



NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP CENTER



NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP CENTER

**Welcome to the Nonprofit Leadership Center
2025 Webinar Series!**

**Beyond Diversity: Creating a
Neuro-Ready Workplace**

Vicky Westra

Our Presenter

Vicky Westra – CEO and Founder



Vicky Westra is the visionary founder of Neuroshifts, a pioneering 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to empowering individuals by promoting emotional and mental well-being and embracing neurodiversity. Her mission extends beyond individuals to transform homes and workplaces into thriving environments for families and teams. Prior to embarking on her transformative entrepreneurial path, Vicky spent 22 impactful years at Tampa Electric Company, culminating in her role as Director of Customer Services and Marketing. Armed with a B.S. in Business Marketing from The University of Tampa, she brings both academic and personal insights to her mission.

Inspired by her daughter's journey and her extensive experience in spiritual and wellness training as well as developing a deep understanding of neurodiversity, Vicky developed Neuroshifts to foster inclusivity and unlock human potential. The organization's vision is to break down barriers and create a world where everyone, regardless of neurodiversity, can thrive. Vicky has also authored "Discover the Light Within" and serves as a teacher, presenter, motivational speaker, and coach.

Rules of the Road...

- To minimize background noise and distractions, all lines will be muted for the duration of the webinar.
- This session is being recorded and will be available on our website for future viewing.
- We warmly welcome your questions. Please type them in the chat box. The trainer will answer questions at the end of the presentation.
- We're looking forward to a productive, engaging session and thank you so much for your participation!



Beyond Diversity: Creating a Neuro- Ready Workplace

Presented by Vicky Westra

FIGURE 2

True cultural transformation requires organizations to move from exclusion to belonging²⁶

