

Employee Assistance Program

Your resource for help with daily challenges and difficult situations

April Is Autism Acceptance Month

Tips to Support Neurodiverse Colleagues

Fostering inclusivity helps people to thrive in a diverse world. One vital aspect of inclusivity that often goes unnoticed is neurodiversity—the recognition and acceptance of neurological differences. By embracing neurodiversity, we can foster inclusive and thriving environments that celebrate unique minds and promote the success of all individuals. Consider the following tips to support your neurodiverse colleagues.

Avoid sensory overload

Sensory overload can be a significant issue for neurodiverse individuals. This can include bright lights, loud noises and strong smells. Be mindful when engaging with your neurodiverse colleagues by offering to collaborate in a quiet workspace and reducing visual clutter.

Adapt your communication

To better accommodate neurodiverse colleagues, vary your communication style and the channels you use. When working on a project together, provide clear instructions, avoid confusing language and offer multiple channels for feedback. Consider circulating a meeting agenda in advance, recording the meeting so colleagues can watch it again and presenting ideas in visual and text formats.

Foster empathy and understanding

Take time to learn about neurodiversity and the unique challenges faced by individuals with conditions such as autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia and others. If you have a neurodiverse team member, listen, learn and seek to understand their experiences and perspectives.

Be an advocate

Stand up for your neurodiverse colleagues by challenging stereotypes and misconceptions, advocating for their needs and celebrating their unique strengths. If you see or hear something potentially harmful or offensive, address it. Your support will not go unnoticed.

For more information about neurodiversity, call your Employee Assistance Program at 1-866-EAP-4SOC (1-866-327-4762) TTY: 711 or visit eap.calhr.ca.gov.

Source: Forbes, The Pink News

