



REHABILITATION & COMMUNITY
PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION



Neurodiversity ROCKS!

Building Inclusive Workspaces for All Brains



Presented by **Kassie Irwin, MS, SHRM-CP**
Human Resources Manager
CONCERN – Professional Services for Children, Youth and Families



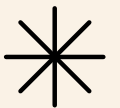
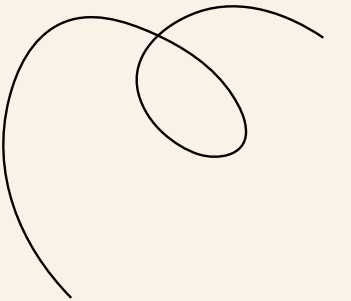


About Our Presenter



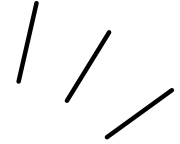
Kassie Irwin, MS, SHRM-CP

Human Resources Manager,
CONCERN – Professional Services
for Children, Youth and Families

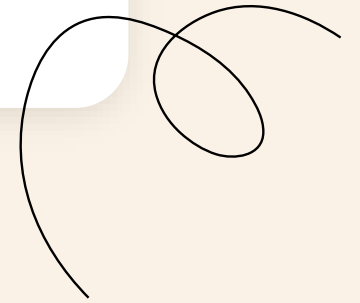




Presentation Roadmap



1. Understanding Neurodiversity.
2. Challenges and Barriers.
3. Creating Inclusive Workspaces.
4. Tools and Resources.





Poll Time!



Understanding Neurodiversity

What comes to mind when you hear the term “neurodiversity”?





Neurodiversity is...



Neurodiversity is the natural variation in how human brains work. Just as we all have unique physical traits like eye color or height, we also have different ways of thinking, learning, processing information, and interacting with the world. Neurodiversity includes conditions like autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, and more.



Strengths of hiring neurodiverse employees



Creativity and Innovation: Neurodivergent employees often approach problems and tasks from unique perspectives, leading to innovative solutions.

Attention to Detail: Exceptional focus on accuracy and detail, particularly in repetitive or structured tasks.

Strong Work Ethic: Many neurodivergent individuals exhibit dedication, reliability, and persistence, especially when engaged in tasks aligned with their interests or strengths.

High Levels of Expertise: Deep interest in specific topics or areas often leads to subject-matter expertise.

Big-Picture Thinking: Seeing connections others may not notice and understanding overarching systems or strategies.

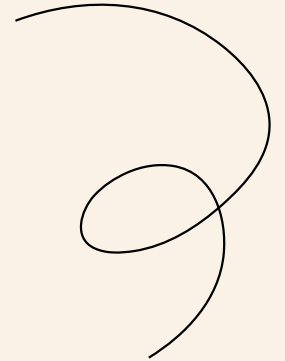
Empathy and Emotional Intelligence: Many neurodivergent individuals are deeply empathetic and intuitive, especially in understanding others' emotions and needs.

Process-Oriented Thinking: Strong ability to create systems and workflows to achieve goals, even in complex environments.

Loyalty and Long-Term Commitment: Neurodivergent employees often value stability and are deeply committed to workplaces that support them.

Strong Ethical Values: A strong sense of fairness, integrity, and dedication to doing the right thing.

Resilience and Problem-Solving: Many neurodivergent individuals have developed strong problem-solving skills and adaptability from navigating environments not always designed for their needs.





Poll Time!



Does your organization currently
have initiatives to support
neurodiverse employees?





Challenges & Barriers for neurodiverse employees :

Challenges & Barriers

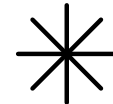
Lack of Awareness and Understanding: Many employers and colleagues lack knowledge about neurodiversity, leading to misconceptions, stigma, or unrealistic expectations.

Difficulty Navigating Traditional Hiring Processes: Standard recruitment methods (e.g., traditional interviews, ambiguous job descriptions) often disadvantage neurodivergent individuals.

