



South Dublin Libraries & Arts
**NEURODIVERSE
SOUTH DUBLIN**

September-December 2024
NEURODIVERSE TALKS


Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council



In an effort to support the neurodiverse community in South Dublin County, a series of insightful and empowering talks have been organized, each focusing on various aspects of neurodiversity. These talks are designed to be inclusive and accessible, offering valuable information and resources at no cost to attendees. Covering a broad spectrum of topics, they aim to address the unique challenges faced by individuals and families within the neurodiverse community.

These talks collectively aim to foster a supportive environment, offering education, resources, and community connection for those within the neurodiverse spectrum and their families. By providing a platform for expert speakers to share their knowledge, South Dublin is taking meaningful steps toward inclusivity and better support for its neurodiverse residents.

The library discussions enrich our toy collection, which can be borrowed. The collection includes toys designed for different skills like gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and communication. South Dublin Libraries now offer quiet time and Sensory Seekers play sessions. Additionally, our Library Labs series includes sessions specifically designed for neurodiverse individuals. Three of our branches also feature cubbies that provide a sensory breakout space.





Autism and Adult Identification

Sharon McCarthy

Ballyroan Library
6.30pm

The growth of the 'Neurodivergent' community in recent years has shifted societal perspective on what it means to be identified as autistic, ADHD, and a wide array of other neurodivergencies- from the idea that 'getting a label' is only useful in school, to the profound effect that identification can have on one's personal, professional and emotional growth later in life. In this talk, Sharon McCarthy aims to cover what the diagnostic process is like when someone decides to go about 'late identification', how to manage the emotions that come with late identification, and what getting your diagnosis later in life means for you as a whole.



The Neurodiverse Umbrella - Inclusion

Dr Dorothy Armstrong

Clondalkin Library
7.00pm- 8.00pm

The term neurodiversity describes differences in the way people's brains work. The idea is that there's no "correct" way for the brain to work. Instead, there is a wide range of ways that people perceive and respond to the world, with varying strengths and weaknesses. This talk will focus on Autism, ADHD and DCD/Dyspraxia which can occur together. To be truly inclusive means that we need to change social and physical environments to include neurodivergent people rather than getting the person to change to 'fit the system'. This talk will discuss some of the ways home, school and other environments might be changed to meet the needs of neurodivergent children and teenagers.

Amanda McGuinness, Prepare Me Manager AsIAM, Autistic Advocate and parent to 4 Neurodivergent children will present on the topic of an Autism diagnosis. The presentation will seek to support parents understanding of what an Autism diagnosis may mean for their children now and into the future. Amanda will provide recommendations on next steps, supporting your child's progression and creating a positive home environment for your Autistic child.



Autism Diagnosis to Support Parents

*Amanda McGuinness
from ASIAM*

**Ballyroan Library
6.30pm**

Autistic girls and women are often misunderstood and can have a more complicated journey to diagnosis. It's important that we understand the unique challenges autistic females can face. In this talk we will discuss some of the reasons why autism can be underdiagnosed in females, the road to diagnosis and the stress many autistic females are under through masking to 'fit in'. We will also be discussing sensory sensitivities, puberty, methods for dealing with exhaustion and mental health.



Autism and Girls

*Dr Dorothy Armstrong
Occupational Therapist*

**North Clondalkin Library
7.00pm- 8.00pm**



Supporting Your Child With Anxiety

Melissa Moore

Castletymon Library
6.30pm

Watching your child struggling with anxiety can be difficult to navigate as a parent or carer. Join Melissa Moore, Accredited Play Therapist, Parenting Consultant and mum of 3 teens to explore what anxiety is and how it presents itself in behaviour and feelings, as well as understanding how the brain works and what neuroscience tells us. Melissa will explain what's developmentally appropriate and explore your role as a parent/carers in anxiety. Learn lots of new empowering responses so you can support and scaffold your child through this difficult time.



