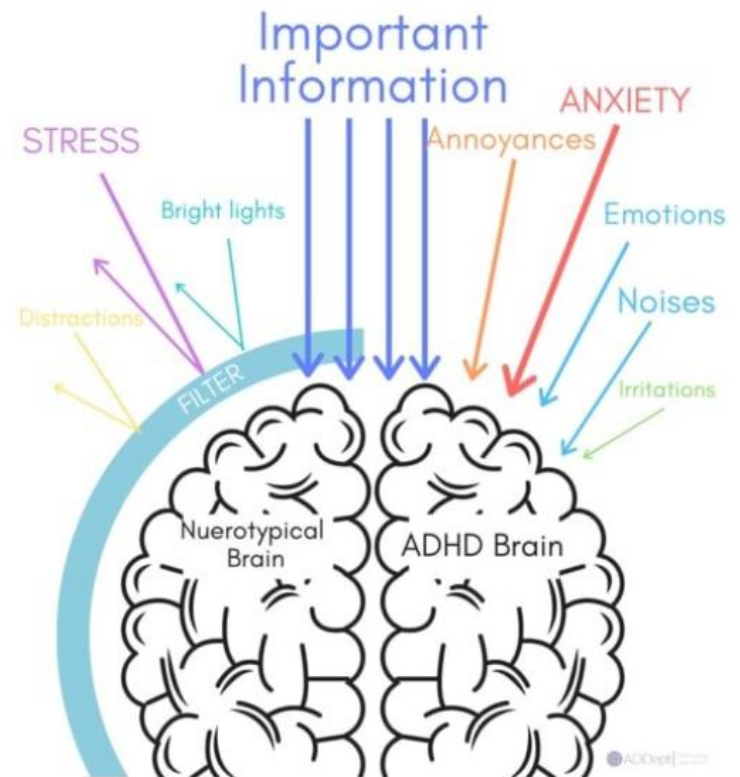
Sensory and Physical

Neurotypical brains adapt to sensory information however those with ADHD struggle to filter out distractions.

CYP with ADHD/ASC struggle with (not exhaustive):

- Loud sudden noise
- Bright /flashing lights
- Strong odours
- Clothing that's too tight
- Hair rubbing against skin
- Too many people
- Minor disagreement or frustrations
- Busy environments

