

Compassionate Neuroinclusive Peer Mentoring

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The values and practices within positive psychology, compassionate pedagogy and neuroinclusivity should be combined and embedded within a peer mentoring system, co-designed by neurodiverse high school students, to improve the outcomes of said students while broader cultural change occurs.

Neurodiversity and Neuroinclusion

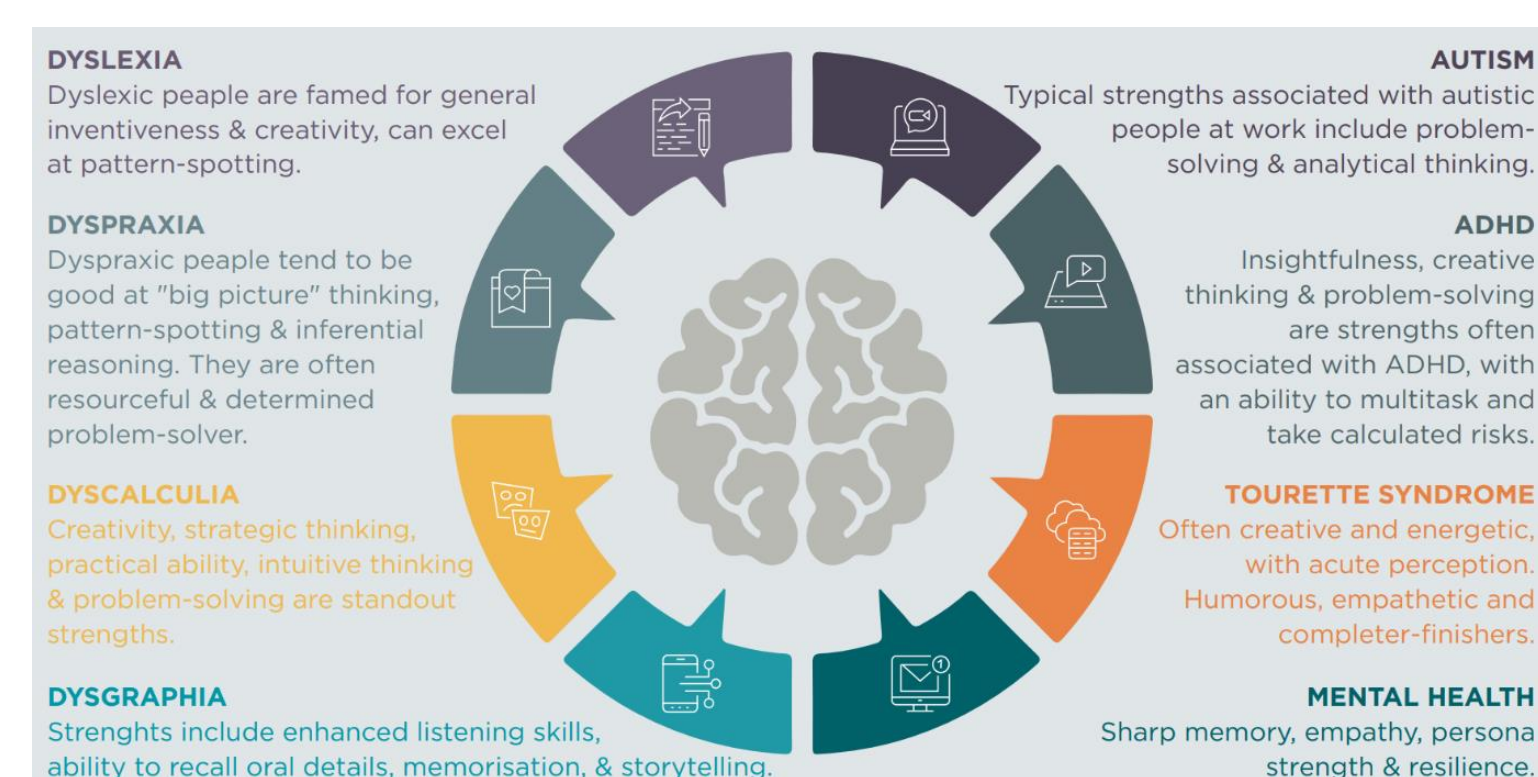
- It is the context that disadvantages the Neurodiverse Student, not the 'ailment'
- Education systems are often based on deficits-based understandings of Neurodiversity
- There is a fundamental mismatch between the needs of neurodiverse students and the motivation to help them
- Schools can and should aim to alter the context in which neurodiverse students learn, both through explicit and implicit measures
- The Neuroinclusive School Model offers a great foundation for this initiative
- Small scale initiatives should be used while greater cultural change in education takes place, which can take up to 3-5 years

