Reframe Psychology

Talking to children about neurodivergence

A practical, strengths-aware guide for parents and carers

When a child is learning about their own brain - or about a sibling, friend or classmate - the most useful starting point is curiosity. This guide offers simple ways to open the conversation, plus books and resources to explore together.

CURIOUS
Ask before explaining

CLEAR
Use everyday language

KIND
Keep support visible

A Reframe Psychology resource

Person-centred psychology, with specialist support for children, young people and families.

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A conversation about neurodivergence works best when it connects with your child's real life.

1

FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

Begin with what they notice. “You’ve said busy places feel hard - shall we think about why?”

2

MAKE DIFFERENCE ORDINARY

Present differences as part of being human. Being different does not automatically mean something is wrong.

3

PAIR STRENGTHS WITH SUPPORT

A neurodivergent profile can include both things that come naturally and things that take more effort.

4

KEEP THE DOOR OPEN

You do not have to explain everything in one conversation. Children often return to a topic when they are ready.

Language that can help

TRY

“Your brain can notice things other people miss.”

“Some things take more effort for you - that doesn’t mean you can’t do them.”

“Let’s work out what helps.”

WATCH FOR

- Turning the conversation into a test
- Using “normal” as the opposite of neurodivergent
- Focusing only on difficulties
- Assuming every child experiences the same label in the same way

The aim is not to teach a child every trait. It is to give them a language for their own experience.

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Autism, identity & understanding

Stories and guides that can help children find language for difference, identity and belonging.

Wonderfully Wired Brains — NEURODIVERSITY
Louise Gooding
Celebrates different ways of thinking and experiencing the world, encouraging understanding and neurodiversity.

A Different Sort of Normal — NEURODIVERSITY
Abigail Balfe
A memoir-style perspective on growing up neurodivergent, with humour and honesty about feeling different.

Square Me, Round World — NEURODIVERSITY
Chelsea Sarah Luker
Stories that explore the experience of navigating a world not always designed with neurodivergent people in mind.

The Ice Cream Sundae Guide to Autism — AUTISM
Debby Elley & Tori Houghton
Uses a simple ice-cream analogy to introduce autism and some of the ways autistic people may experience the world.

Being Autistic — AUTISM
Niamh Garvey
A straightforward guide to what autism means, with an emphasis on understanding and self-acceptance.

Autism, Identity and Me: A Practical Workbook — AUTISM
Rebecca Duffus
A practical workbook for exploring autistic identity, challenges, coping and personal strengths.

The Awesome Autistic Go-To Guide — AUTISM
Yenn Purkis & Tanya Masterman
Supportive advice for autistic young people around self-acceptance, relationships and speaking up for their needs.

Can You See Me? — AUTISM
Libby Scott & Rebecca Westcott
A school story from the viewpoint of an autistic girl, exploring friendship, belonging and being understood.

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Book descriptions reflect the supplied reference list. These are conversation starters, not diagnostic resources.

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ADHD: making sense of a busy brain

Books that explain ADHD in accessible ways - including strengths, challenges, school and everyday life.

My Unique ADHD World
ADHD
Joanne Steer & Claire Berry
An interactive introduction to ADHD using real-life examples to explore both strengths and challenges.

A First Look At: ADHD: My Busy Brain
ADHD
Pat Thomas & Claire Keay
A simple introduction to ADHD designed to open up conversation between children and the adults around them.

All Dogs Have ADHD
ADHD
Kathy Hoopmann
A playful visual analogy that uses dogs to explore common ADHD traits in a child-friendly way.

My Brain's a Race Car
ADHD
Nell Harris
Uses a race-car metaphor to help children think about how an ADHD brain can work and feel.

The Survival Guide for Kids with ADHD
ADHD
John F. Taylor
Practical advice and coping strategies for children learning to manage everyday ADHD-related difficulties.

A Teenage Girl's Guide to Living Well with ADHD
ADHD
Sonia Ali
Focuses on ADHD in teenage girls, with practical ideas for school, relationships and personal growth.

My Amazing ADHD Brain
ADHD
Emily Snape
Highlights the strengths and creativity that can come with ADHD and encourages a positive view of neurodivergence.

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Difference, dyslexia & wider support

A few broader titles for conversations about disability, learning differences, confidence and coping.

We Are All Different — DIFFERENCE
Tracey Turner; illus. Åsa Gilland
A warm introduction to difference and inclusion, helping children notice what makes people different and what connects us.

What Happened to You? — DIFFERENCE
James Catchpole; illus. Karen George
A playful story about disability, boundaries and the idea that people do not owe others an explanation.

A Teenager's Guide to Burnout — BURNOUT
Naomi Fisher & Eliza Fricker
A practical guide for teenagers to understand, prevent and recover from burnout, with stories and strategies.

The Spectrum Girl's Survival Guide — AUTISM
Siena Castellon
Practical ideas for autistic girls around school, friendships, self-care and navigating everyday life.

I Don't Like Reading — DYSLEXIA
Lisabeth Clark
A gentle introduction to dyslexia, reading confidence, useful strategies and asking for the right support.