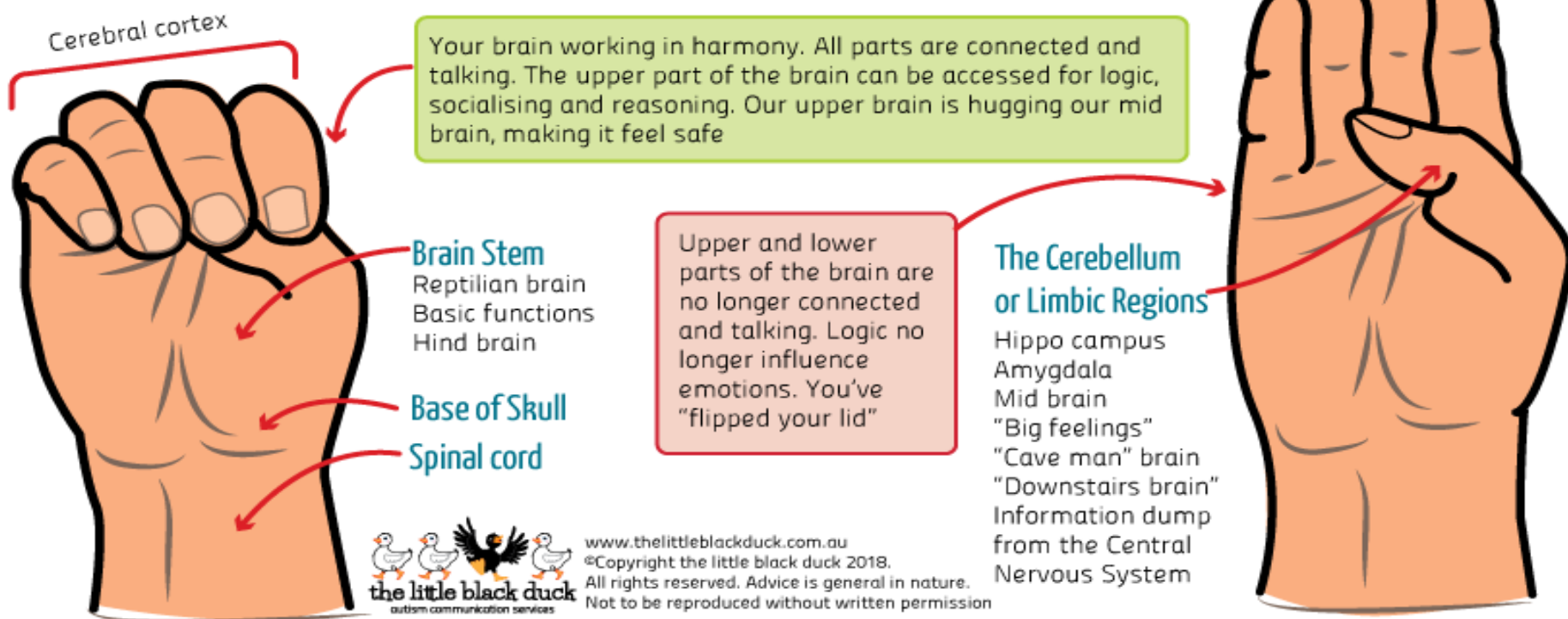
THE OVERWHELMING IMPACT OF AN UNFILTERED BRAIN



The Hand Model of the Brain

What happens when we “flip our lid”

When our brain is working efficiently both the upper and mid brain are communicating effectively. Information comes in and is processed logically. Sometimes too much information is coming in for the Upper brain to process and it disconnects. We “flip our lid” and can no longer access the functions provided by the upper brain



Building emotional awareness

Naming Emotions: Teach children to identify and name their feelings (happy, sad, frustrated). Use visuals, like emotion charts or "feelings wheels". Programmes like Zones of Regulation are really useful too.

Body Clues: Help children recognize physical signs of emotions (e.g., tight fists, fast breathing when angry).

Daily Check-Ins: Encourage a routine where children can share how they feel each day using a simple scale (e.g., "I'm feeling a 3 out of 5 happy").





Showing Our Feelings	
 <p>smile • wave jump up and down • heart pounds • dance run super fast • laugh</p>	 <p>stomp shake fists yell • growl • roar cross arms</p>
 <p>cry shake make a face cover your face with your hands</p>	 <p>turn red hide run away stomp • get hot inside hide behind your mom</p>
 <p>stand tall I did it! I did it! smile big</p>	 <p>belly hurts • hold on to cry • your mom shake</p>

Setting routines and boundaries for consistency

Daily Routine: Consistent routines help children feel secure and can reduce anxiety, making it easier for them to regulate emotions.

Clear Expectations: Establish simple rules and explain consequences clearly. Children are more likely to regulate emotions when they understand boundaries.

Reward and Reinforce: Reinforce emotional regulation by praising efforts and successes in managing strong feelings.



Modelling emotional regulation

Be a Role Model: Show how to manage your emotions in stressful situations (e.g., saying, “I’m feeling frustrated, so I’ll take a deep breath”).

Self-Care: Emphasize the importance of self-care, showing that everyone has moments when they need to recharge.

Positive Self-Talk: Demonstrate using self-talk in front of your child (e.g., “It’s okay, I can handle this”).



Effective ways of supporting your child



**Open, transparent
communication**

**Consistent use of language and
strategies**

Regular check-ins

Routines and structure

Unconditional positive regard

Resources

- <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/support-in-the-community/family-support>
- <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/resources/>
- <https://autism-bucks.charity/>
- <https://directory.familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/service/1322?collection=advice-and-support&keywords=NAS%20South%20Buckinghamshire%20branch&needs=autism&page=1>
- <https://talkback-uk.com/>
- [ADHD Support Group Meetings - ADHD Aware](#)
- <https://outsidein-solutions.com/>
- <https://www.triplep-parenting.uk.net/uk/triple-p/?cdsid=lmhb7dcc0ueoq35fko4qu1a5u7>