

Neurodiversity Affirming Care

A Clinical Reference for Understanding Affirming Practices

Neurodiversity affirming practices recognize that *all human minds* are naturally diverse, and that differences in communication, learning, and regulation deserve respect and support.

These Practices:

- Support and recognize all communication modalities
- Value regulation before expectation
- Recognize that regulation is internal and looks different for everyone
- Provide a calm and sensory-accessible environment
- Reduce the pressure to camouflage natural neurodivergent traits to conform with socially defined norms (masking)
- Understand that eye contact is not an indicator of attention, and requiring it can be dysregulating
- Offer a safe space where consent and refusal are both respected
- Respect bodily autonomy
- Respect and honor all the ways an individual identifies
- Incorporate individual strengths, interests, and preferences into care
- Partner with individuals in their own goal-setting and care
- Recognize family as key stakeholders
- Value connection and relationship-building