

NEURODIVERGENT WELLBEING GROUPS



INFORMATION FOR
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 The group and its aims
- 2 What's needed for a successful group?
- 3 What happens and when?
- 5 Structure and expectations
- 6 Key messages and session summaries
- 10 Information for parents and carers

CONTACT INFORMATION



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**Edinburgh Disability
and Neurodiversity Hub**

THE GROUP AND ITS AIMS

Groups are delivered as part of the EDAN Hub, funded by the Scottish governments Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

These groups are designed to support the wellbeing of neurodivergent children and young people through sharing information and facilitating activities which aim to increase self-understanding, acceptance, support and community. These aims are achieved through working in collaboration with a Tailor Ed Foundation Project Worker and a selected co-facilitator from the community partner.

Each group will be expected to meet weekly for 8-12 weeks. We work in a collaboration with community staff to deliver group content and increase inclusion and neuro-affirming practice in that setting.

SELF UNDERSTANDING / SUPPORT / SELF ACCEPTANCE / COMMUNITY



All minds are
different - this is
ok

We all make
mistakes - that
is ok

We are only
responsible for
ourselves

THE GROUP IS

- An informal, safe space where neurodivergent children and young people can relax and be themselves
- A reflective place for children and young people to learn about and develop an understanding and strategies for supporting their own wellbeing
- Neuro-affirming, trauma-informed, inclusive and person-centred
- A group where neurodivergent young people are valued as the experts in their own experience

THE GROUP IS NOT

- A 'classroom' style lesson
- A mental health or therapeutic intervention
- A group where children and young people are made to 'fit' neurotypical social or wellbeing norms

WHAT'S NEEDED FOR A SUCCESSFUL GROUP?

A CO-FACILITATOR WHO

- is neuro-affirming, compassionate, understanding and open-minded
 - is comfortable in their own understanding of neurodiversity and well-being
 - can attend the group each week
 - wants to work collaboratively and reflectively with the Tailor Ed Project Worker
 - can ensure the space is accessible, available and prepared each week
 - can support children and young people on a 1:1 basis alongside the group (e.g. check-ins)
 - can advocate for the wellbeing group (with parents, other staff members and senior management)
 - has a desire to continue the aims of the group following the partnership
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STUDENTS WHO

- have a formal diagnosis of neurodivergence (e.g. autism, ADHD, developmental coordination disorder, etc.) OR
 - are on a pathway to ND diagnosis
 - self-identify as neurodivergent
 - have some awareness of their neurodivergence
-

A SPACE THAT

- has a variety of different seating options (soft seating, different chairs)
 - has a variety of areas for students to take part in activities (e.g. tables, floorspace)
 - has easily accessible materials to be used in group activities
 - has access to sensory and emotional regulation supports
 - has snacks for students
 - is available consistently each week
 - is free of sensory discomforts
-

A CULTURE WHICH

- encourages and supports wellbeing, self-exploration and acceptance
 - is respectful, inclusive and safe
 - fosters openness and support
 - is neuro-affirming and trauma-informed
-

WHAT HAPPENS AND WHEN?

PLANNING STAGE	
What	Notes
Contact wellbeing@tailoredfoundation.co.uk to register interest in becoming a community partner	
Initial contact between Project Worker(s) and Community Partner	
Initial meeting/visit with Project Worker(s) and Community Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the service • Setting expectations and needs, next steps
<p><u>Following meeting - Community Partner to identify</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-facilitator for group • Room • Children and young people • Options and budget for group snacks/drink 	
Meeting between Project Worker and Co-facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm day and time for group • Content planning (activities, adaptations, resources, roles and responsibilities, CYP needs, etc.) • Risk assessments (group, venue, room)
<p><u>Following Project Worker and Co-facilitator meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-facilitator meets with children and young people individually • Co-facilitator shares information with families • Consent from CYP and families to attend group • Co-facilitator brings children and young people together before the start of the group work for initial get to know you session(s) 	

WHAT HAPPENS AND WHEN? (CONT.)

