



Together for Neurodiversity

Empowering Futures, Embracing Differences

My Sibling is Autistic



What is Autism?

Autism is a different way of experiencing the world. It's something your sibling was born with, and it affects how they communicate, process information, understand emotions, and interact with others.

Autism is not an illness or something to be "fixed." It just means that your sibling's brain works differently from yours.



Every Autistic Person is Different

Just like every person is unique, every autistic person is too. Some autistic people talk a lot; others may not use words at all. Some like being around people, and some prefer time alone. Your sibling has their own strengths, interests, and challenges—just like you do.





How Might Your Sibling Be Different?

Your sibling might:

- Use a communication device or not speak at all.
- Repeat words or phrases (this is called echolalia).
- Prefer routines and find changes stressful.
- Be really passionate about certain topics.
- Struggle with loud noises, bright lights, or busy places.
- Need extra time to understand things or respond.
- Seem to behave in ways you find unusual—but those behaviours often serve a purpose, like helping them feel calm or express how they feel.



Why Do They Get Treated Differently Sometimes?

You might notice that your sibling gets more support or is allowed to do things differently. This isn't about being unfair—it's about meeting their needs.

Fair doesn't always mean the same. It means giving each person what helps them thrive.



It's OK to Have Mixed Feelings

You might feel proud, frustrated, protective, embarrassed, curious, or even angry sometimes.

All these feelings are normal. Life with an autistic sibling can be amazing and also challenging.

Don't bottle things up. Talk to someone you trust—a parent, teacher, friend, or counsellor.



How Can You Help?

You don't need to be perfect or act like a second parent. But there are small things that can make a big difference:

- Learn about autism so you can better understand your sibling.
- Be patient when they need extra time.
- Stand up for them if others are unkind.
- Include them in ways that work for them.
- Celebrate their progress, however big or small.



Remember to Look After Yourself Too

Having an autistic sibling might mean more responsibilities or a different family dynamic. But your needs matter too. You deserve time, space, and support. You're not just "the sibling"—you're important in your own right.



You're Not Alone

Many young people have autistic siblings. Some join sibling support groups or online forums to talk to others who understand. Sharing your experiences can help you feel seen and supported.



Your Relationship Will Grow

Your bond with your sibling might not look like others—but it can still be strong, meaningful, and full of love. You'll learn things from them that most people never do. You'll grow in patience, empathy, and understanding.

And even if they don't always say it—you matter to them more than you know.