Big Behaviours

Melissa Moore

Lucan Library
7.00pm- 8.00pm

Recognising, Understanding and Managing Big Behaviours and Feelings in the Home. Do you want to feel empowered and confident in understanding and managing your child's behaviours at home? Melissa Moore, Accredited Play Therapist and mum of 3 looks at what parents/carers can do at home to recognise, understand and respond to big emotions and behaviours. She will explore brain development (neuroscience) and its role, where these big feelings and behaviours come from, the need to dig deeper and what parents/carers can do to bring back calm into the home.

Fussy Food Plates invites parents and caregivers to a special session focused on food-restricted eating in neurodiverse children. Led by Samantha, this talk will explore the unique challenges faced by neurodiverse children at mealtimes and provide practical strategies to address these issues. Attendees will gain insights into the psychological aspects of food-restricted eating, learn effective techniques for introducing new foods, and receive nutritional guidance. Join us for a supportive and informative discussion aimed at fostering healthy eating habits in neurodiverse children.



Restricted Eating

Fussy Food Plates

Tallaght Library
7.00pm- 8.00pm

Work is a key component for quality of life and an important determinant of self-esteem and identity. It can provide a sense of fulfilment, opportunities for social interaction, and for most people, it provides their main source of income. As many neurodivergent adults face additional challenges in the workplace, this talk will provide information, resources and practical suggestions around the following:

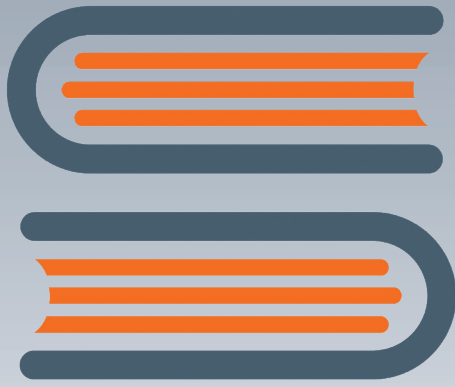
- Neurodiversity self-advocacy in the workplace and promoting a neuroinclusive environment.
- Understanding reasonable accommodations, why they matter, and what your employment rights are.
- Stigma, bias and strategies to help navigate challenges.
- Making the decision to disclose or not, what steps to take, and how to support yourself.
- Deciding to take a strengths-based approach and focus on your positive attributes to help you grow and thrive in the workplace.
- Q&A and discussion.



To disclose or not to disclose, that is the question: Neurodiversity in the workplace.

Christine Poole

Tallaght Library
7.00pm- 8.00pm



Sensory Explorer Classes

Sensory Explorers is a unique class that encompasses all elements of play, fun and discovery into one class. Every session includes themed Sensory tuff trays which will excite and delight all the senses. Sensory play is important for brain and memory development. It also strengthens gross and fine motor skills. There are also different activities at each station which include Magna tiles, Lego/Duplo, Dinosaurs, STEM, Arts & Crafts. No two classes are the same! Classes are held monthly in **Ballyroan, Lucan** and **Tallaght Library**.

Contact branches for dates.



OUR SPEAKERS:



**Sharon
McCarthy**

Parent in a neurodivergent household and a late-identified autistic person and ADHDer, **Sharon McCarthy** is an author, having written one and co-written another autism-centred book; and hosts the Autism Journeys podcast. Sharon works alongside a number of different organisations in an educational capacity, acting as course/module author and lecturer in both University College Dublin and the Cork College of FET- Morrison's Island Campus, filling the role of course coordinator in the latter position. Additionally, Sharon is a court-appointed advocate who has recently branched into the area of neurodivergent-to-neurodivergent coaching and mentorship. Sharon's passion lies in creating accessibility through environmental modification, working with families and organisations to tailor any number of professional and educational spaces to match the neurodivergent experience.



