

# INFORMATION & RESOURCES



**ADDvanced Solutions**  
Community Network  
Supporting you to find the answers

## NEURO-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

### Medical Model of Disability or Social Model of Disability

The medical and social models of disability offer two distinct perspectives on disability:



#### Medical Model

This model views disability primarily as a problem or defect within the individual. It focuses on diagnosing, treating, or curing the impairment through medical intervention.



#### Social Model

In contrast, the social model views societal barriers as disabling rather than an individual's impairment. It emphasises that disability is created by an inaccessible environment, discriminatory practices, and societal attitudes. The focus is on removing these barriers and promoting inclusion.

### Both models may have influence on a neurodivergent person's experiences.

ADDvanced Solutions Community Network, in partnership with Neurodivergent young people, choose to prioritise language around an inclusive and social model of neurodiversity, unless we are specifically referencing medical and diagnostic criteria and processes.

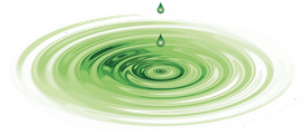
The following pages explain our choice of language in our communications & resources.

### LANGUAGE DISCLAIMER

At ADDvanced Solutions Community Network, we acknowledge that it is likely that the parents, young people and families we support have been exposed to numerous ways to discuss neurodevelopmental conditions and may have different views on what terminology they prefer. It is important to us that anyone who accesses our offer feels empowered to identify however they chose. We do not discourage any language use unless it has harmful or derogatory connotations. Based on our research, and acknowledging the diversity of our team and those we support, we have created this glossary of terms which explains our chosen vocabulary so that it is more accessible and easier to understand.

Call us on 0151 486 1788 or email us [info@advancedsolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@advancedsolutions.co.uk) for more information.  
Check out our website [www.advancedsolutions.co.uk](http://www.advancedsolutions.co.uk)

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## Let's talk about ... Neurodiversity

Language around neurodiversity is non-medical and is not associated with a specific diagnosis, instead it has been adopted by those that align with the neurodiversity movement.

Term	Meaning	Used in Context
<b>Neurodiversity</b>	This term was first coined by Judy Singer in 1998. It is used to describe neurological variation and diversity within all people.	"We embrace <b>neurodiversity</b> by accepting the different ways each person's brain processes information."
<b>Neurodiverse</b> (plural)	Amongst any group of people, there are differences in the way their brains process information. These differences may or may not be of a categorised condition.	"Our team is <b>neurodiverse</b> , we all think in different ways."
<b>Neurodivergence</b> (noun)	Neurodivergence refers to the state or condition of being neurodivergent, which typically includes a variety of neurological differences such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other neurodevelopmental conditions.	"There a numerous types of neurodivergence which can cause differences in the way information."
<b>Neurodivergent</b> (singular or plural)	Neurodivergent is an umbrella term describing people who have neurological differences which can be identified and are sometimes diagnosed. People with neurodevelopmental conditions such as Autism or ADHD may identify as neurodivergent.	"Many people who have neurodevelopmental conditions may identify as neurodivergent."

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## Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
<b>Neurodevelopmental Conditions</b>	An umbrella term for conditions such as autism ADHD, dyspraxia, dyslexia....We choose to use this term over <b>Neurodevelopmental Disorders</b> (the medical model). Neurodevelopmental conditions is more neutral and is often preferred by those who advocate for a more inclusive and less pathologising perspective. It aligns with the social model, which sees these conditions as variations in neurodevelopment rather than inherently problematic disorders. The focus is on recognising and supporting diverse ways of thinking and functioning.
<b>Differences</b>	Not <b>deficits</b> - Amongst any group of people, there are differences in the way their brains process information. These differences may or may not be of a categorised condition. Different ways of thinking bring many positives as well as challenges and should not be seen as a "deficit".
<b>Autistic person</b>	Autistic individuals may, of course, each identify how they choose; as an autistic person (identity first) or a person with autism (person first). Many autistic people and autism experts and advocates prefer identity-first language because it indicates that being autistic is an inherent part of a person's identity, not an addition to it. For this reason we choose to use identity first, but it is individual preference.
<b>Barriers</b>	As much as possible we refer to barriers and reference the environmental factors that might limit a neurodivergent persons ability or wellbeing rather than language that appears to blame the person. eg: Barriers to School Attendance rather than School Avoidance or School Refusal
<b>Difficulties and Challenges</b>	We must recognise that neurodivergence does bring some difficulties and challenges, especially for children and young people when navigating the world we carefully choose these words over disorders, problems and deficits as this shifts the focus to the factors and barriers to overcome rather than problems that need to be "fixed".