World Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month

April 2023

Autistic Voices

MATTER

support • empower • accept • include

Nothing About Us Without Us

www.aut2know.co.za

What's included in the pack?

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- Autistic persons speak out about their rights.
- Identity First Language – Why and what?
- Nothing about us without us – where does this come from?
- Ideas on how to create acceptance and awareness.
- How to help Autism South Africa Raise Money.
- Where does that money go?
- Autism Word Search.
- What is Autism Poster?
- Decorative Bunting.
- Colouring in page designed by autistic adult, Lindsey Carter.
- Word Search Answers.

Autistic persons speak about why their voice matters.

Autistic voices matter – what are your thoughts on the theme this year?

As autistic people a lot of us struggle to meet our support needs and struggle to cope with daily activities. Many of the tools that could be helping autistic people are only available to autistic children like for instance service dogs, therapy, support in school, being allowed stim tools or fidgets in their work space.

In South Africa autistic adults should have the right to services that will help us meet our support needs and people have to realise being autistic isn't something you grow out of, if you're autistic as a child you are going to be autistic as an adult.

Those who have selective mutism and are non-verbal shouldn't be forced to speak by others, they deserve access to communication tools.

It also shouldn't be as difficult as it currently is for autistic people to get diagnosis resources.

Avery Schuster –
Autistic Adult

In this country, our nonspeakers are segregated, dismissed, judged by their outsides and invalidated by ableist "professionals" and "authorities."

The worst part of this is that it means they are denied access to the very things that would enable them to stand up for their own rights. This is a human rights crisis on a level equal to that of apartheid.

We are all humans and we all have equal rights, regardless of skin colour, social status and disability. If people continue to condemn us as intellectually deficient, then we will continuously be denied access to our basic human rights. I am a nonspeaker who was once deemed as cognitively deficient.

I am not.

The medical and educational systems that are currently in place for us have not been selected by us. When will our government and policy makers start listening to us? Not just to me, but to other nonspeakers who have escaped our society's shackles of silence? We need to see a change.

We need a revolution.

I urge anyone who is reading this to restore themselves from the brainwashing that was instilled in them since childhood. Changing core beliefs is hard, but it will lead to a beauty of equality, equity and freedom. We deserve to be heard; we deserve to be seen. Take your directives from nonspeakers and be prepared to rebuild systems for us from scratch.

We overcame discrimination in our country in the past and we will do so again.

Zekwande Mathenjwa –
Nonspeaking Autistic Teen

Founder of the Zekwande Foundation

2023/02/22 Dylan

I contribute to South Africa by Respecting Everybody and all the different Cultures. I have learned different lifeskills. eg. I have my drivers license and now I can help transport my friends and family. I have also learned to never giveup When trying to do Something new I will always do my best. I always go to my job everyday because I love been at work and helping the people I work with.

Dylan Buchel;

Autistic Adult

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Identity First Language

With autism? Autism spectrum disorder? Autistic person? Person on the autism spectrum? There are many different ways to talk about autism and to talk about the very people who consider themselves part of the community.

Before we delve into which term is preferred by the community, let's first understand what identity first and person first language is. **Person first language** in most disability communities is what is preferred; this is where you would say "person with a disability"; a person with autism is an example of person first language. The idea behind person first language was to put the person before the disability. This was done out of respect for the person.

Identity first language on the other hand is where the disability or identity comes before the word person. This would be *autistic person*. For many people this is disrespectful. However for the autistic community, identity first language is the preference.

Person First Language	Identity First Language
Person with autism	**Autistic person**
On the autism spectrum	
Individual with autism spectrum disorder	
With ASD	
On the spectrum	

A few years ago, Autism South Africa made the decision to listen to the autistic community and to respect their choice of language use. Many polls have been conducted on social media as well as through academic research. Overwhelmingly the response has been identity first language. It is for this reason, that A;SA has since used identity first language.

The rationale behind this is that autistic persons are proud of their identity, they want to be known as autistic and they want that recognised. It is a part of their identity. This has been seen across the spectrum with both speaking autistic persons, nonspeaking autistic persons, persons with high levels of support and persons with low levels of support.

With all of this being said, we always ask the individual person what their preference is.

If you would like to read up more on this, we would highly recommend the following; you can scan the QR code or click on the QR code to access the articles.