Workplace Sensory Overload: Many workplaces are designed without considering sensory needs, such as noise, lighting, or workspace layouts.

Challenges with Communication Styles: Neurodivergent individuals may communicate differently, which can lead to misunderstandings with colleagues or managers.

Difficulty with Executive Functioning: Some neurodivergent employees may find it harder to manage time, prioritize tasks, or navigate complex workflows without support.





Challenges & Barriers for neurodiverse employees :

Challenges & Barriers

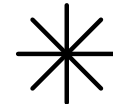
Inadequate Workplace Accommodations: Many organizations fail to provide adequate accommodations due to a lack of policies, awareness, or flexibility.

Social Challenges in Team Dynamics: Group settings, team projects, or networking events can be stressful or overwhelming.

Misinterpretation of Strengths as Weaknesses: Unique ways of thinking or working may be seen as deficiencies rather than assets.

Fear of Disclosure: Many neurodivergent employees worry about revealing their neurodiversity due to potential stigma, bias, or negative treatment.

Bias in Performance Evaluations: Standardized performance metrics or evaluation methods may not account for neurodivergent strengths or communication styles.

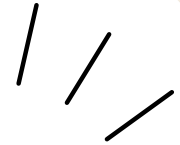




Poll Time!



What challenges have you observed or experienced in making workplaces inclusive for neurodivergent employees?





Creating Inclusive Workspaces



01

Flexible Work Arrangements

Flexible work arrangements allow employees to tailor their work schedules or locations to better fit their needs. These accommodations are particularly beneficial for neurodiverse individuals who may thrive in environments that support their unique working styles.

02

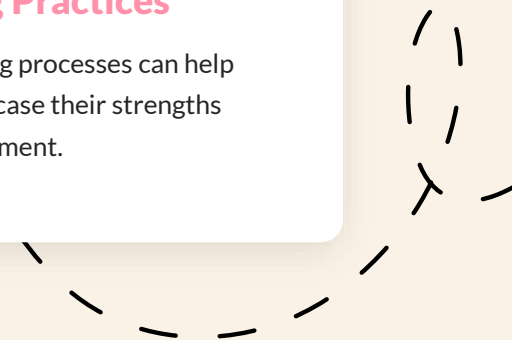
Sensory Friendly Work Environments

Many neurodiverse individuals are sensitive to sensory input like bright lights, loud noises, or crowded spaces. Adjusting the workplace to minimize sensory discomfort can significantly improve focus and comfort.

