



NEURODIVERGENCE



vocabulary "cheat sheet"

NEURODIVERSITY



All of the different
brains that make
up society

NEURODIVERGENT



A person
whose brain is
different from
most people

NEUROTYPICAL



A person
whose brain is
the same as
most people

Common Neurotypes



Autism



ADHD



Typical



Anxiety



SPD
Sensory Processing
Disorder

MASKING



Copying neurotypical
behavior or hiding
neurodiverse behavior

STIMMING



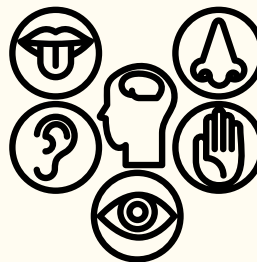
An automatic,
soothing, repetitive
behavior

EMOTIONAL REGULATION



Understanding,
processing, and
responding to emotions
in a way that is safe and
comfortable

SENSORY REGULATION



Understanding,
processing, and
responding to sensory
input in a way that is
safe and comfortable

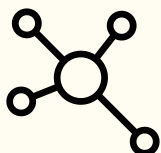


NEURODIVERGENCE

communication differences

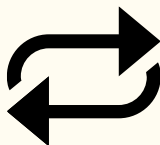
language content and organization differences

TOPIC CHANGES



may change topics quickly
may be able to switch between two topics at once
make different connections

ECHOLALIA



repeating a phrase, word, sign, sound
immediate or delayed
may have non-literal meaning

NON-LINEAR STORIES



may not follow sequential or time order
may include a lot of details
may give a lot (or not enough) background info

INFO DUMPING



stay on one topic for a long time
ex. banana rant

HIGH INTERESTS



may have very high interest topic
may hyper focus on this

HUMOR



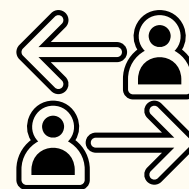
may misunderstand sarcasm
may prefer "dark" or "young" humor
may have unexpected reaction (e.g. laughing at bad news)

HIDDEN CUES



figurative language may be hard to understand
implied meaning ("I'm fine")
social expectation: "Call me anytime!"

DIRECT LANGUAGE



may better understand language that is straightforward
may use very direct language
may not enjoy "small talk"



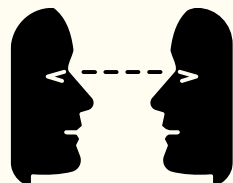
NEURODIVERGENCE



communication differences

"body language" differences

EYE CONTACT



may be uncomfortable, distracting, or painful
may be OK with familiar or trusted people

FACIAL EXPRESSION



may not match neurotypical expectations
may be more or less expressive
may also have a different emotional reaction
to something

BODY LANGUAGE AND GESTURE



may not match neurotypical expectations
may be more or less expressive
may misunderstand others' body signals

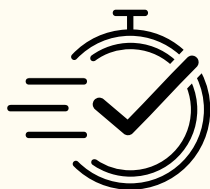
POSTURE AND GAIT



may not match that of neurotypical
may have coexisting difficulty with motor
planning, sensory needs, muscle tone, etc.

production differences

RATE



faster rate of signing or speaking

VOICE



may have less variation in pitch and volume
may have trouble understanding how
tone can change meaning