**Dr Dorothy
Armstrong**

Dr Dorothy Armstrong (MSc PhD) is an expert occupational therapist who specialises in the area of neurodivergence (Autism, ADHD, Developmental Coordination Disorder / Dyspraxia). She works on projects to promote inclusion and delivers training, education and advice to organisations such as schools, community groups and businesses. She has made television and radio appearances and is the author of the book 'The Next Adventure: Transitioning to Secondary School when you have Developmental Coordination Disorder'. More information about Dorothy can be found on her website:
www.dorothyarmstrongconsultantot.com



**Amanda
McGuinness**

Amanda McGuinness is an Autistic Advocate and an Autism & Visual Supports Specialist. She is a Law Graduate and is currently undertaking a Master of Childhood Speech Language and Communication Needs at University Galway. Amanda is the creator of the “Auti ” character online through her social media littlepuddins. ie, which teaches and educates on Autistic lived experiences. Her areas of specialism include Visual Supports, Autistic Identity & Culture, Autistic Masking, Autistic Communication, and Autistic Lived Experience Education. She has extensive experience supporting Autistic children and their families. Having previously worked as a Training Officer in AsIAM, Amanda is now responsible for the development and maintenance of the AsIAM Prepare Me App.



**Melissa
Moore**

Melissa Moore is an Accredited Play Therapist, Parenting Consultant, Autplay Therapist, Social Care Leader, Trainer and Clinical Supervisor. Melissa has worked with hundreds of children and their families who present with emotional and behavioural difficulties for over 28 years and has extensive experience of working with children who have experienced adversities. She is also a mother of 3 teens, 2 of whom are neurodiverse. Melissa runs a busy private Play Therapy practice and Parenting Support Service in Duleek, Co. Meath. Melissa believes that parents are the experts on their own children and strives to empower and support parents along the windy road of parenting. Melissa is renowned for her expertise in the area of parenting and can regularly be heard sharing advice on LMFM radio.



**Samantha
Forrest**

Samantha, a mother of three from Dublin, has turned her passion for joyful mealtimes into a global solution for parents. With a BSc in Bioanalytical Science, an MSc in Pharmaceutical Science, and a nutrition coach qualification, she combines scientific expertise with hands-on parenting experience.

Recognising the struggles with fussy eaters, she founded "Fussy Food Plates" to make mealtimes fun and engaging for children. Her innovative plates not only meet nutritional needs but also transform eating into an enjoyable experience. Samantha's journey showcases her commitment to creating positive changes in family mealtimes, blending science, nutrition, and creativity to inspire parents & caregivers.



**Christine
Poole**

Christine Poole BSc, MSc, Dip, researcher, facilitator, and writer from Dublin is a senior clinical scientist with over twenty years experience working in genetics in healthcare.



BOOKING INFORMATION:

All events are free of charge unless otherwise stated

For any events that require booking, please go to
www.southdublinlibraries.ie

Ballyroan Library

Orchardstown Avenue,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 14.

T: 01 4941900

E: ballyroanlibrary@sdublincoco.ie

Lucan Library

Supervalu Shopping Centre,
Newcastle Road, Lucan, Co. Dublin.

T: 01 6216422

E: lucanlibrary@sdublincoco.ie

Castletymon Library

Castletymon Road, Dublin 24.

T: 01 4149203

E: castletymonlibrary@sdublincoco.ie

Mobile Libraries

T: 01 4597834

E: mobilelibraries@sdublincoco.ie

Clondalkin Library

Monastery Road,
Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

T: 01 4593315

E: clondalkinlibrary@sdublincoco.ie

North Clondalkin Library

Liscarne Close,
Rowlagh, Dublin 22.

T: 01 4149269

E: northclondalkinlibrary@sdublincoco.ie

County Library

Library Square,
Tallaght, Dublin 24.

T: 01 4620073

E: tallaghtlibrary@sdublincoco.ie

Palmerstown Library

Palmerstown Shopping Centre,
Kennelsfort Road, Dublin 20.

T: 01 4678909

E: palmerstownlibrary@sdublincoco.ie



Contact details:

South Dublin Libraries
Unit 1, the Square Industrial Complex,
Tallaght, Dublin D24 YXW3

Tel: (353) 1 459 7834

Email: library@sdublincoco.ie



 **SouthDublinLibraries**

 **SDCCLibraries**

 **southdublinlibraries**