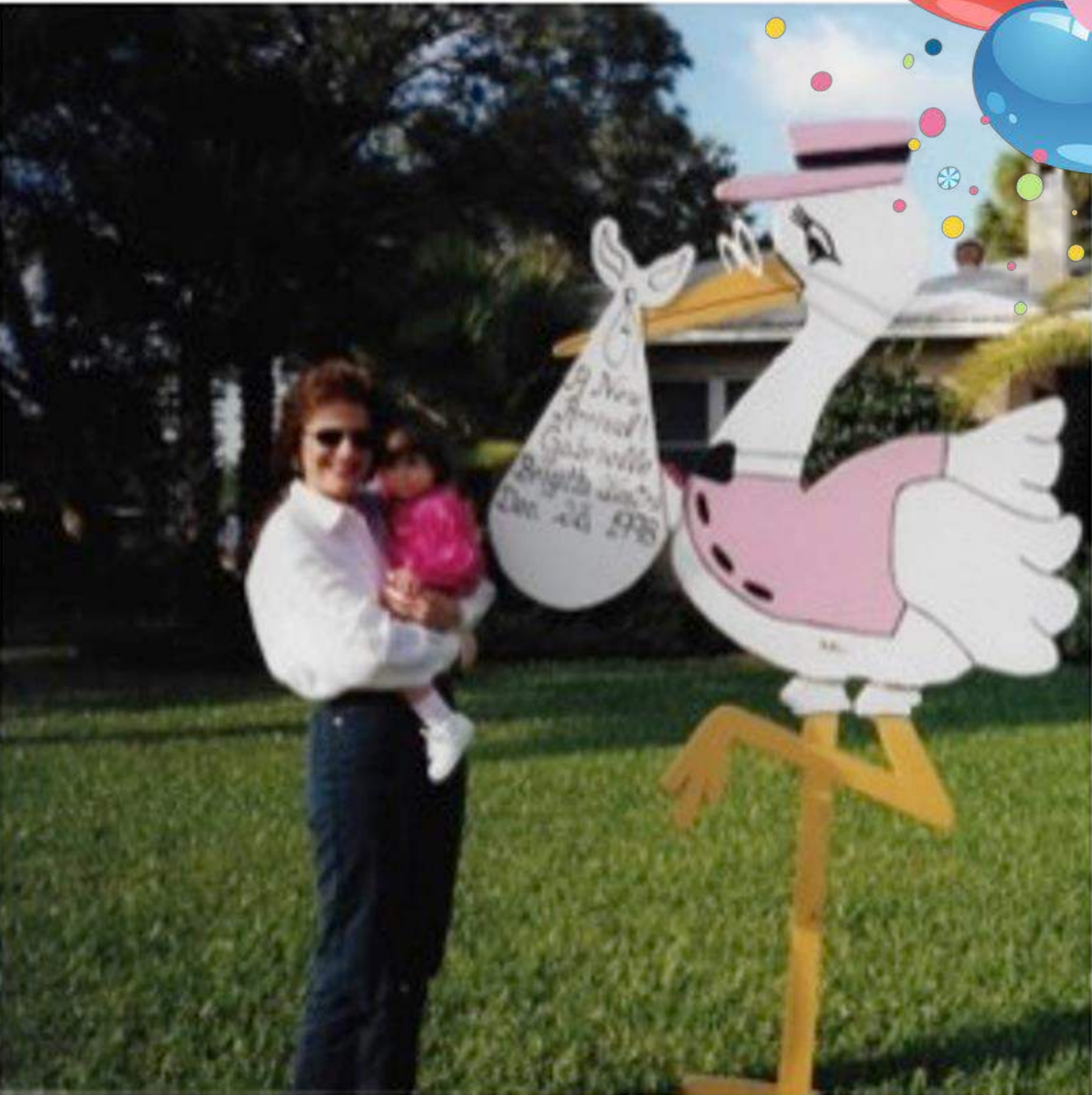


Source: Deloitte analysis.

Agenda

- **My Personal Journey with Autism**
- **Neuroshifts Vision**
- **What is Neurodiversity?**
- **Current Stats**
- **Challenges Faced by Neurodiverse Employees**
- **Employer Barriers to Create a Neurodiverse Workplace**
- **Benefits to Creating a Neurodiverse Workplace**
- **Employer/Employee Spotlight**
- **Q & A**

Happy Adoption Day – December 23, 1998



The Emotional Guidance Scale

How do you feel today?



The Green Zone

-  Joy, Appreciation, Love, Empowerment, Freedom
-  Passion
-  Enthusiasm, Eagerness, Happiness
-  Positive Expectation, Belief
-  Optimism
-  Hopefulness

The Yellow Zone

-  Contentment
-  Boredom
-  Pessimism
-  Frustration, Irritation, Impatience
-  Overwhelm
-  Disappointment
-  Doubt

The Red Zone

-  Worry
-  Blame
-  Discouragement
-  Anger
-  Revenge
-  Hatred, Rage
-  Jealousy
-  Insecurity, Guilt, Unworthiness
-  Fear, Grief, Depression, Despair, Powerlessness

*Modified from Abraham-Hicks book "Ask and It Is Given"