NEURODIVERGENCE

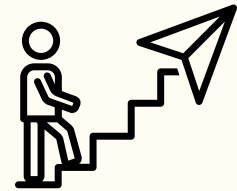
communication related differences



ATTENTION



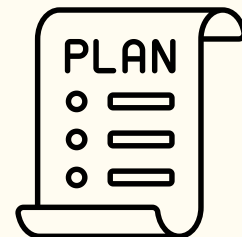
MEMORY



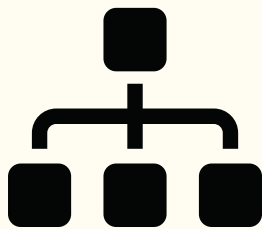
INITIATION



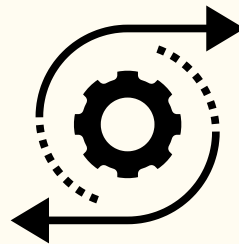
**EXECUTIVE
FUNCTION**



PLANNING



ORGANIZATION



FLEXIBILITY





NEURODIVERGENCE

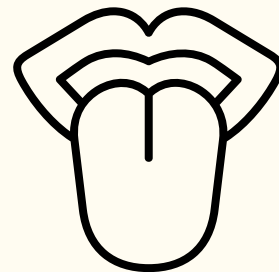
communication related differences



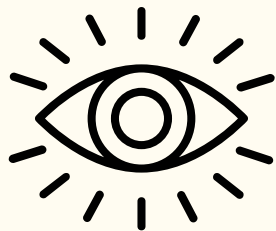
hearing



touch



taste



vision

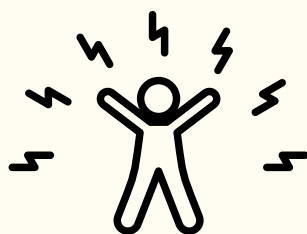
sensory processing



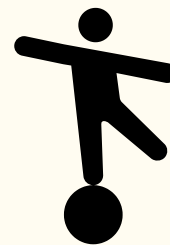
smell



proprioception
(muscle/joint)



interoception
(internal body sense)



vestibular
(balance)





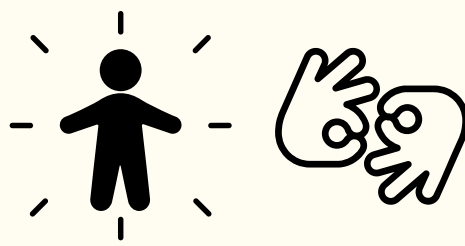
considerations for Deaf and signing neurodiverse communicators

A NOTE ON RESEARCH:

due to lack of research, we have to apply what we know about language development and communication patterns of:

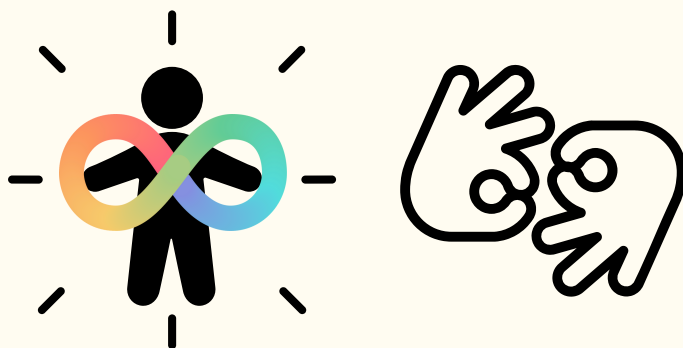


hearing neurodiverse people



neurotypical ASL users

while advocating for more research and listening to people with intersectional identities





DEAF NEURODIVERSE

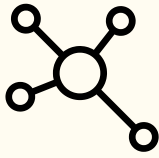


APPLYING THE RESEARCH:

LANGUAGE AND ORGANIZATION

all of the topic and organization differences still apply:

TOPIC
CHANGES



INFO
DUMPING

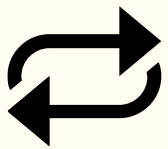
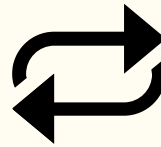


NON-LINEAR
STORIES



making connections across topics, giving all the details and background information, are features that maybe seen in Deaf neurotypical communicators

ECHOLALIA



repeating
their own
signs



copying a
communication
partner's signs

abc

fingerspelling
after signing
a word

HIGH INTERESTS



important to note that people with limited language or language deprivation may be more easily able to talk about one topic, especially a preferred topic, though they may not identify as neurodiverse.





DEAF NEURODIVERSE



APPLYING THE RESEARCH:

NON-LITERAL LANGUAGE

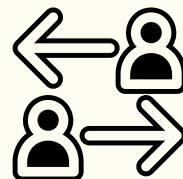
HUMOR



HIDDEN
CUES



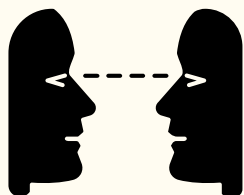
DIRECT
LANGUAGE



using direct communication may be seen in neurotypical Deaf communicators

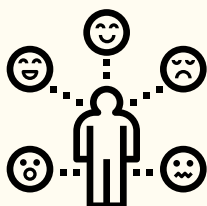
"BODY" LANGUAGE

EYE
CONTACT



eye gaze and eye contact will look different for Deaf and hard of hearing communicators as they are taking in visual information from a wider area
consider if they are able to view the signing space enough to understand communication

