

Practice strategies for supporting autistic and ADHDe children's mental health online course



3 HOURS

Start course

About this course

Practice strategies for supporting autistic and ADHDe children's mental health introduces five strategies to support your work with children and families. It recognises that our world isn't built for neurodivergent brains, and that neurotypical rules, systems and environments have a significant impact on autistic and ADHDe children's mental health and wellbeing. As such, this course focuses on improving children and families' quality of life by understanding, accommodating and advocating for their needs, rather than controlling or 'treating' the child's neurodivergence.

The five strategies explored in this course are:

- Working out the 'why'
- Supporting self-regulation
- Destigmatising neurodivergence
- Cultivating connection and compassion
- Building the child's cheer squad

This course builds on the learnings shared in [Understanding autistic and ADHDe children's mental health](#), which introduced a neurodivergent-affirming approach to working with children and families. We recommend you complete that course before starting this one.

Who is this course for?

This course is aimed at health, community and social service professionals, including psychologists, counsellors, social workers, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, community health services workers (including NDIS workers) and medical professionals (e.g. GPs, paediatricians, nurses). Teachers and early childcare workers may also find the strategies helpful in their day-to-day interactions with autistic and ADHDe children.

Learning aims

This course aims to increase understanding and application of neurodivergent-affirming practice approaches among practitioners working with autistic and ADHDe children and their families. It will support you to:

- uncover and address the needs underlying children's 'challenging' behaviours
- build children's and parents' regulation skills
- respectfully and compassionately guide families towards acceptance of the child's neurodivergence
- strengthen family relationships by fostering compassion and understanding
- help families to build the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves and others.

A note on language

The majority of individuals in the neurodivergent community advocate for 'identity-first language' (e.g. 'autistic child', 'ADHDe', 'AuDHDe') rather than person-first language (e.g. 'child with autism/ADHD').¹ This is based on the belief that autism and ADHD are an intrinsic part of a person's identity.

Based on insights from the literature, guidance from parents with lived experience, and the Australian Government's [National Roadmap to Improve the Health and Mental Health of Autistic People](#), we have chosen to use identity-first language in this course.

1. Taboas, A., Doepke, K., & Zimmerman, C. (2023). Preferences for identity-first versus person-first language in a US sample of autism stakeholders. *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*, 27(2), 565–570. DOI: 10.1177/13623613221130845.