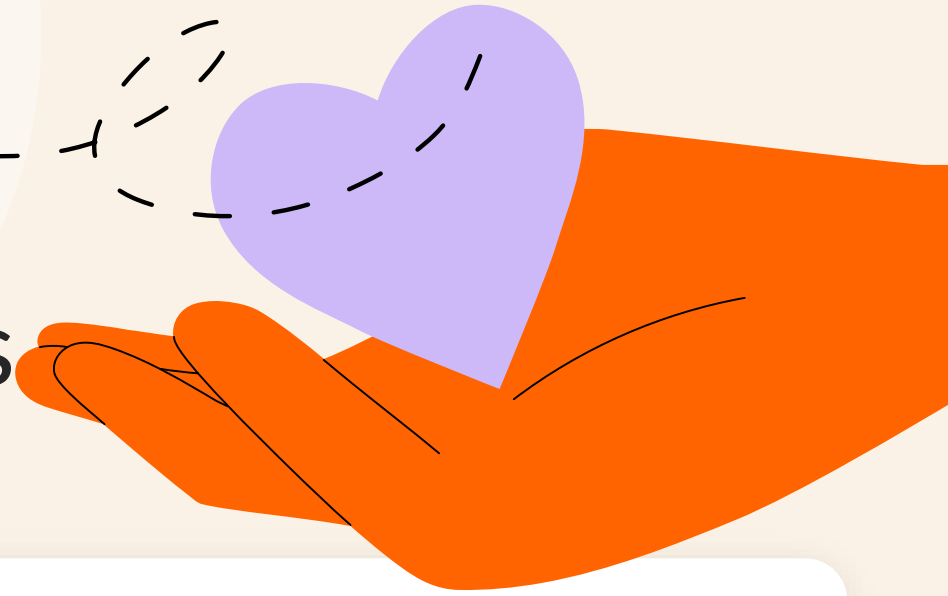
03

Recruitment & Hiring Practices

Adapting recruitment and hiring processes can help neurodiverse candidates showcase their strengths and remove barriers to employment.



Tools and Resources for Creating Inclusive Workspaces



01

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

www.askjan.org

Job Accommodation Network's (JAN) Accommodation Finder can suggest tailored solutions based on specific needs.

02

Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

www.shrm.org

Information on accommodations, policy and job description templates, expert advice, and more!

03

TRAINING

Providing training for staff and leadership on creating workspaces that are comfortable for a variety of employees can be your best retention tool!



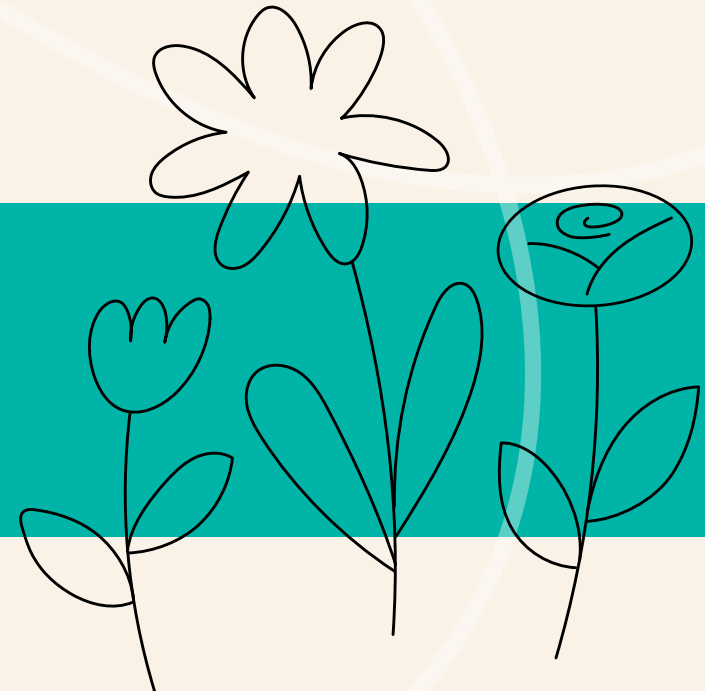
Survey & Certificates

We'd love your feedback! Please complete this brief survey.

The survey link will be emailed to all registrants.

