



YOUR FREE RESOURCE

Neurodivergent Student Profile

DEVELOPED BY

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About me.

Hello! I'm Lydia Meem, founder of Autism Understanding psychology practice in Newcastle, Australia.

As a neurodivergent clinical psychologist, author, speaker, and clinical supervisor, I'm dedicated to enhancing the psychological assessment for Autistic individuals and their families.

I'm also passionate about promoting school strategies for neurodivergent students to engage, learn, and thrive.



I help psychologists, allied health professionals and teachers create neurodiversity affirming spaces and practices through online tools, interactive workshops, national and international conferences, supervision and retreats.

I've been working with neurodivergent individuals since 1998 and I am a Fellow of the APS College of Clinical Psychologists. My book, [Beyond IQ Scores](#), combines case-review research and clinical insights, guiding clinicians through psychometric assessments, enhancing their capacity to discern and interpret subtle signs of autism and other developmental differences.

If you'd like to dive deeper into autism and ADHD assessment and consultation, I invite you to explore my 2024 [Neurodiversity Affirming Clinician](#) training. Packed with tools, templates, case studies, resources, and strategies, it empowers you to confidently craft a neurodiversity-friendly experience for your clients.

For primary and high school teachers seeking insights and practical strategies in the classroom and playground, my on-demand course, [Supporting Autistic Students](#), is tailored for you. Let's connect and collaborate to understand, celebrate, and accommodate the full range of human brain styles!

Hello and welcome.

Welcome! The Neurodivergent Student Profile has been designed to be a quick way for teachers to capture and share information about how a student learns and interacts in the classroom and the playground.

It can be used at the end of the year to assist with transitioning from one teacher to the next. It can also act as a quick reference for casual teachers, camp leaders, sports coaches, youth group leaders etc., to understand the student's passions, strengths, challenges, and supports and accommodations needed.

It can be included in a student's Individual Education Plan. The Neurodivergent Student Profile uses "I" language so that it can be completed in consultation with an adolescent and shared with their teachers and service providers.

It can also be handy to share with paediatricians, psychologists and allied health professionals working with the student.

Developed in 2009 by Lydia Meem and presented at the Asia Pacific Autism Conference in 2013, the Neurodivergent Student Profile has since been updated to include more neurodiversity affirming language and strategies.

Scan the QR code below to share a free copy of this resource with your peers.



SCAN ME!

Your profile.

Personal details:

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Teacher: _____

Interests:

I enjoy: _____

I love you to ask me about: _____

I like to learn about: _____

Thinking styles - I tend to think best in these ways:

- ☐ **Passionate and loyal to interests** - I tend to be passionate and become an expert in a couple of things rather than being more mildly interested in a broad range of things.
- ☐ **Sensory driven** - I like to explore the sensory aspects of things and sometime need to create my own sensory experiences, so I might ask sensory questions or be distracted by sensory experiences during conversations.
- ☐ **Logical problem-solver** - I tend to focus on factual information and look for logical solutions to problems, rather than focusing on social information and responding to emotional content in a conversation first.
- ☐ **Detailed model-builder** - I love to learn all the facts and understand how they fit together in context with all the other things I know. I might need to ask for a rationale or ask clarifying questions before getting started on a task, but once I understand, I can do it efficiently.
- ☐ **Visual thinker** - I tend to have a great visual autobiographical memory. I may enjoy puzzles and notice small visual details that others miss.

- ☐ **Creative thinker** - I love to play with ideas and new ways of doing things.
- ☐ **Guardian of routines** - I like to know what's going to happen, and follow routines. I may need to check the schedule more often than others, and need reassurance and a rationale for changes in my routine.
- ☐ **Novelty seeker** - I love to explore new ideas, try things and meet people. I hate doing the same thing over and over again.
- ☐ **Mover and shaker** - I need to move my body in order to think and focus on learning and other things I care about.
- ☐ **Idea generator** - I have lots of ideas, but sometimes have trouble turning my ideas into action, or finishing tasks and projects.
- ☐ **Careful thinker** - I need extra time to process what you've said and think of a response.
- ☐ **External processor** - I need to talk or make sounds so I can process what I'm learning.
- ☐ **Internal processor** - I need time on my own to think about things before I can share my thoughts with others.

Communication - I use the following to communicate:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full sentences. | <input type="checkbox"/> Facial expressions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Short phrases. | <input type="checkbox"/> Visuals. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single words and/or vocal sounds. | <input type="checkbox"/> A communication device or program (i.e. Proloquo2Go, LAMP). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pointing or bringing objects, leading you to objects. | <input type="checkbox"/> Text messages or text-to-speech. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gestures. | <input type="checkbox"/> Signing (AUSLAN). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Comprehension - I understand your instructions best if you:

- ☐ Say my name to get my attention first.
- ☐ Give short simple instructions.

☐ Write step-by-step instructions on board/worksheet.

☐ Use visuals to explain instructions.

☐ Use literal language and avoid sarcasm.

☐ Allow me extra processing time.

