

Me

- Parent of three neurodiverse young adults
- Teacher in a former life
- Founder & CEO of Parenting Special Children



www.parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

From diagnosis to young adult - parent & child/young person journey

Three neurodiverse young adults aged 17-22 with ADHD, Global Developmental Delay, and Dyslexia

Diagnosis - 'it's a whole new world you have to navigate'

IASS, SENCO, EHCP, DLA, SLT, Ed Psych, GDD, ADHD, ASC, OT, SP, PDA

Primary school

Friendships

Secondary school

Relationships

Further education

Work

Diagnosis: What helped!

- Meeting another parent who understood what we as a family were facing

“We are not alone”

- Parent forums <https://www.rainbowpcf.org.uk/your-resources/useful-links/>
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND Local Offer)

(Nottinghamshire Families Information Service)

<https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk>

Tips: health practitioners please signpost (CAHMS, paediatricians, HVistors plus)

It's a whole new parenting world!

Traditional ways of parenting did not work with my children

Consequences unless natural consequences didn't work!

What worked

Calm and patient - understanding ADHD

Adjusting environment - lots of planning, one to one adult interaction

Changing my expectations

Celebrating and acceptance (no shoulds)

Being their advocate

Education - often most demanding aspect of life

- Three local authorities; three different schools; three different responses to school

Tips:

Parents: Working in partnership with schools key - SENCO, teacher

Support (Parent Partnership Service, Nottingham) if relationship breaks down

SOSSEN or IPSEA for national support

Schools: Working in partnership with parents - you both bring expertise, equal partnership

Transition

Where we are now!

“It’s a whole new world you have to navigate!” Back to the beginning?

College: less boundaries; less structure; less parental involvement (parent view)

Young adult: freedom? Taking responsibility

Job: CV, interviews, acceptance/rejection, job responsibility

Lack of aspiration for young people/adults with learning disabilities 6% paid jobs,
66% want a job

Sitting with uncertainty

Adulthood

- Relationships
- Supported living
- Training
- Trust
- Letting go
- Celebrating
- Enriched relationships



NEURODIVERSITY

It takes all kinds of different minds

Dyslexia | ADHD | Dyspraxia | Autism