SCAN ME

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network: Identity First Language

SCAN ME

Monique Botha's research article Does Language Matter? Identity-First Versus Person-First Language Use in Autism Research: A Response to Vivanti

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WHAT IS THE UNCRPD AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA?

The UNCRPD stands for the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is an international convention developed by the United Nations. The convention gives an outline of the rights and the freedoms that should be realised by all people with disabilities. In 2007, South Africa signed and ratified the convention.

The convention states that all persons with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else without discrimination. Issues that are covered include access to education, employment, healthcare, and justice, the right to live independently and the right to be included in society.

In addition to this convention, the rights of persons with disabilities in South Africa are also protected by the Constitution, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, and the Employment Equity Act.

Even though we have all of the above in place and our policies are favourable to people with disabilities; there is very little practice of those rights in reality. Autistic persons still face many barriers in South Africa. This includes the right to education, equal opportunities in the workplace; and access to healthcare services. These rights are often compromised, amongst the many other difficulties that autistic persons face such as stigma and prejudice from the general public.

The convention also calls for the direct participation of the disability community to actively fight for their rights.

You can access the UNCRPD here: SCAN ME

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NEURODIVERSITY

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DISABILITY
STIMMING
AUTISTIC
SUPPORT
RESEARCH
DIFFERENT
COMMUNITY
ACCEPTANCE
EMPOWER
RESPECT
NEURODIVERSITY
INCLUDE
PRESUME COMPETENCE
SPECTRUM

Help Us Raise Money

Autism Acceptance Spirit Week

Autism Acceptance Spirit Week – With thanks to The Neurodivergent Teacher who has graciously allowed us to use this in our booklet this month. Please follow The Neurodivergent Teacher's page: https://www.facebook.com/theneurodivergentteacher

Magnificent Mind Monday

Autism is a neurological variation, which means the brains of autistic people work differently than the brains of non-autistic people – and that's amazing! Celebrate how amazing it is all of our minds work in different and wonderful way by **wearing a fun hat and/or wild hair.**

Neurodiversity Tuesday

To celebrate the beauty in the diverse spectrum of the human mind, **wear rainbow or tie-dyed clothes to school or work!**

What's your passion Wednesday

One characteristic of autism is to show incredibly focused passion for topics of interest. What are you passionate about? **Dress to show something you love.**

Thursday Autism acceptance day

Love and acceptance go a long way. **Wear red or gold** to show your support and acceptance of autistic individuals.

Sensory Friendly Friday

Autism people often have a variety of sensory sensitivities.
Dress up today in our most comfy clothes
(including school-appropriate pjs), use as much natural light in your classroom instead of fluorescents as possible, and/or wear sunglasses.

a;sa
autism south africa

WHAT IS AUTISM?

AUTISM IS A SPECTRUM

AUTISTIC PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT AUTISTIC CHARACTERISTICS

SOME MIGHT HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH SENSORY INFORMATION SUCH AS LIGHTS, SOUNDS, TEXTURES AND TASTES

CHILDREN MIGHT PLAY DIFFERENTLY WITH THEIR TOYS

SOME AUTISTIC PEOPLE MIGHT SPEAK
SOME AUTISTIC PEOPLE MIGHT NOT SPEAK

AUTISTIC PEOPLE AND CHILDREN MIGHT HAVE MOVEMENT DIFFERENCES

AUTISTIC PEOPLE ENGAGE IN SELF-STIMULATORY (STIMS) BEHAVIOUR TO HELP THEM STAY REGULATED OR CALM

WWW.AUT2KNOW.CO.ZA 011 484 9909 INFO@AUTISMSOUTHAFRICA.ORG

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Bunting Instructions

Print out the page with the bunting triangles – print as many as you would like to create a banner.
Cut each flag out.
Get some string, and lay it onto the top of the triangle. Fold down the top edge of the triangle over the string and glue it down.
Your bunting is ready to hang.