Emotional Scale

Positive Emotional Zone

Moderate Emotional Zone

Negative Emotional Zone

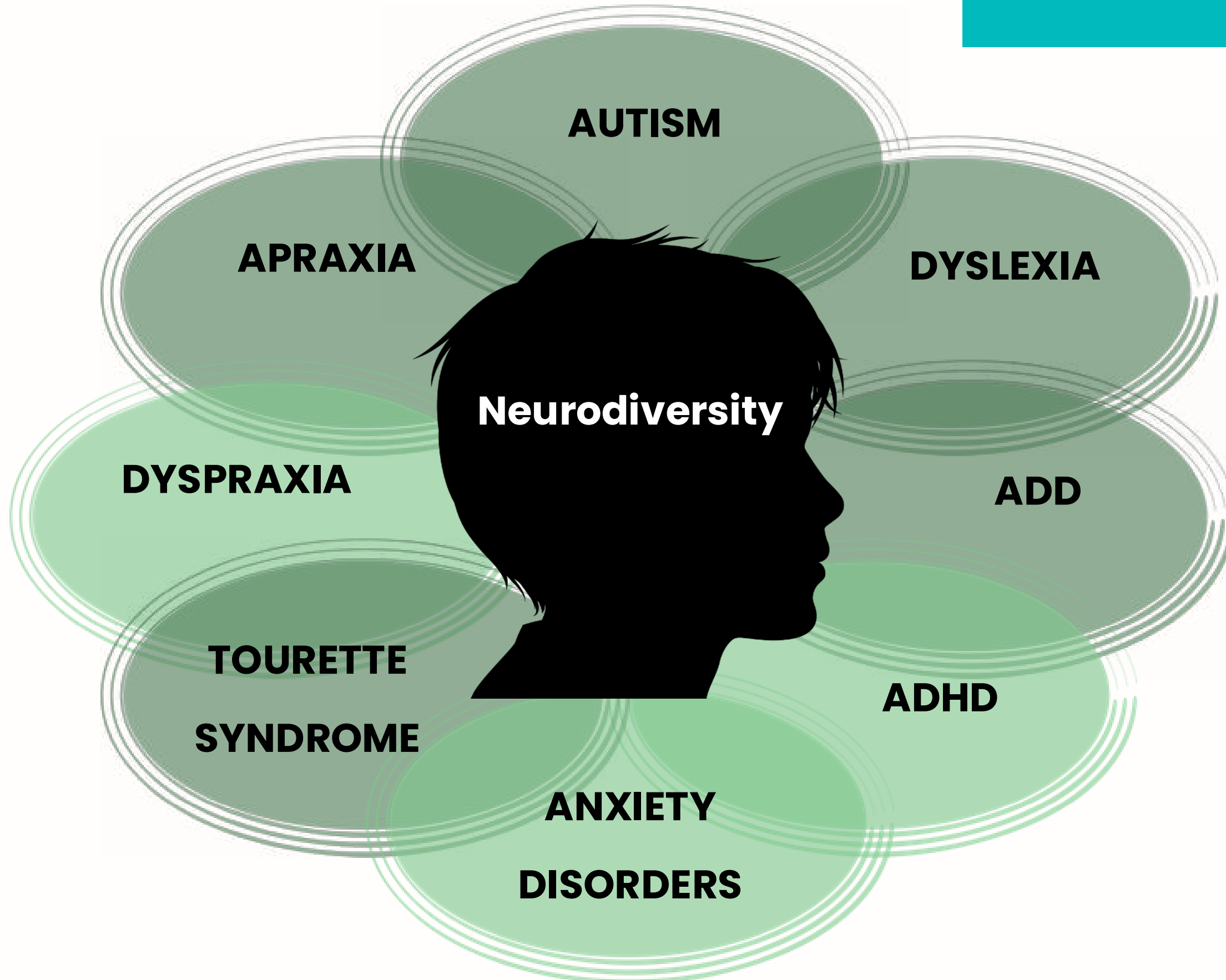
Artistas Café Opens in Jan. 2011



OUR VISION

To ignite a global movement that empowers individuals, families, businesses and our broader community to create a Neuro-Ready World inclusive and embracing of those diagnosed with autism and other neurodiverse conditions. We will forge the path for them to have a joyful, fulfilling and purpose-driven life. Together, we will shatter barriers, foster inclusivity, and inspire generations to thrive.

What is Neurodiversity?



- **Neurological Difference**
- **Neurocognitive Functioning Differences**
- **Neurodevelopmental Differences**

Embracing Neurodiversity



Natural variations in the human brain

Neurodiversity encompasses differences in cognitive processing, such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, which are part of the natural diversity of the human population.



Respect and accommodate differences

Instead of viewing these neurological differences as disorders, the neurodiversity approach advocates for respecting and accommodating them in the workplace and society.

