



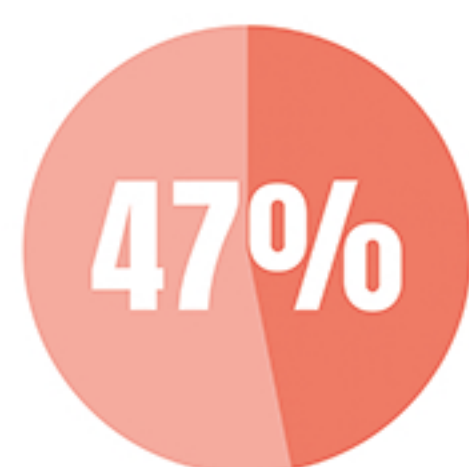
# Breaking Ableist Barriers: Neurodiversity-Affirming Practice



## Ableism

The discrimination or prejudice against people whose needs differ from the majority, and stigmatising those who diverge from the norm as “less than”.

## Current Situation in Hong Kong



According to a survey done by the YWCA on parents of SEN children, around 47% of SEN children have experienced unfriendly reactions from others.

Unfriendly reactions include:

- Being mocked (31.7%)
- Uncomfortable stares (43.1%)
- Physical bullying (12.9%)
- Verbal Abuse (28.7%)

## Common Ableist Barriers Faced by Children with SEN



### Enforcing Normality

Being assessed by frameworks that only apply to neurotypicals.

### Negative Shaming

Being shamed for their natural neurodivergent traits and behaviours.

### Encourage Masking

Being taught to mask their natural traits to conform and fit in.

## Neurodiversity-Affirming Practice

- Recognise that children may follow different developmental pathways.
- Acknowledge differences in their abilities and how they interact with the world.
- View differences as unique strengths and traits instead of deficits that need fixing.

## 7 Key Principles in Adopting Neurodiversity-Affirming Practice

Presume competence

Promote autonomy

Strengths-based approach

Respect all communication styles

Tailor support to individual needs

Honour neurodivergent culture

Be informed of neurodivergent voices



## What We Currently Do

### Affirmative Learning Environments

Promote inclusive teaching practices.

### Strengths-based Programs

Develop skills and interests based on children's unique strengths and traits.

## Future Directions

### Public Education Initiatives

Raise awareness on neurodiversity to foster acceptance and understanding in society.

### Increase Funding on NGOs

Support NGOs advocating for neurodiversity.

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