

Support for neurodivergent children and adults in the Netherlands

What exists, what each thing is for, and who pays. Compiled September 2026.

1. Where care starts

Huisarts (GP). The gateway to almost everything. No huisarts means no referral, no GGZ, no Dutch prescription. Newly arrived families should register with one before anything else.

POH-GGZ. A mental health practitioner working inside the GP practice. Short-term support for adults and often for young people, no referral needed, covered by the basisverzekering, and no eigen risico. The most underused door in Dutch healthcare.

Jeugdarts / GGD. Youth doctor attached to the school health service. Sees children at set ages, and can also be asked for an appointment. Free, no referral, and can refer on for assessment.

Bedrijfsarts. Company doctor, for adults in work. Access is a right, not a favor, and the employer does not get told what was discussed. The route to workplace adjustments and sick leave.

2. Assessment and treatment

For children (under 18): the gemeente pays. Care for under-18s runs through the Jeugdwet, funded by the municipality, with no eigen risico. Two routes in: a referral from the huisarts or jeugdarts, or an application through the municipality's own youth team. Both lead to jeugd-GGZ providers.

For adults: the health insurer pays. Huisarts, then POH-GGZ, then a referral to basisGGZ (shorter, milder) or specialistische GGZ (complex, longer). Covered by the basisverzekering, subject to the annual eigen risico.

Private assessment. Faster, self-paid, and not always reimbursed. Worth checking against an aanvullende verzekering before booking.

3. School

Intern begeleider (IB'er). The school's internal support coordinator. In practice most conversations start with the teacher during the ten-minute gesprek, and the IB'er gets involved when support is the subject.

Schoolondersteuningsprofiel. Every school publishes what support it can offer, basic and extra. A public document, worth reading before a meeting.

Samenwerkingsverband. The regional partnership responsible for making sure every child in the region has a suitable school place. It issues the toelaatbaarheidsverklaring (TLV) for special education. Each samenwerkingsverband must have an ouder- en jeugdsteunpunt where parents and pupils can get information and support.

Ouders & Onderwijs. National parent helpline for anything school-related. 088 605 0101, weekdays, or vraag@oudersenonderwijs.nl.

Onderwijsconsulenten. Free, independent help when a child is stuck: they advise, mediate and guide when parents, the school and the samenwerkingsverband cannot reach a solution. Before applying there must already have been a conversation with the school and with the samenwerkingsverband or the ouder- en jeugdsteunpunt, and they cannot take a case where a lawyer is already involved. 070

312 2887.

Leerplichtambtenaar. The attendance officer. Involved when a child stops attending, and, despite the reputation, can sometimes help arrange a temporary reduced timetable.

4. Crisis and out of hours

- **Huisartsenpost** outside office hours. **112** in an emergency.
- **113 Zelfmoordpreventie:** 113 or 0800 0113, free, 24/7.
- **MIND Korrelatie:** free and anonymous support by phone, chat and WhatsApp.
- **Kindertelefoon:** 0800 0432, free, for children and young people.
- **Jeugd-GGZ crisis service** via the huisarts or huisartsenpost.

5. The two things people get wrong

1. **Under 18 is the gemeente; 18 and over is the insurer.** Different funding, different route, different waiting list. The transition at 18 catches families out, and it is worth preparing a year ahead.
2. **Free independent help exists and almost nobody uses it.** Ouders & Onderwijs, onderwijsconsulenten and the ouder- en jeugdsteeunpunt are all free, and none requires a referral.

Questions about any of this? Come and talk to us.

Phone numbers and opening hours change, so check anything you plan to rely on.