



NE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

thank you to MONTCLAIR SEPAC for sharing all of this valuable info with the northeast community & supporting our mission of belonging, equity, & diversity

learn about it

Neurodiversity: having a brain that works differently from the "average" or neurotypical person.

Neurodivergent: people whose brain differences affect how their brain works. That means they have different strengths and challenges from people whose brains don't have those differences. The possible differences include medical disorders, learning disabilities and other conditions.

Neurotypical: individuals with typical neurological development or functioning. Instead of saying: "that person doesn't have a disability, they are 'normal'" - use words like: neurotypical, typical, NT (neurotypical) or typically developing, instead of "normal".

Disability/Disabled: any condition of the body or mind that often makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities and interact with the world around them. Using the words: disabled and/or disabilities rather than "special needs" is preferred by most disabled people. Disability and disabled are not bad words.

Autism: a developmental disability that affects how we experience the world around us. Autistic people are an important part of the world. Autism is a normal part of life, and makes us who we are. Autism has always existed. Autistic people are born autistic and we will be autistic our whole lives. Autism can be diagnosed by a doctor, but you can be autistic even if you don't have a formal diagnosis. Because of myths about autism, it can be harder for autistic adults, autistic girls, and autistic people of color to get a diagnosis. But anyone can be autistic, regardless of race, gender, or age. Autistic people are in every community, and always have been. <https://autisticadvocacy.org/about-asan/about-autism/>

Autism acceptance vs. Autism awareness: Autism "awareness" is knowing that someone is Autistic. Acceptance is including and accepting Autistic people for who they are and for all that they are.

Identity first vs. person first language: "Identity first" language is preferred by most adult Autistic people (as opposed to "person first"). For example: "they are Autistic" instead of "they are a person with Autism". Autism isn't separated from the person, the same way we wouldn't say: person with Norwegian, we would say "Norwegian person".

read about it

Just Ask: Be Different, Be Brave, Be You! - by Sonia Sotomayor

We Move Together - by Anne McGuire and Kelly Fritsch

The Smart Cookie - by Jory John

Just Right for You: A Story about Autism - by Melanie Heyworth

The Day You Begin - by Jacqueline Woodson

NeuroTribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity - by Steve Silberman

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

April is devoted to celebrating neurodiversity and accepting our differences that make us unique.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2ND IS NATIONAL AUTISM ACCEPTANCE DAY!

WEAR GOLD (or YELLOW)

the chemical symbol for gold is Au, which are the first two letters of Autism.

The symbolic color gold is used to show the bright and shining future for Autistic people.

talk about it

-Do you have Autistic friends, family members or classmates? If so, what are some ways that they sometimes do things differently than you?

-What are ways we can support, love and accept Autistic people in our families, our classrooms and in our community? If you're not sure, it's ok to ask!

-What disabilities do we have in our family? In what ways do our family members, friends, classmates do things that are different?

-Do you know what some of your Autistic friends/family/classmates are passionate about? If you don't know - you can always ask!

-When you are feeling your most comfortable, is it easier for you to read or feel calm or have conversations? What are things you like to do that help your senses (the way you hear, touch, see, smell and taste) feel at ease?

for more info...

"What is Autism to You" - A worthwhile video explaining Autism by Sara Harvey, also known as Agony Autie. Sara an Autistic person and advocate in the Autistic community. @agonyautie <https://youtu.be/H8hHGJKf3o>

ASAN (Autistic Self Advocacy Network), @autisticselfadvocacy <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>

The Neurodivergent Teacher - A great source for learning more about Neurodiversity, @the_neurodivergent_teacher <https://m.facebook.com/theneurodivergentteacher> the-neurodivergent-teacher.com

Two Moms No Fluff podcast - A behind the scenes podcast for parents of kids with disabilities & for parents, friends & family of neurotypical people - our allies! <https://www.montclairlocal.news/2022/02/12/2-moms-no-fluff-a-montclair-moms-podcast-on-raising-kids-with-disabilities/>