

Madison Clark

The Emergence of Neurodivergence in our lives.

More than ever has the word 'Neurodivergence' come up in both the media and everyday conversations. The widespread use of the phrases 'neurodivergent' and 'on the spectrum' is a noticeable trend that can be accredited with the newer generation, and their tendency to self diagnose themselves with it. Leading to the acceptance and tolerance behaviors that once were misunderstood or even ignored, this shift has made neurodivergence feel more common but it also raises the question: why now?

It feels like almost everyone either identifies as neurodivergent or knows someone who does. Whether it's ADHD, OCD tendencies, anxiety, or something else that affects how someone thinks or processes the world, these differences are becoming a part of daily conversation. It's easy to point fingers at social media for this. Apps like Tiktok and Instagram have made it trendy to talk about mental health and labels. But is it just that people are finally putting names to things that always existed, or are there genuinely more people being born this way?

Some believe it's just increased awareness. In the past, people who struggled to focus, had emotional outbursts, or didn't fit into traditional learning styles were labeled as "lazy," "weird," or "bad kids." Now, these same traits are being reevaluated as signs of something deeper. Parents and adults usually argue that environmental changes—like screen time, overstimulation, diet, or stress—might actually be playing a role in shaping how developing brains work.

There's also the fact that getting a diagnosis has become more accessible in some places. Parents are quicker to spot signs, teachers are more informed, and the stigma around therapy and evaluations is slowly disappearing. But at the same time, the numbers are rising fast. Faster than ever before. It makes you wonder if the world has changed too much and too quickly; and unfortunately kids are the ones most sensitive to those changes. It's also possible that what we define as neurodivergence is expanding. Behaviors that were once considered within the range of typical may now fall under diagnostic criteria. This shift in definitions could be contributing to the rise in numbers, even if the actual brain differences have always existed.

Whatever the reason may be, neurodivergence is no longer hidden. It's being recognized, talked about, and in many ways, embraced. But the mystery behind its rise remains. Maybe it's a mix of

better awareness and modern life pressures. Or maybe it's just how evolution works... people adapting to a world that demands new kinds of minds.