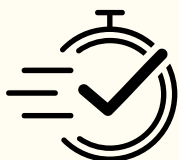
FACIAL
EXPRESSION



we can predict that differences facial expression may impact ASL grammar and non manual markers for some communicators

PRODUCTION

RATE



we might observe an increased rate of signing

MOTOR
PLANNING



we can predict that differences in motor planning may impact coordinating handshapes and movement of signs





DEAF NEURODIVERSE



APPLYING THE RESEARCH:

COMMUNICATION RELATED DIFFERENCES

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION



working memory may impact
receptive understanding of
fingerspelling, and therefore
vocabulary development

other executive function deficits
still apply

• • •

people with unilateral deafness
may have more trouble ignoring
sounds

SENSORY REGULATION



visual stims and visual sensory
seeking could impact accessing
information in class for signers

look to fidgets and sensory input
from the other senses





MODIFY



modifications to support neurodiverse communicators

1

Adjust the environment

consider if the environment is sensory-friendly

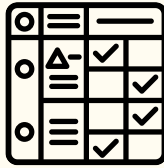


explicitly provide options for alternative ways of attending



2

Adjust your expectations



review rubrics and assignments to ensure they are accessible to all students



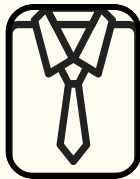
accept work in any modality when possible:

ASL

Speech

Writing

AAC



flexible dress codes

3

Adjust your communication



set clear, direct boundaries and expectations



avoid or explain non-literal language



ask for clarification, check in to ensure understanding



use visual and written cues





TOOLS



tools to support neurodiverse communicators

1

To support sensory needs

use a fidget



use a tool to reduce sensory input



use a tool to increase sensory input



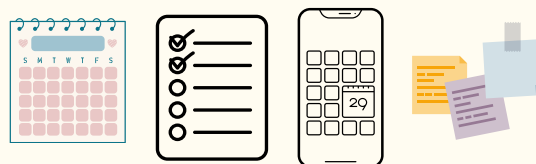
2

To support attention and executive function

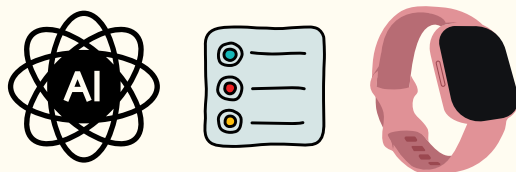
use timers and alarms



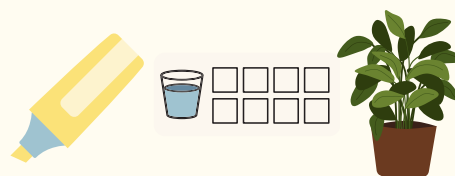
use schedules and written cues



use apps and technology



use visuals



3

To support communication

use written supports



use apps and technology



use visuals





STRATEGIES

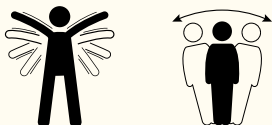


strategies to support neurodiverse communicators

1

To support sensory needs

stimming



move to a more supportive environment



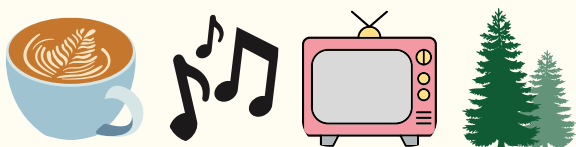
sensory diet and regulate your body



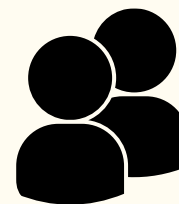
2

To support attention and executive function

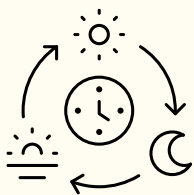
pair with preferred activity



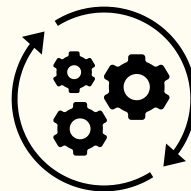
use body doubling



connect to routines



automate what you can



connect to your goal



3

To support communication

educate safe people about your communication style and needs



choose supportive environments



monitor your social, emotional, and sensory "battery"

