

The Neurodivergent Parent

Diagnosed, self-recognized, or wondering. Whatever our children turn out to be like.

What we bring our wiring shapes family life for the better too

- **We notice.** Light, noise, tone, the shift in a room before anyone has said anything.
- **We take inner experience seriously.** Many of us were told we were too sensitive. We won't say that to our own kids.
- **We are honest about feelings.** Children who hear adults name their own states learn to name theirs.
- **We question rules that exist for no reason.** Bedtime because it works. Clothes that feel right. Parties we want to attend.
- **We build systems that work.** Years of workarounds for a world that wasn't built for us. Our families get the benefit.

Worth asking: What do my children get from me that they wouldn't get from anyone else?

What costs us more a map of where the energy actually goes

- **Sensory load.** A family home is loud, sticky, bright and unpredictable, all at once.
- **The admin.** Forms, lunches, appointments, class app groups.
- **Transitions.** Leaving the house, coming home, bedtime, the end of the holidays.
- **Being needed without notice,** when we had planned the next hour.
- **The performance.** The school gate, parties, being the parent who seems fine.
- **Recovery time.** We go up fast and come down slowly.

Avoiding the hard moments works today and costs tomorrow. The list of things we don't do keeps growing.

What helps designing a family life that fits

- **Protect two things, not ten.** Name the two drains that cost most, build around those.
- **Know the hard hours.** Planning for after school, dinner and bedtime feels different from dreading them.
- **Boundaries we can keep without shouting.** "I'm staying with you, and I'm putting my earplugs in."
- **Leave the room, not the child.** "One minute in the kitchen. I'm coming back." Then come back.
- **Repair out loud.** "I got loud because I was overstimulated, not because of you."
- **Shared vocabulary.** Say our own zone out loud, including green. Children learn the words by hearing adults use them.

Worth asking: What sets me off? What already helps me come back?

If our own wiring is new information many of us recognize ourselves through our children.

No diagnosis needed to use this page

- **Relief and grief can arrive together,** with guilt and doubt. All of it is normal.
- **We have insider knowledge.** We understand from the inside what our children can't yet say. Their experience still isn't ours.
- **The adult route:** huisarts, then POH-GGZ, then GGZ. Separate waitlist, eigen risico applies.

Parent checklist

My two biggest drains are:

My early warning signs look like:

What helps me come back:

One thing I'd like to try this week:

Something I need support with:

We're allowed to

- Leave the party early on purpose, not in panic.
- Say “not right now” to our children.
- Have a boring weekend.
- Parent in a way that looks nothing like the family next door.
- Get our own assessment.
- Ask for help before we're at the end of ourselves.

Pull up a chair. We see you.

Whatever you came with, it's welcome at our table. If things feel like too much, the huisarts or the POH-GGZ is the first call.