

SPEECH THERAPIST CHEATSHEET:

NEURODIVERSITY AFFIRMING PHRASES TO USE IN ASSESSMENT REPORTS FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN

AVOID	USE INSTEAD
Delay / Disorder	Difference
Severe (unless you definitely need to use descriptors like this for funding purposes)	Significant differences/challenges with... Has high support needs
Fixated / Obsessed / Repetitive	Preference for / Deep interest / Enjoys repetition
Did not participate willingly	Had a preference for ____ / Had difficulty when ____
Was compliant	Appeared to enjoy participating in ____
Demonstrated appropriate eye contact/ social communication with the therapist	Interacted with me in the following ways during the assessment...
Has severe delays in using expressive grammar accurately	Has difficulty using accurate grammar when speaking, e.g. _____. This can lead to other people misunderstanding their messages and can negatively impact interactions
Interrupts frequently	Shows excitement and interjects often within a conversation. In some cases, communication partners may interpret this as rudeness, however these interjections appear to be a way for ____ to share their enjoyment and connection with what another person is sharing.
Doesn't use verbal communication yet	Communicates in the following ways: ...
Isn't using their AAC device independently	Is able to use their AAC device with the following supports in place: ...
Doesn't show appropriate skills for pretend play, hitting the doll on the floor repetitively, rather than feeding it	Has a play preference for sensory exploration of toys and objects, e.g. appearing to enjoy listening to the sound a doll made when it hit the floor, many times
Repetitively talked about her topic of interest, the Titanic, rather than taking turns with the therapist talking about each others' preferred topics	____ has a strong interest in the Titanic, and shared many interesting facts with me during our session. She responded really positively and appeared to feel relaxed in our interaction when I showed an interest in learning more about her topic of interest.
Parent reported that ____ hits his brother regularly and the family has difficulty controlling or stopping this challenging behaviour.	Parent reported that ____ often hits his brother. This generally happens when ____ has not slept well the night before, and it usually happens when his brother takes the remote control for the TV and changes away from ____'s favourite show. ____ appears to be communicating that he is upset at that change he hadn't expected, while he was doing a preferred, regulating activity.