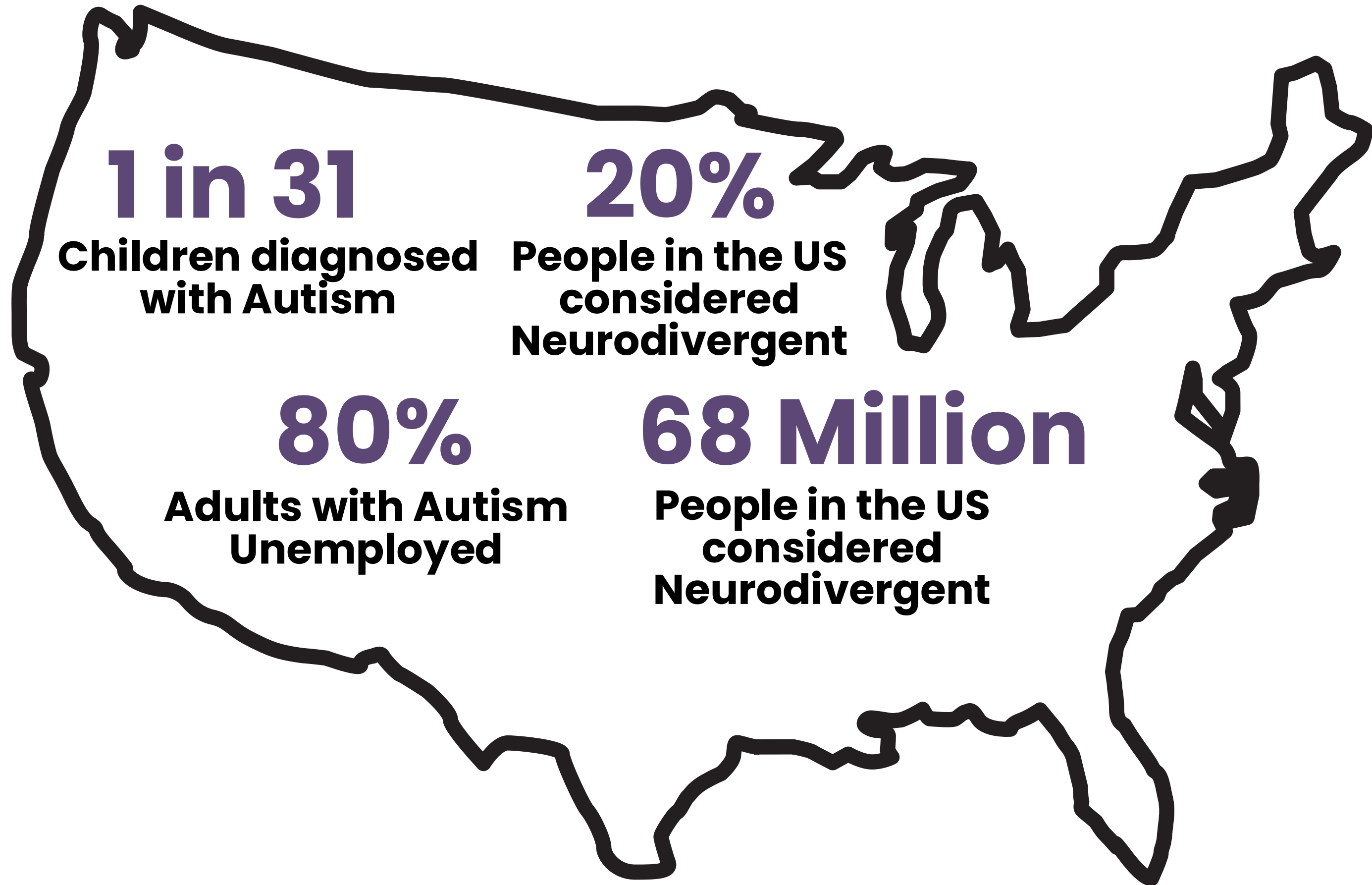


Celebrate unique perspectives and talents

Individuals with diverse neurological profiles often possess unique skills, talents, and ways of thinking that can contribute to innovation and problem-solving in the workplace.