The Illustrated Guide to Dyslexia and Its Amazing People — DYSLEXIA
Kate Power & Kathy Iwanczak Forsyth
An accessible illustrated guide to dyslexia, how it can feel and different ways of working with it.

Xtraordinary People — DYSLEXIA
Kate Griggs
Celebrates dyslexia and the different strengths people can bring, encouraging children to see difference positively.

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For parents: understanding & support

The Strengths-Based Guide to Supporting Autistic Children — AUTISM
Claire O'Neill
Using a child's strengths as a foundation for support, written from autistic and parenting experience.

Nurturing Your Autistic Young Person — AUTISM
Cathy Wassell
Support for families navigating the pre-teen and teenage years, including those awaiting diagnosis.

Helping Your Autistic Child — AUTISM
Dr Ann Ozsivadjian
Practical support around anxiety, social interaction, sleep, eating, sensory needs and distressed behaviour.

Helping Children with ADHD: A CBT Guide — ADHD
Susan Young & Jade Smith
Structured, evidence-based strategies for children aged 6-12, including impulsivity, anxiety and emotional regulation.

Taking Charge of ADHD — ADHD
Russell A. Barkley
A detailed parent guide to understanding ADHD and supporting behaviour, school and relationships.

Calm the Chaos — PARENTING
Dayna Abraham
Accessible parenting strategies for families whose neurodivergent child is struggling.

Your Child Is Not Broken — PARENTING
Heidi Mavir
A parent perspective on neurodivergence, ableism, advocacy and doing family life differently.

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For parents: understanding & support

Tic Disorders: A Guide for Parents & Professionals — TICS
Uttom Chowdhury & Tara Murphy
Research- and clinically informed guidance on tic disorders and approaches to managing symptoms.

A Parent's Guide to Dyslexia, Dyspraxia & Other Learning Difficulties — LEARNING
Valerie Muter & Helen Likierman
Practical strategies for understanding and supporting children with learning differences.

Mom & Dad I Need You to Calm Down — PARENTING
Catherine Abbott
Emotion-regulation skills for parents, with a focus on staying regulated while supporting a struggling child.

Sincerely, Your Autistic Child — AUTISM
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network; ed. Emily Paige Ballou et al.
Autistic contributors reflect on childhood, identity and what they wish parents had understood.

Parenting Rewired — AUTISM
Danielle Punter & Charlotte Chaney
A neurodiversity-affirming approach to understanding autistic behaviour and adapting parenting around individual needs.

Raising Twice-Exceptional Children — 2E
Emily Kircher-Morris
A roadmap for supporting gifted neurodivergent children at home and in education.

ADHD 2.0 — ADHD
Edward M. Hallowell & John J. Ratey
An accessible overview of ADHD science and strategies for helping people with ADHD thrive.

A Different Kind of Parenting — PARENTING
Eliza Fricker
Illustrated, compassionate reflections and practical support for neurodivergent families.

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For parents: learning, regulation & identity

Parenting Your Autistic Child — NEW 2026
Lisa Galley
A 2026 guide focused on understanding nervous-system needs and adapting parenting rather than forcing neurotypical expectations.

Different Minds — NEW 2026
Pete Wharmby
A 2026 exploration of autistic children in education, reframing distress and behaviour through understanding and compassion.

Autism in Childhood — AUTISM
Luke Beardon
A clear, neuroaffirmative guide for parents and carers wanting to understand autistic childhood and individual needs.

Avoiding Anxiety in Autistic Children — ANXIETY
Luke Beardon
Practical thinking about why anxiety develops and how environments and expectations can be adjusted.

What Your ADHD Child Wishes You Knew — ADHD
Sharon Saline
A parent-focused ADHD guide centred on collaborative problem-solving, connection and the child's perspective.

The Explosive Child — REGULATION
Ross W. Greene
Introduces collaborative problem solving for children with persistent frustration and behavioural difficulties.

Raising the SEN-Betweeners — UK
Lisa Lloyd
A UK parent memoir-guide about raising neurodivergent children who can fall between conventional support pathways.

Unmasking Mum — NEW 2026
Lisa Lloyd
A 2026 memoir-guide about autism, ADHD and the experience of being a neurodivergent parent.

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Sometimes a book is only the beginning.

When questions move from “What is autism / ADHD / dyslexia?” to “What does this mean for my child?” personalised support

CHILD AND ADULT ADHD ASSESSMENTS

Clinical Psychology assessment using interviews, questionnaires and objective measures such as QbTest, with practical recommendations.

CHILD AND ADULT AUTISM ASSESSMENTS

Comprehensive assessment, carried out by two Clinical Psychologists and including developmental history, structured interviews and recognised assessment tools.

COGNITIVE & LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

Face-to-face assessment of learning, cognition and neurodivergent profiles, with a detailed school-ready report and personalised feedback.

PARENTING SUPPORT

Specialist guidance around behaviour as communication, anxiety, emotion regulation, family adjustment and neurodiversity adaptations.

READY TO TALK?

Book a free 15-minute intro call

START

A brief, informal conversation to help you think through next steps before committing to an assessment or therapy.

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