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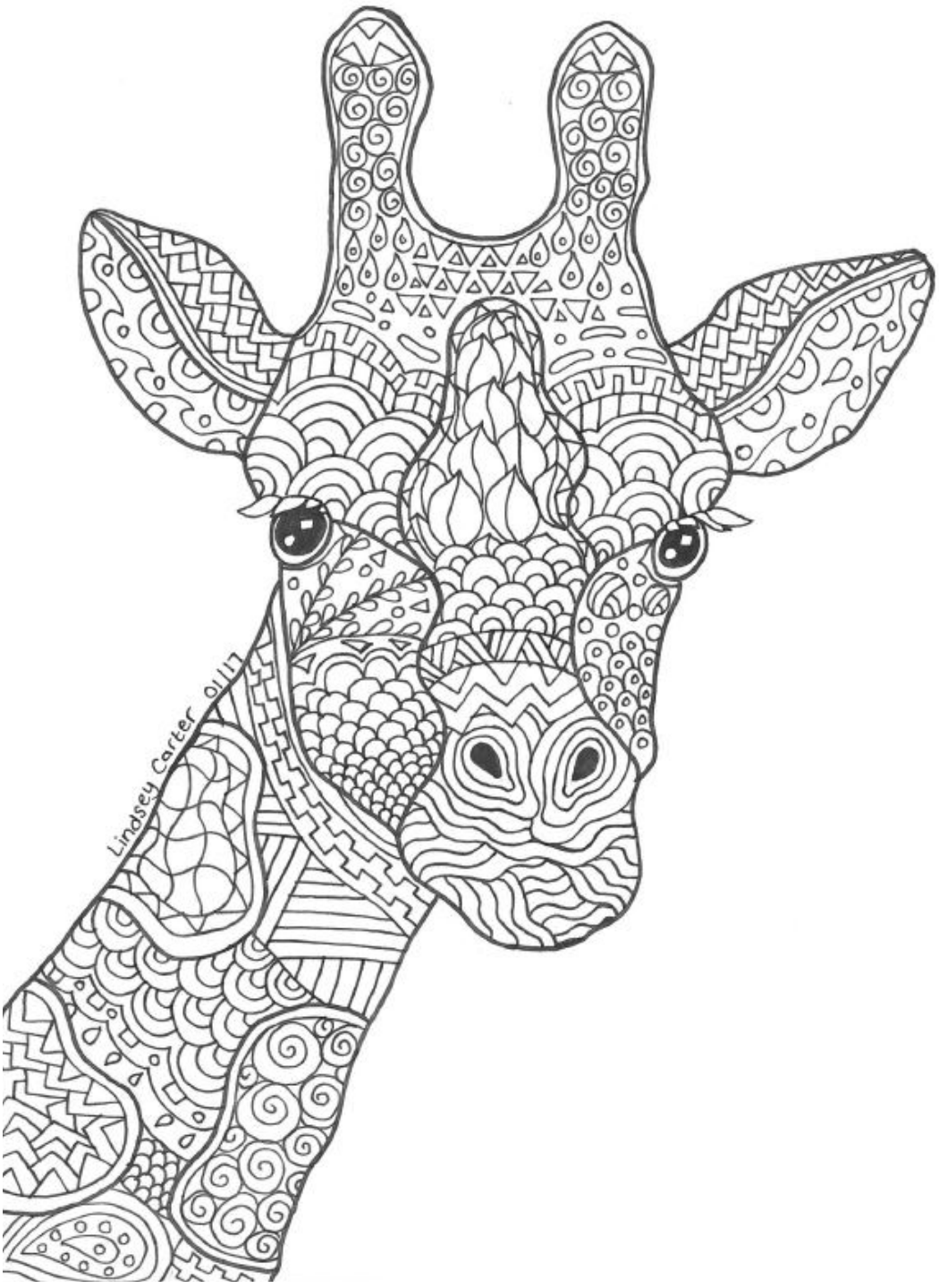
Colouring in Page – Designed by Lindsey Carter



Autism South Africa is selling a full colouring in book, all designed by Lindsey. Proceeds go to Autism South Africa. You can order your copy by contacting Autism South Africa.

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2023 World Autism Awareness and Acceptance Day T-Shirt Orders

T-Shirts will be delivered via Paxi (through Pep) for an additional R60. Collections from the Autism South Africa office in Johannesburg at no cost can also be arranged. T-Shirts are R120.00 each.