Peer Mentoring

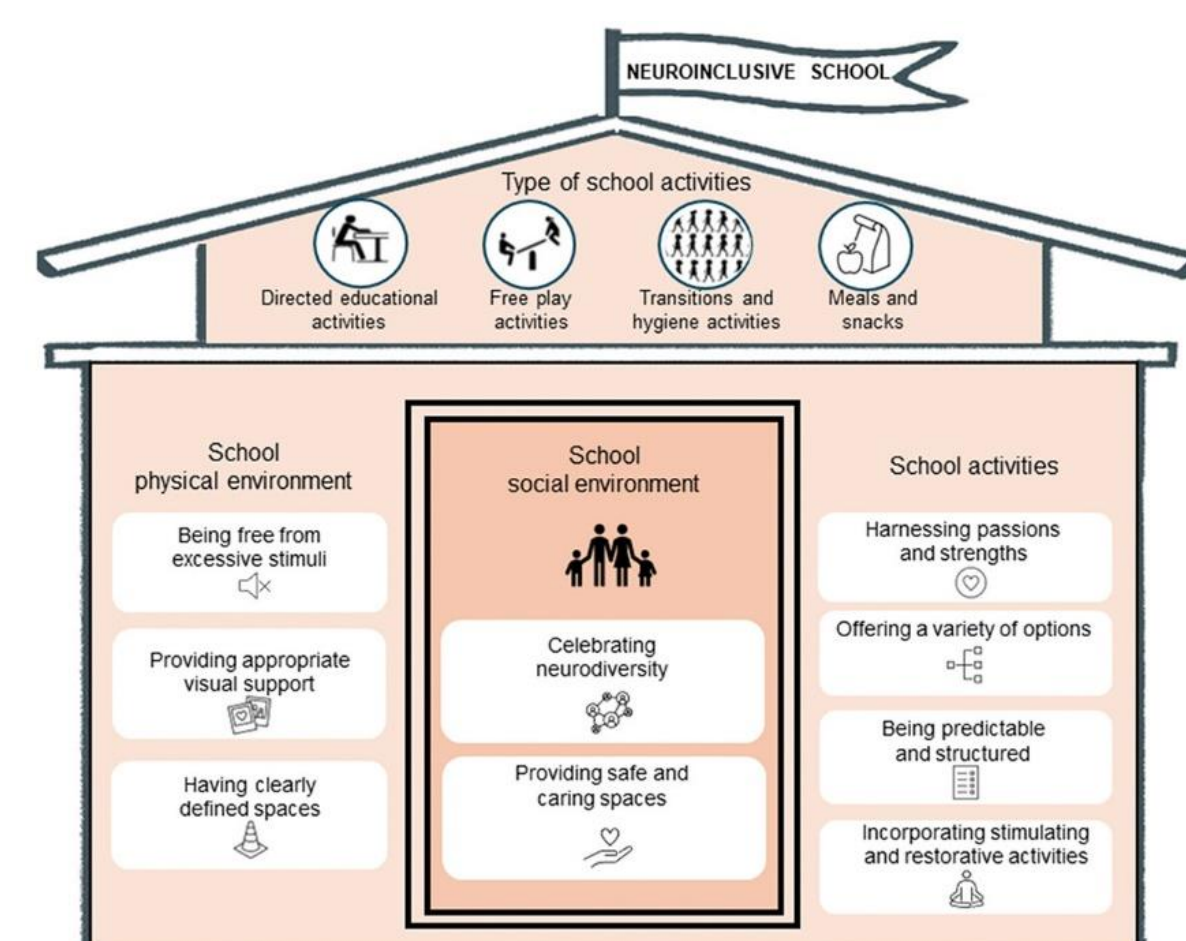
- Peer mentoring is a system where a more experienced student is paired up with a less experienced student with the aim of helping guide the mentee through education
- It effectively promotes well-being and mental health, helping disabled students .etc.
- Most peer mentoring systems rely on the supposition that a neurodiverse child should be more like the neurotypical student who is mentoring them
- Therefore, it is important that peer mentoring is further developed to directly help neurodiverse students rather than having them model their behaviour on neurotypical students

Compassionate Pedagogy and Positive Psychology

- Compassion is the ability to see suffering in others without negative judgement and the motivation to act to alleviate such suffering
- Compassion-focused therapy is commonly used with autistic children and has been recommended for use in the education sector
- Positive Psychology is based on the tenets of strengths, fulfilment, and growth
- We can use Chickering's Seven Vectors of Development as a guide for how students are developing emotionally, socially, and intellectually
- These principles encourage reciprocity between mentors and mentees and help remove the reductive binary relationship which is currently in place in peer mentoring



Strengths commonly associated with Neurodiversity



The 'Neuroinclusive School Model' as shown above

Variable	Traditional Psychology	Positive Psychology
assessment	pathology	positive attributes and strengths
focus		
research focus	risk factors, pathology	protective factors, neuroplasticity
treatment goal	symptom relief	increased well-being and growth
main treatments	medications, short-term psychotherapies	psycho-educational interventions to enhance positive attributes
prevention	largely ignored	important focus across the lifespan

Salient Differences between Traditional Psychology and Positive Psychology

References

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