

Katie's Field Guide

to a Different

KIND OF BRAIN.



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- **Protect the flow state.** Unstructured play is vital. Let them stay in their flow for longer. (It's regenerative!) Give warnings before transitions; a sudden '*we're leaving in five minutes*' can feel like a crisis.
- **Enter their world.** Observe what your child loves and step in when invited. Meet them where they are rather than pulling them out.
- **Make things concrete.** Abstract concepts like time and money need real-world anchors. Use objects, pictures, or physical comparisons, and remember to be patient and kind.
- **Embrace helpful tools.** AI, apps, and assistive technology are not shortcuts - they are legitimate supports that free up cognitive load for emotional regulation and creativity.
- **Positive messaging matters.** Research shows neurodivergent children receive significantly more negative messages than their peers (20,000 before the age of 10-12)
Actively balance this - name what they do well, often, and celebrate the wins!
- **Noise and sensory management.** Noise-cancelling headphones in overwhelming environments can be transformative. Sensory comfort isn't fussiness.
- **Colour-coded systems.** Lists, schedules, and reminders in colour work better for many neurodivergent children than plain text.
- **Exercise as regulation.** Physical movement is one of the most effective tools for managing anxiety and ADHD-related emotional intensity.