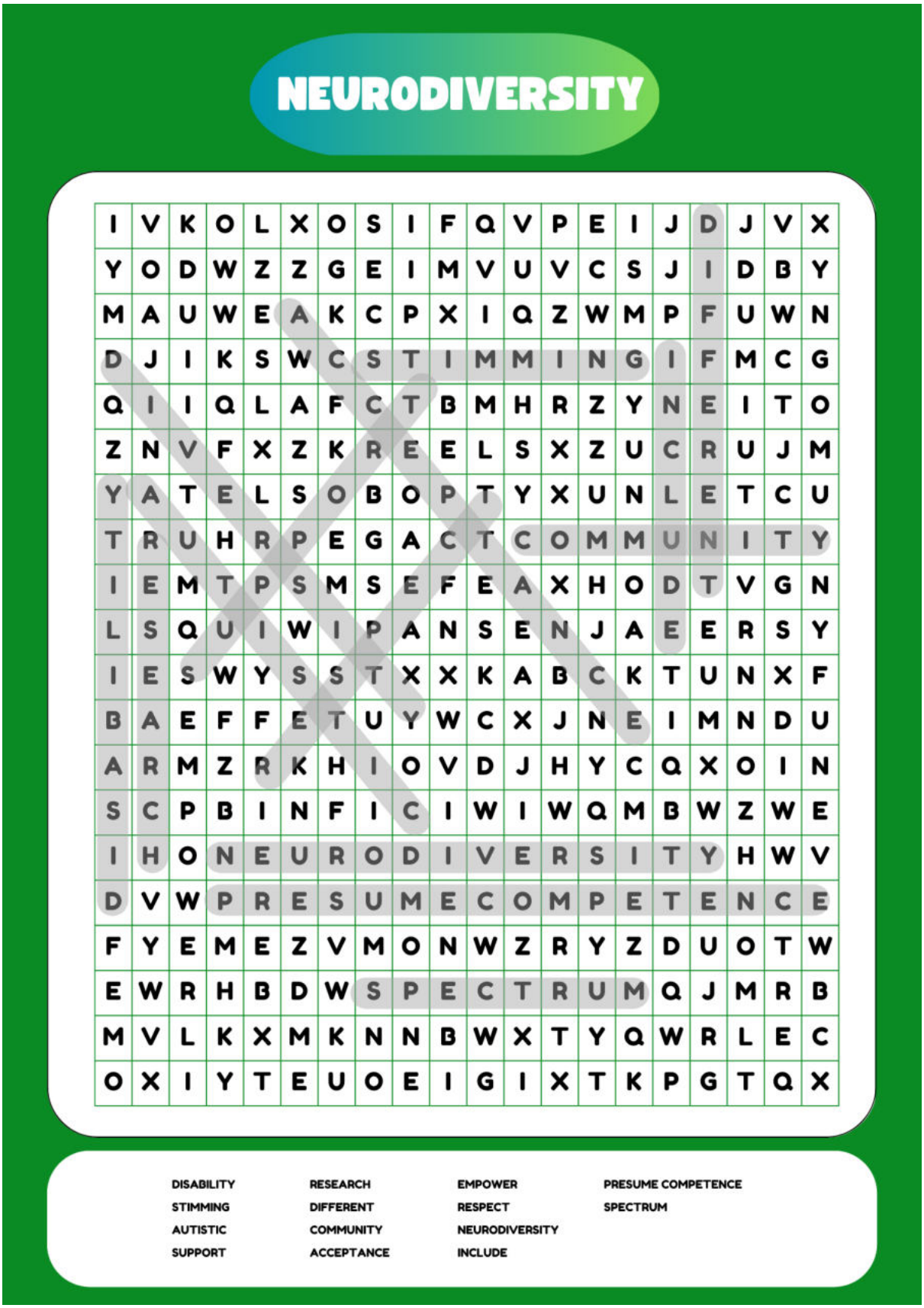
Name and surname	
Email Address	
Contact Number	
Organisation / School / Company	
Your closest PEP store for PAXI delivery	
Size and quantity required	_____ Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large _____ X X – Large _____ X X X – Large

*We use PAXI services which will deliver to your closest PEP store. You will then need to collect the package from the PEP store at the name and address that you have provided

Total amount to pay: R _____

Please return this form to Hector –

admin@autismsouthafrica.org together with your proof of payment. Please use TSHIRT and your name as a reference. E.g. TSHIRTJULIETCARTER

Banking details: Autism South Africa
Standard Bank
Sandton; 051 001
220731233

WORDSEARCH ANSWERS