By recognizing and embracing neurodiversity, organizations can create a more inclusive and productive work environment that celebrates the unique perspectives and talents of individuals with diverse neurological profiles.

Current Statistics



Imagination Exercise



Challenges Faced by Neurodiverse Employees

- **Sensory Sensitivities**

Neurodiverse individuals may experience sensory processing issues, leading to discomfort or distraction in environments with bright lights, loud noises, or strong smells.

- **Communication Difficulties**

Differences in communication styles, such as difficulty with social cues or interpreting abstract language, can hinder effective collaboration and understanding with neurotypical colleagues.

- **Rigid Work Environments/Schedules**

Inflexible schedules, lack of accommodation for breaks or alternative working methods, and an emphasis on conformity can create significant challenges for neurodiverse employees.

- **Limited Awareness and Understanding of Workplace**

Neurodiverse employees may have a lack of understanding about work environment and their rules and expectations.

- **Difficulty with Change**

Some individuals on the neurodiversity spectrum might find it challenging to cope with change or unexpected situations, which can be frequent in dynamic work environments.

- **Task Management**

Certain executive functioning challenges may affect organizational skills, time management, or the ability to prioritize tasks without support.

Barriers to Creating Neuro-Ready Workplaces

- **Lack of Commitment**

Leadership commitment from the top down is crucial because it sets the tone and direction for an organization, ensuring alignment with goals and fostering a culture of accountability and motivation.

- **Limited Awareness and Education of Neurodiversity**

Insufficient knowledge and misconceptions about neurodiversity among managers and coworkers can lead to unintentional discrimination, microaggressions, and a lack of support.

- **Unconscious Bias**

Preconceived notions and stereotypes can lead to biased decision making.

- **Inflexible Workplace Culture**

A rigid or unwelcoming culture can deter individuals from diverse backgrounds from fully participating and contributing.

- **Limited Resources**

Access to resources, mentorship, and career advancement can impede the progress of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

- **Microaggression and Discrimination**

Subtle or overt acts of discrimination can create a hostile work environment and hinder the sense of belonging for marginalized groups.

Benefits of Creating a Neuro-Ready Workplace



- **Unique Skillsets**
- **Increased Productivity**
- **Increased Innovation/Problem Solving**
- **Increased Retention Rates**
- **Enhanced Team Dynamics**
- **Increased Team Performance**
- **Increased Brand Recognition and Loyalty**

Crucial Components in creating a Neurodiverse Workplace

Leadership Commitment

Creating a culture of valuing differences starts at leadership level.

Specialized Training for Managers

Providing managers with training on how to create a Neuro-Ready Environment

Sensory-Friendly Environments

Creating workspaces to accommodate the sensory needs of neurodiverse individuals.

Support Networks

Offering programs that lead to a sense of belonging a fostering the support needed to create an inclusive environment.

Flexible Policy/ Hiring Practices

Reviewing and modifying policies and procedures to accommodate the unique needs of neurodiverse individuals.

Neuroshifts Can Support Your Journey!

Workshop/Training - Beyond Diversity: Thriving with a Neuro-Ready Work Team

Workshop/Training - Green Zone Workplaces: Empowering Leaders and Teams for Greater Emotional Health

Consulting Services



Employer Spotlight



- **SAP**
- **Microsoft**
- **IBM**
- **Ernst & Young**
- **JP Morgan Chase**
- **Hewlett Packard Enterprise**



Russell



NEUROSHIFTS
Align • Transform • Emerge

Q & A



Thank you!

www.neuro-shifts.org

Phone: 813-251-2787

e-mail: vicky@neuro-shifts.org