



Celebrating the infinite possibilities of neurodiversity -

Neurodiversity Week 13-19 March 2023

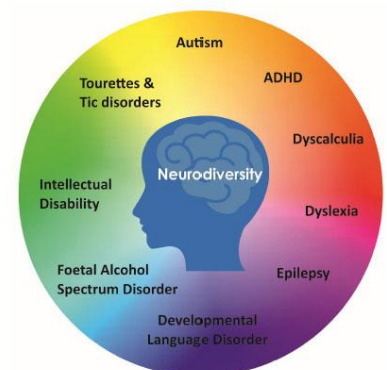
What does Sir Issac Newton, Andy Warhol, Nikola Tesla, William Yeats, Greta Thunberg and Billie Eilish all have in common?

They have all mastered their neurodivergent talents!

This is just a glimpse of those known people who are neurodivergent, the list is much longer. Today around one in five people are neurodiverse (Forbes, 2021). Neurodiversity knows no geographic nor language bound. So what is neurodiversity? What is dyslexia, dycalculia and dyspraxia? Join the 2023 Neurodiversity Week activities!

Neurodiversity describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one "right" way of thinking, learning and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits (Dr Baumer, Dr Frueh, 2021). Like a person's fingerprints, no two brains — not even those of identical twins — are exactly the same. Because of that, there's no definition of "normal" capabilities for the human brain. Some of the conditions that are most common among those who describe themselves as neurodivergent are:

- Autism spectrum disorder.
- Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- Cerebral vision impairment.
- Down syndrome.
- Dyscalculia (difficulty with math).
- Dysgraphia (difficulty with writing).
- Dyslexia (difficulty with reading).
- Dyspraxia (difficulty with coordination).
- Dysorthography (difficulty with grammatical rules).
- Epilepsy.
- Hyperlexia.
- Intellectual disabilities.
- Maries-Irlen syndrome.
- Mental health conditions like bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and more.
- Prader-Willi syndrome.
- Sensory processing disorders.



Social anxiety (a specific type of anxiety disorder).
Synesthesia.
Tourette syndrome.
Williams syndrome.

Let's take a closer look at learning disorders - **DYS** such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, as well as certain manifestations induced by these disorders such as dyscalculia, dysgraphia or dysorthography. **Dyslexic** students have a difficulty with reading, spelling and writing. Imagine a page on a book, and the words on the page are moving around like a worm or its letter sequence is inverted. Dyslexic students seek other solutions to organise their ability to read, such as the use of coloured acetate overshoots, devices (laptops or tablets) or text to speech devices.

Dyscalculic students struggle with math facts and procedures. They find it difficult to visualise numbers, shapes, changes in orientation, layouts and images in 3D. Dyscalculic students refer to a summary of maths facts, use tools such as blocks or calculators, to reduce the cognitive load.

Dyspraxic students are affected by motor planning and coordination – which appears in challenges to organise, plan sequence, coordinate and balance and social and emotional skills. Dyspraxic and dys- students reduce their dual cognitive tasks through compensatory tools and accommodations, such as the use of tablets and laptops, with text-to-speech, speech-to-text and other applications to support mathematics.

Neurodivergent students may need accommodations to function well in their learning environment. [Annex II of the European School Special Educational Needs Procedural Document](#) outlines the possible accommodations for neurodivergent students.

Understanding the types of neurodiversity creates awareness and an environment where all of us can thrive together. Embracing our individual strengths is the key to unlocking our full potential. Many people with neurodiverse profiles have great strengths, such as creativity, thinking outside the box, are artistic and so much more. Let's celebrate the pioneering abilities of our fellow neurodiverse colleagues and students – creating infinite possibilities!

Want to learn more?

Join the celebrations through the resources on the 2023 Neurodiversity available via this [link](#). Interested in joining the conversation with ADHD, ASC & LD Belgium or have a suggestion? You can register to join as a member or participate in the Neurodiversity Week workshops via this [link](#) or email jarita.christie@adhd-edu.be.

Written by an EEBII parent on behalf of

