

## FACT SHEET

# Neurodiversity: What is It?



Neurodiversity means that everyone's brain works in a unique way. People think, learn, and behave differently, and that's completely normal.

### Key Points:



Neurodiversity is a concept that promotes acceptance of differences, seeing them as valuable rather than as deficits.



Conditions like Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia and Tourette's syndrome are additional needs that affect the brain's way of experiencing the world.



Embracing neurodiversity encourages supportive environments and strategies for individuals.

### Developmental milestones: What are They?

**Definition:** Developmental milestones are skills, benchmarks or behaviours that most children could do by a certain age. These milestones guide caregivers, educators, and healthcare providers in assessing a child's progress.

#### Key areas of development:

- **Physical/Motor Skills:** Crawling, walking, running, fine motor skills (e.g., grasping objects).
- **Cognitive Skills:** Problem-solving, memory, recognizing shapes, and understanding basic concepts.
- **Language Development:** Babbling, speaking words, combining words into sentences, and understanding language.
- **Social and Emotional Skills:** Making eye contact, playing with others, expressing emotions, understanding social cues.

You can access the full list of developmental milestones and the EYLF/NQS following this link: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/201802/DevelopmentalMilestonesEYLFandNQS.pdf>



## How knowing Developmental Milestones helps identify Neurodiversity

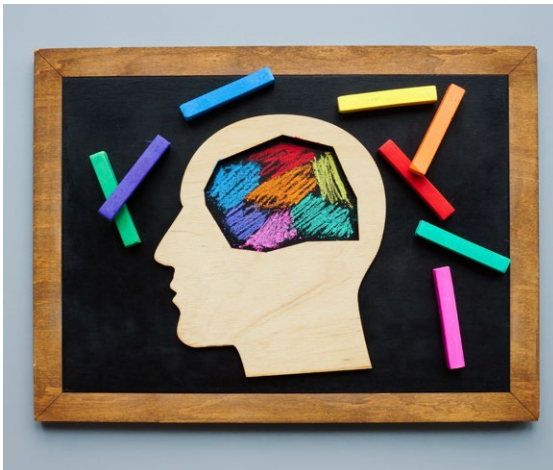
**Early Identification:** Recognising when a child is not meeting typical milestones can help identify neurodiverse traits early.

### Why it matters:

- Early intervention is key to providing the right support. The sooner neurodiverse traits are recognised, the sooner strategies can be put in place to help the child thrive.
- Identifying a child's strengths and challenges allows for individualized support, tailored teaching methods, and strategies to enhance development.

## Supporting children with Neurodiversity

1. **Individualised approach:** Every child is unique, so the support provided should be personalised. This includes adapting learning materials, teaching methods, and classroom routines to fit each child's strengths and challenges.
2. **Positive environment:** Create an inclusive and understanding environment where neurodiverse children feel valued. Encourage peer support and foster emotional and social growth.
3. **Collaboration with Professionals:** Work with family, educators, doctors, and therapists to develop a comprehensive plan for supporting the child's development.
4. **Skill building:** Focus on developing the child's strengths and help them build skills in areas where they may need extra support.
5. **Parent and Educator communication:** Regular communication between parents and educators ensures that strategies are consistent, and that progress is monitored.



### Linked to NQS Standard 1.1.2 –

“Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.” Understanding milestones helps educators support children's individual learning needs.

### Linked to NQS Standard 6.2.2 –

“Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion, and participation.” Early identification ensures children get the right help to fully participate in learning.

## Summary

Neurodiversity celebrates the natural variation in human brains, and understanding developmental milestones helps caregivers and educators recognise when children may be neurodiverse. Early identification and tailored support can empower children to succeed, thrive, and feel accepted for who they are.