



**Neurodiversity
Celebration
Week**

In partnership with



Celebrating our unique strengths and differences

March 13 - 19, 2023

www.neurodiversityweek.com



Agenda



What is Neurodiversity?



Do These Differences Have a Name?



What Is Neurodiversity Celebration Week?



What Can You Do To Help?

What is Neurodiversity?

- Have you noticed that everyone thinks, learns and processes information differently?
- Neurodiversity is based on the idea that everyone has a differently-wired brain and their own unique way of thinking and experiencing the world.

Neurodiversity is about recognising that everyone's brain works differently.



Respecting Differences

- Neurodiversity is about recognising and respecting that we don't all learn the same way.
- Differences in the way our brains are wired means that you may find some things challenging that others find easy.
- You may also find things easy that other people find challenging.

We each have our own strengths
and challenges.

Do These Differences Have a Name?

Some of the different ways of thinking, learning, interacting and perceiving the world have been given labels, such as:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Dyscalculia
- Tourette's Syndrome



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- About 4% of the population have ADHD.
- ADHD affects a person's ability to focus. It can cause inattention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness.
- People with ADHD can be some of the most creative members on a team, bringing energy and new approaches to their projects
- Several studies have shown that adults with ADHD tend to be out-of-the-box thinkers and calm under pressure.

Focusing on Success

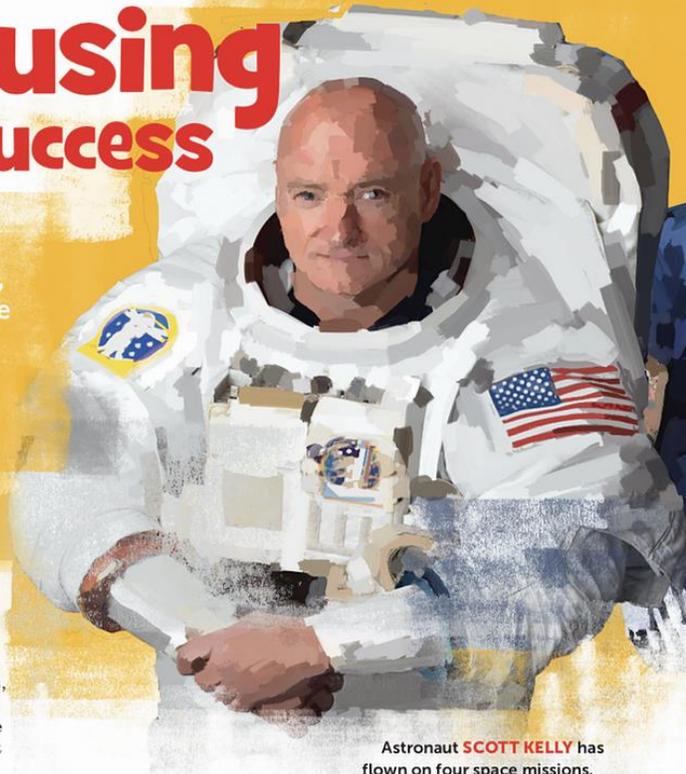
Like many kids, these pros have ADHD. Here's how they succeeded.

By Marty Kaminsky
Art by Chris Arran

Many students have trouble sitting quietly. They fiddle with pencils, talk out of turn, and jump to do things before thinking. Others can sit still but find it hard to focus on classwork. They may daydream, struggle to organize their work, and forget to do assignments.

Most people feel restless or distracted from time to time, but some feel this way almost all the time. Nearly 2.5 million elementary-school children in the United States have ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder). That's about one out of ten kids.

But ADHD does not have to be a roadblock to achievement. Here, some pros in their fields share the secrets of their success.



Astronaut **SCOTT KELLY** has flown on four space missions, including one that lasted close to a year. But when he was growing up, he had trouble focusing in school. As a result, he earned low grades.

"I read a novel in college about the space program. The book motivated me to study harder and become a much better student and, eventually, an astronaut. The lesson I learned was, Don't ever give up on yourself. Find something or someone that motivates you and use that to help motivate yourself."

"A lot of very successful people have ADHD, so wear it with pride."

—Katherine Ellison, author



As a defensive tackle for the New England Patriots, **LAWRENCE GUY** is successful today. But he struggled with ADHD and other learning disabilities throughout his school days. Still, he never gave up.

"In school, I lost focus a lot. I was always playing with things in my hands. My sophomore year in high school was my turning point. I wanted to succeed so badly on the football field. I realized that if I could apply myself, focus, and pay attention there, I could learn all the plays. I took that self-control back into the classroom. I learned that I needed a place to release my extra energy, but I did have the ability to focus."

Living with ADHD

ADHD is treatable. Some things that help include skill therapy, support at school, and sometimes, medication. If you think you might have ADHD, talk to a parent, guardian, doctor, school counselor, school nurse, teacher, or another adult you trust. Professionals can help kids with ADHD, and the adults in kids' lives can help set them up for success.