☐ Other _____

Conversations and connection styles - In conversations I tend to:

☐ Connect with you by sharing about my passions. I share because I care about you and want you to know all the cool stuff.

☐ Rely on stock phrases from my favourite shows or things I've heard.

☐ Rely on you to keep the conversation going by asking me questions.

☐ Other _____

Conversations and connection styles - I sometimes have difficulty knowing how to:

☐ Start or join a conversation.

☐ Follow someone else's topic.

☐ Interrupt a conversation.

☐ Change topics.

☐ Make "small talk".

☐ End a conversation.

☐ Ask about another's interests.

☐ Other _____

Social - I tend to play/hang out:

☐ Alone (I need time to recharge through solo play or engaging in my passions).

☐ I connect with a couple of groups, rather than staying with one group all the time.

☐ Alongside others.

☐ With another student.

☐ With a group of same-age students.

☐ With older students.

☐ With younger students.

☐ With staff.

Social - I can have difficulty:

- ☐ Finding peers who share my interests.
- ☐ Keeping friendships going smoothly.
- ☐ Knowing what to do if my friends are away from school.
- ☐ Knowing what to do if my friends are fighting with each other.

Social - At lunchtime I tend to be:

- ☐ Engaged in solo play, walking or running around.
- ☐ In a quieter structured area (i.e. computer room, library).
- ☐ Directing play (organising games, explaining rules).
- ☐ Other _____

Teamwork - Sometimes I have difficulty:

- ☐ Waiting for my turn.
- ☐ Following another's lead.
- ☐ Sharing with others.
- ☐ Coping with delegation of jobs.
- ☐ Coping when others disagree with my ideas.
- ☐ Recognising that I am part of a group.
- ☐ Other _____

Coping with change - Sometimes I have difficulty coping with:

- ☐ Changes in my daily routine.
- ☐ Sports carnivals.
- ☐ Casual teachers.
- ☐ Excursions and incursions.
- ☐ Theme days.
- ☐ Vacation/start of year transition.
- ☐ Other _____

Coping with change - I am better able to cope with changes if you:

- ☐ Forewarn me of changes.
- ☐ Use visuals to explain changes.
- ☐ Allow me extra time to prepare/adjust.
- ☐ Other _____

Repetitive motion and routines - Sometimes I will:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rock back and forth. | <input type="checkbox"/> Flick or tap my fingers, or flap my hands. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sway side-to-side. | <input type="checkbox"/> Bang my head or harm myself. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spin, twist, sort or line up objects. | <input type="checkbox"/> Make unusual noises. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bite or suck my hand or clothes. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Dealing with stress

Sometimes when I am very stressed, confused or angry, I have been known to:

If this happens, please stay calm and:

Things that help me feel calmer are:

Sensory seeking & sensory sensitivity - I enjoy these sensations, they help me concentrate:

- ☐ Music or repetitive sounds.
- ☐ Deep pressure (e.g. weighted items, tight clothing).
- ☐ Fidget tools (e.g. chewelery, spinning items).
- ☐ Other _____

Sensory seeking & sensory sensitivity - I can be extra-sensitive to or distracted by:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loud or unusual sounds. | <input type="checkbox"/> Textures, shapes or colours. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing light or dust particles. | <input type="checkbox"/> Tastes (e.g. limited range of foods). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patterns, symmetry. | <input type="checkbox"/> Smells (may sniff objects or comment). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fans or blinds. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Sensory seeking & sensory sensitivity - I may be less aware of:

- ☐ Mild pain (e.g. after falling over).
- ☐ Temperature (may wear warm clothes in summer, cool clothes in winter).
- ☐ Hunger, thirst, full bladder (may need prompting to take a break).
- ☐ Other _____

Teaching strategies - Strategies that my teacher and I find helpful:

- ☐ Neurodiversity affirming approaches – understanding how my brain works.
- ☐ Asking me about my passions and interests.
- ☐ Visual timetable of daily activities and changes.
- ☐ Visual of classroom expectations.
- ☐ Time to engage in or research my passions.

- ☐ Turning off lights, relying on natural light.
- ☐ Use of headphones, earbuds or ear plugs.
- ☐ Occupational Therapy (OT) assessment, sensory diet, fidget items.
- ☐ Sensory or movement activities to release energy (carry items, run note to office).
- ☐ Allowing me to move or make noises as I think.
- ☐ Allowing me to do an oral presentation or demonstration of my skills just for you or via video, rather than in front of the class.
- ☐ Education for peers on Autism and Neurodiversity.
- ☐ Colour coding of books and equipment.
- ☐ Breaking assignments into chunks, and checking I'm on track to answer the questions.
- ☐ Scaffolds for assignments indicating the type of response needed.
- ☐ Being flexible about how I do an assignment (e.g. individual vs group project, demonstrating my knowledge in a different way using my strengths).
- ☐ Seeing an example of the finished artwork or project.
- ☐ Assistance with arranging a partner or group for projects, excursions and camp.
- ☐ Communication book between teacher and parents.
- ☐ Consulting me on what works for me.
- ☐ Other _____

Congratulations!
You have reached the end.

Notes.

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