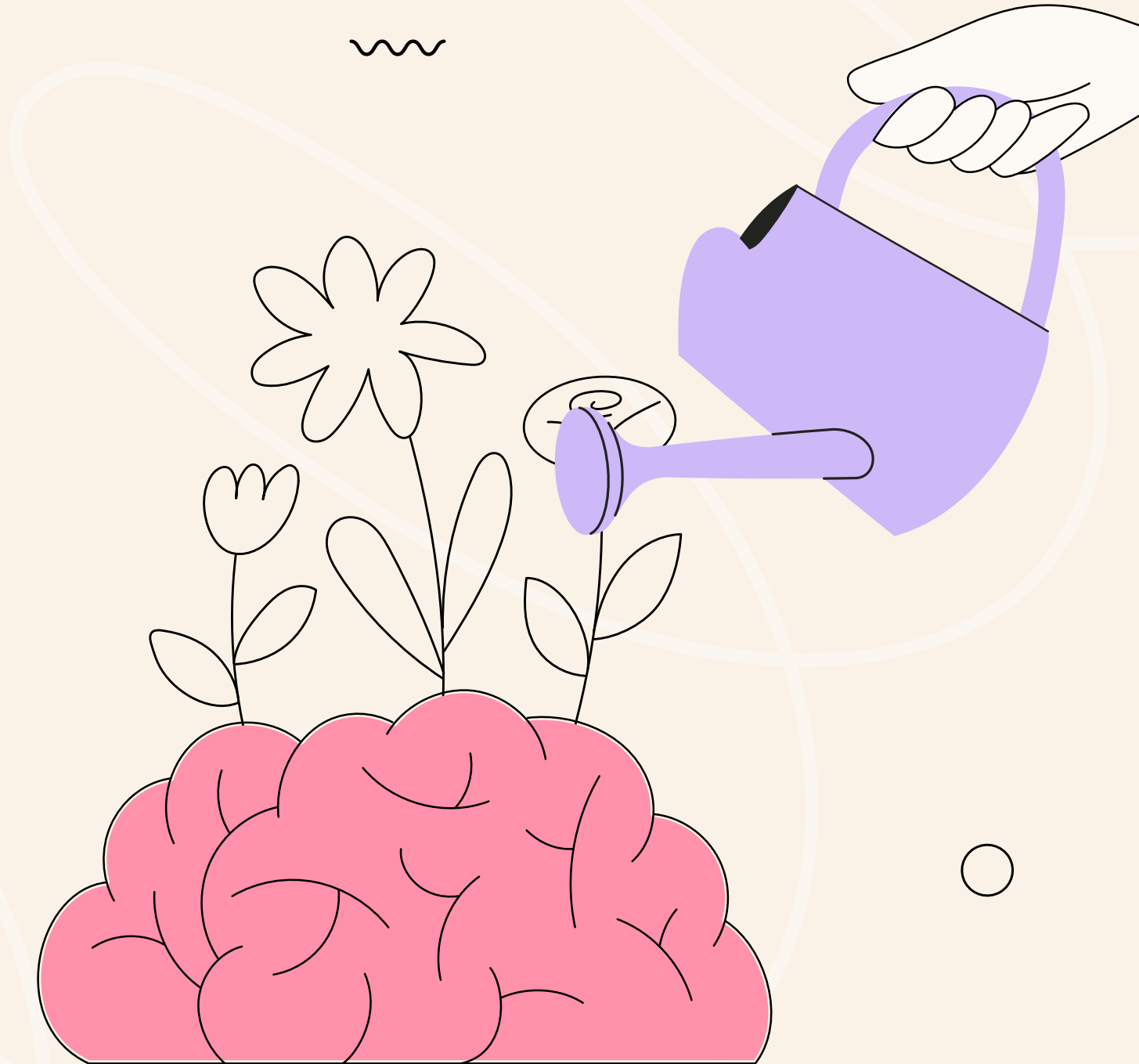
You may request a certificate of attendance via the final question of the survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RCPAWebinar>





Questions?



...

THANK YOU!



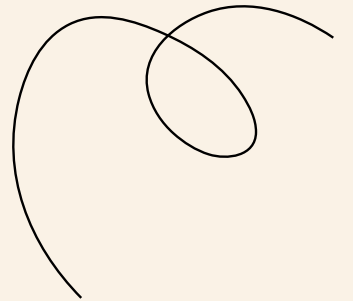
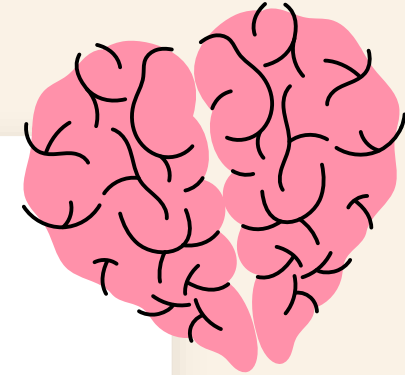
Let's Connect!



kirwin@concern4kids.org



www.linkedin.com/in/kassieirwin/



www.concern4kids.org