Author **KATHERINE ELLISON** was a newspaper reporter, often taking dangerous assignments in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Her work earned her a Pulitzer Prize. She did not know she had ADHD until her son filled out a questionnaire to find out if he had it. Reading the form over his shoulder, she realized that he did have ADHD, and so did she. Today, she accepts ADHD as part of her toughest challenges and her greatest successes.

"A lot of very successful people have ADHD, so wear it with pride. Know that you are going to make a lot of mistakes. Learn to forgive yourself without making excuses and try to learn a lesson from each one. I use exercise as one way to cope. I've learned that I need structure in my life."

Figure skaters **ZACHARY DONOHUE** and Madison Hubbell won a silver medal for ice dancing at the 2018 International Skating Union World Figure Skating Competition and placed fourth at the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea. In elementary school, Zachary had a hard time making friends because his classmates thought he was wild, scattered, and overly excitable.

"When I was 16, I realized that it was OK for me to be different than others. Now, at 27, I'm learning to understand my own emotions. I still struggle with ADHD, but I've learned that I'm responsible for more than just myself. I've learned how important it is to be organized and to be a step ahead—it helps slow me down, which is important for someone with ADHD." 

Autism

- About 2% of the population is autistic.
- Autism affects how a person perceives the world and interacts and socialises with others.
- People on the autism spectrum are often highly logical and good at absorbing and remembering facts, attention to detail, and recognising patterns.

Did you know
that climate
change activist
Greta Thunberg
is autistic and
has ADHD?



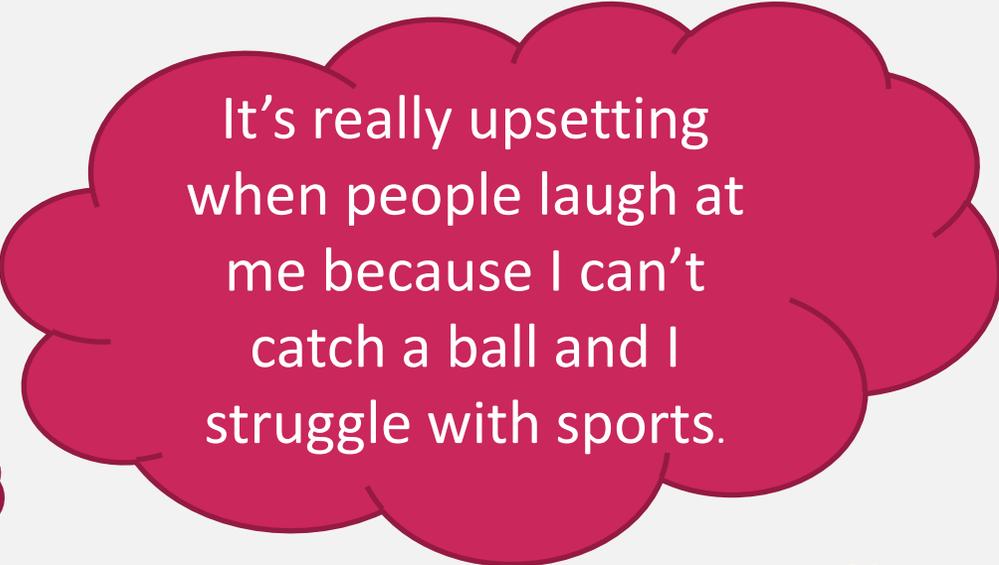
Dyslexia

- About 10% of the population are dyslexic.
- Dyslexia is a language processing difficulty that can cause challenges with reading, writing and spelling.
- Dyslexic people are often creative thinkers, good at problem-solving and verbal communication.

