

Allison Burgess, LMFT: Neurodiversity: How to Parent Through Understanding the Brain

Does your kid like to do one thing more than another, and just want to do that? Does your child feel more comfortable doing repetitive-like behaviors? Does your child like to only do things a certain way? Does your child have trouble moving off an activity and have trouble getting back to it?

How can you help your child know there are more lanes out there than just the one they are in? There are strategies you can use to teach your child to “change lanes” and expand their brain development.

Our brains all develop differently. Some smart kids may be average or even below average in some areas, like social development or reading, but an absolute genius in other areas (especially in topics they enjoy!). They naturally gravitate towards what holds their interest. If they really have an interest in something, and are good at it, they have the ability to spend hours on it – that’s where perseveration can be a benefit. So, they can become experts and have success in that topic, while also learning how to work out the other areas so that they are “good enough.” For a lot of these kids with neurodiversity (atypical neurodevelopment), that can also affect their bodies because they can’t filter out all that sensory input.

As parents, you can help some of the less developed areas and maximize on the highly functioning areas. You can help your kid see lots of pathways for interests and activities instead of getting stuck in one neural loop. This approach involves parenting to the brain and not simply just behavior, because your child thinks differently than you!

On June 1st, 2021, Creative Healing for Youth in Pain (CHYP) hosted this ONLINE community event for parents. We addressed questions during this Zoom event (by using the chat function of Zoom).

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Allison Lee Burgess, LMFT is a Licensed Psychotherapist, Professional Speaker, and Parent Coach. She recently presented her TEDx talk, “Re-imagining Parenting: Transforming Expectations to Appreciation of Neurodiversity.”

For nearly a decade she has specialized in working with highly sensitive, anxious, and spirited teens and their parents to help families stay emotionally connected through even the most intense times.

Allison has helped hundreds of teens and their families, and has done speaking engagements, presentations, and webinars to private, public, and charter schools. She has counseled members of the U.S. Figure Skating Team and has had her writing contributions featured in Lambert academic book publications, and published online articles for Divorce Magazine.

Allison is a single working mom and proud parent of three fabulous teenagers. She has a private practice in Pacific Palisades, California and also coaches clients virtually across the country.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITqB7hsbVig&t=1s>