PLANNING STAGE

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 1: 8-12 weeks</u> Tailor Ed lead facilitates Community Partner co-facilitates</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 2: 8-12 weeks</u> Community Partner lead facilitates Tailor Ed co-facilitates</p>	
Week of group	<p><u>Logistics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides • Resources prepared • Snacks/drinks prepared
Day of group	<p><u>Room set up and tidy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic risk-assessment • Snacks • Resources
Group follow up	<p><u>Follow up</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between facilitators (dynamics, content, concerns, reflections, points for following week) • 1:1 Between community facilitator and CYP (how did they find it, any suggestions, input for activities, relationships and dynamics)

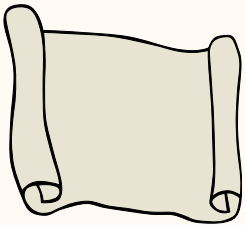
AFTER THE PARTNERSHIP

Resources, materials and notes are shared with community partner
Community Partner - Facilitates groups as needed
 Tailor Ed - ad hoc support with your designated CYP group worker

TYPICAL GROUP STRUCTURE

Each week will focus on a different topic that is relevant to wellbeing. There will be different activities (e.g., games, arts, writing, discussion) that can be modified and adapted depending on the needs of the group. Each young person is asked to agree to the expectations of the group. Each group can add their own expectations and edit these as group goes on.

Senses Bodies & energy Emotions HABITS
SPECIAL INTERESTS SLEEP Community & connection



During group, any notes, doodles, comments or insights can be recorded on the group scroll (by young people or staff). The hope is that the scroll 'tells the story' of the group over time and reflects important learning and insights from young people and staff.

GROUP EXPECTATIONS

Feel free to move around, leave the room for breaks, stim, or do anything needed for your comfort. Sit anywhere that feels comfortable, doesn't have to be a chair. Please don't leave the building without letting us know.

We ask questions but don't feel you have to answer.

Please ask any questions whenever they pop into your head. We also have time at the end of our group to speak to staff and each other.

Respect yourself and others. **This is an affirming and welcoming space: all identities are respected,** and we ask you to do the same for others.

Do your best to listen and let others speak.

This is a confidential space. Please don't share what others say with people outside the group

KEY MESSAGES AND SUMMARIES

WHOLE GROUP AIMS AND KEY MESSAGES

Self understanding, self acceptance, community and support



- All minds are different – this is ok
- We all make mistakes – that is ok
- We are only responsible for ourselves

1. SPECIAL INTERESTS

Special interests really are special! Knowing what makes us happy is really important to our wellbeing. They often help us understand ourselves better, showing us our values, helping us make decisions and for some, becoming a career!



- Understand key words and meanings (e.g. neurodiversity)
- Identify personal special interests
- Special Interests are positive for wellbeing and life
- Special interests highlight what is important/values
- ND people are important for special interests

2. WELLBEING AND HABITS

In this session, we think about what wellbeing is for us, the different things we do to take care of it and what we can do to improve it. We also talk about habits, how they help us look after ourselves (especially in tricky times!), and how to develop new habits making sure we show lots of kindness towards ourselves.



- Wellbeing can be/include many different things
- Wellbeing is all emotions and parts of life, not just being happy
- Habits are important for wellbeing, especially in harder times
- Habits do not have to be perfect all the time
- Identify one wellbeing habit CYPs can use to improve wellbeing

3. YOUR BODY AND ENERGY

In this session, we talk about the importance of accepting our bodies, how we look after them, where our bodies get energy from, how our energy might be different as neurodivergent people and ways to recharge ourselves through food and movement (always remembering there isn't "good" or "bad" ways to do it).