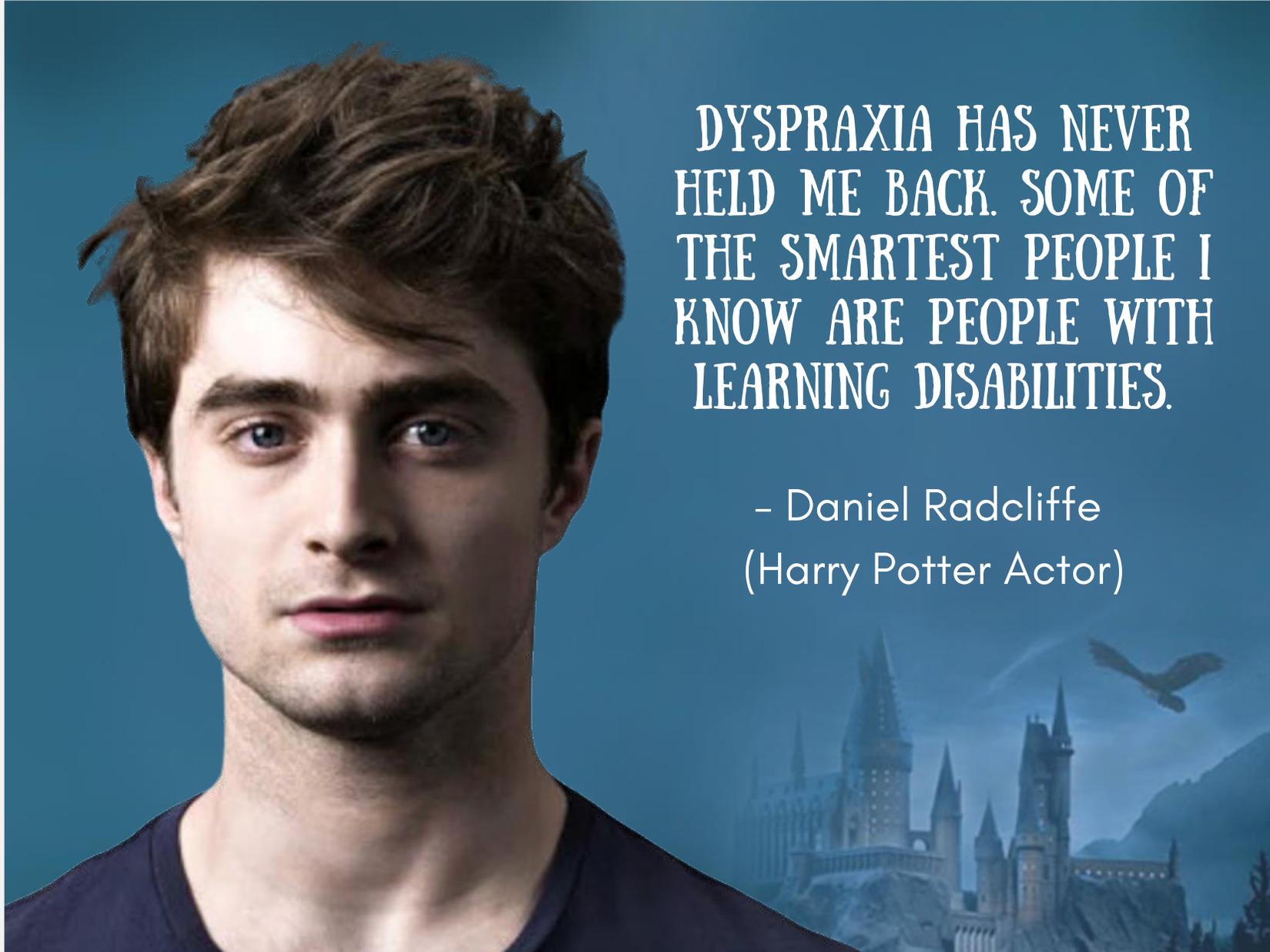


Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD, Dyspraxia)

- About 6% of the population are dyspraxic.
- Dyspraxia affects your physical coordination, and can sometimes be misperceived as clumsiness.
- Dyspraxic people are often creative, determined, and really good at developing their own strategies to overcome difficulties.



It's really upsetting when people laugh at me because I can't catch a ball and I struggle with sports.



DYSPRAXIA HAS NEVER
HELD ME BACK. SOME OF
THE SMARTEST PEOPLE I
KNOW ARE PEOPLE WITH
LEARNING DISABILITIES.

- Daniel Radcliffe
(Harry Potter Actor)

Tourette Syndrome (TS)

- About 1% of the population have Tourette Syndrome.
- Tourette Syndrome (TS) causes sudden, uncontrolled, repetitive muscle movements and sounds called “tics.”
- People with TS are often high-achieving, creative and empathetic.





Winner of 2020 Neurodiversity Celebration Week Art Competition

What is Neurodiversity Celebration Week About?

- Neurodiversity Celebration Week is about celebrating the strengths and talents of people with learning differences.
- Sadly, these students are often misunderstood.
- Neurodiversity Celebration Week is one way of reminding everyone of the importance of being kind, tolerant and accepting of everyone.

Recognising Determination

- Neurodiversity Celebration Week is also about recognising hard work, resilience and determination.
- The school environment is not the ideal place for special educational needs (SEN) students to use and showcase their unique strengths and talents.



Recognising and Celebrating Strengths and Talents

- Neurodiversity Celebration Week serves as a reminder that no matter what our differences and challenges, everyone also has their own strengths and talents.
- Many people who have ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia or Tourette Syndrome and struggled in school, are now very successful.
- Many attribute their success to their unique way of thinking and perceiving the world around them.

There are currently

Over 2,400 schools

Over 1.5 million students

taking part worldwide

What Can You Do To Help?

- Don't tease or make fun of anyone in your class who is different or who is finding something difficult.
- Instead, be kind, understanding and encouraging.
- Never forget that you have the power to make a positive difference to someone who may be having a difficult time.

Make someone's day by being understanding and kind.



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