

# NEURODIVERSITY AND AUTISM



## ED&I FACT SHEET: 04

### What is Neurodiversity?

A relatively new term, neurodivergent refers to someone who may think, learn or process information in a different ways to others. Neurodiversity can be viewed as a spectrum that covers a range of conditions such as, but not limited to:

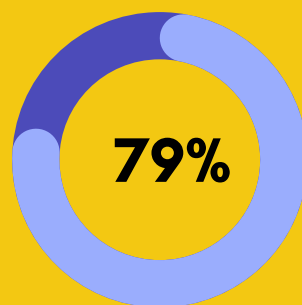
- **Autism**
- **ADHD**
- **Dyslexia**
- **Dyspraxia**
- **Tourette's**



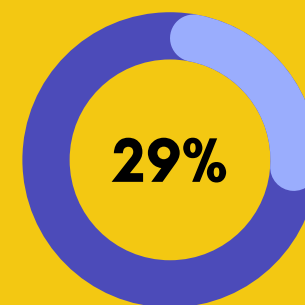
### IN THE UK, 1 IN 7 PEOPLE



**ARE NEURODIVERGENT AND MORE  
THAN 1 IN 100 PEOPLE ARE AUTISTIC**



**OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE  
REPORT FEELING ISOLATED**



**OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
ADHD ARE ALSO AUTISTIC**

### Autism

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects how a person communicates with and relates to the world around them.

It is important to recognise that autism is a spectrum and therefore people on that spectrum present with a different set of strengths and challenges.

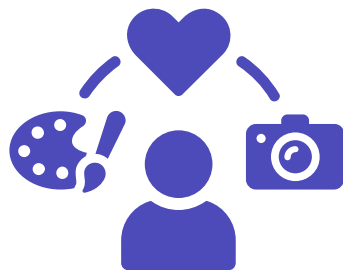
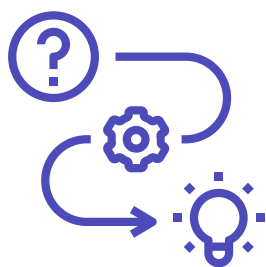
Within this spectrum, Autistic individuals typically display challenges across four areas of need:

- Language and Communication
- Social Interaction
- Flexibility of Thought
- Sensory Processing

## Strengths associated with Autism

All people are unique and individual, and have their own strengths and qualities. Autistic people have their own unique strengths, some of which can be identifies within the following areas:

- Problem solving
- Attention to detail
- Special interests
- Highly focused
- Reliable and loyal

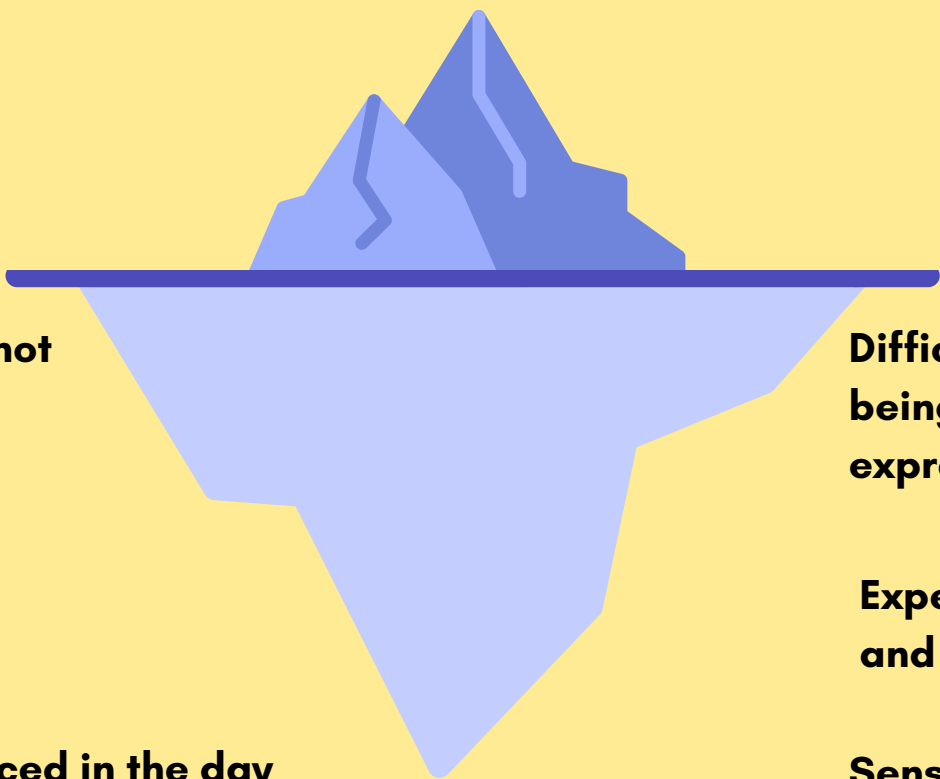


## Experiences of People with Autism

### THE AUTISM ‘ICEBERG’

The Iceberg helps us understand the internal experiences if autistic people.  
Estimation that up to half of all autistic people experience high levels of anxiety on a regular basis.

**Feelings of frustration, anxiety and anger**



**Feeling overwhelmed and not knowing how to express emotions**

**Difficulties making themselves understood**

**Other challenges experienced in the day that have bottled up**

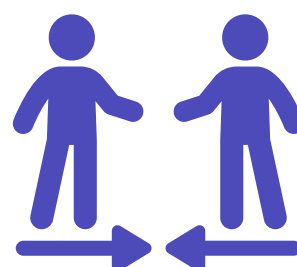
**Difficulties understanding what’s being said to them, facial expressions and body language**

**Experiencing high levels of stress and aniqety around change**

**Sensory or information overload**

### What adjustments can be made in the workplace?

- Recognising our role to create an inclusive environment
- Person Centered Approach – talk to the individual about their needs and requirements, listen and check that you've understood correctly
- Look for the root cause of frustration or anxiety, validate their feelings
- Consider the environment and the effects this might have
- Use concise and direct language
- Set clear boundaries and stick to them
- Give time and space to process information
- Be proactive rather than reactive to minimise anxiety or stress



### How can I access support?

**National Autistic Society** can provide support on supporting people with Autism in the workplace