- All bodies are important and need to be looked after
- Energy comes from food and movement
- There are no good or bad foods or ways to move your body
- There are lot of food and body rules – these are not always helpful
- Habits can help ND people with energy and eating/drinking
- Accepting your body (not "good" or "bad") is important for wellbeing

4. SLEEP

Sleep is often a bit tricky when you are neurodivergent! For this session, we talk about how sleep works, the differences that come with being neurodivergent, the effects sleep has on our emotions, and practical things we can do to make our sleep better.



- Sleep is important for wellbeing
- Sleep patterns and sleep chemicals bring on sleep
- Sleep routines and habits can make sleep come easier, especially for ND people
- Sleep helps us feel more in control emotions
- Worrying about sleep doesn't help us sleep! (No one ever died of not enough sleep!)

5. EMOTIONS

Everyone has emotions every single day, and although some feel better than others, none of them are "good" or "bad". Emotions are signals that tell us about our needs. In this session, we will talk about all of that, and try some strategies that can help us understand, accept, and respond to emotions when we feel them.

5. EMOTIONS (CONTINUED)



- We all have emotions, all day every day
- Emotions are not “good” or “bad” but some feel nicer than others
- Different emotions need different types of support – adults can be helpful
- Understanding emotions helps us stay safe and content

6. SENSES (AND REGULATION)

Neurodivergent people often have senses that feel much more (or less) than others, and knowing this can help us respond to our senses in ways that help us feel calm, comfortable and happy. In our session, we talk about senses and experiment with ways to support our sensory needs including stimming.



- We have 8 senses. We feel some more than others
- ND senses can sometimes be really sensitive or really not!
- Understanding our senses and what they need can help us stay calmer and feel more in control of our emotions and actions
- The Window of Tolerance is the gap between too much and too little feeling/emotion
- Stimming is a good way to help stay in the Window of Tolerance

7. CONNECTEDNESS AND COMMUNITY

Connection is key to our wellbeing. We look at all the things that help us feel connected to ourselves as well as friendships and other relationships. We think about the things that make a healthy relationship, tricky times in relationships, and how boundaries and saying no help us keep ourselves safe. We also share some habits that can help us build and maintain our relationships.

7. CONNECTEDNESS AND COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)



- Understanding and connecting to yourself (self-acceptance) is an important part of connecting to others
- Different people experience relationships differently – this is ok and normal!
- Understand what makes a healthy/positive relationship (and what doesn't!)
- Friendships can be difficult – this is ok and very normal!
- Habits help with friendships/relationships/connections
- Saying NO is crucial to safety and healthy relationships

8. CELEBRATION AND FEEDBACK

In this session we have a look at what we've learned and celebrate ourselves and that we've completed the group!



- Identify personal learning/change
- Consider (and identify) next steps for support
- Have fun!

NEURODIVERGENT WELLBEING GROUP

Information for parents and carers

This 8-12 week group is delivered in a community setting in collaboration with a Tailor Ed Foundation wellbeing Project Worker and a selected co-facilitator. The group is designed to support the wellbeing of neurodivergent children and young people through sharing information and facilitating activities which aim to increase self-understanding, acceptance and to build community and connection with their peers.

✓ Topics covered

- Special interests
- Wellbeing habits
- Your body and energy
- Sleep
- Emotions
- Senses
- Community and connection

✓ What the wellbeing group is (and isn't)

An informal, safe space where neurodivergent young people can relax and be themselves

A reflective place for children and young people to learn about and develop an understanding and strategies for supporting their own wellbeing



Neuro-affirming, trauma-informed, inclusive and person-centred

A 'classroom' style lesson with strict structure



A group where neurodivergent young people are valued as the experts in their own experience

A group where children and young people are made to 'fit' neurotypical social or wellbeing norms

An individual support service or therapeutic mental health intervention

✓ Tailor Ed Foundation Staff

Your child will be working with Project Workers from the Tailor Ed Foundation. More information about them, as well as our parent groups can be found on the Wellbeing webpage [here](#).

Please contact us if you have any questions!

wellbeing@tailoredfoundation.co.uk