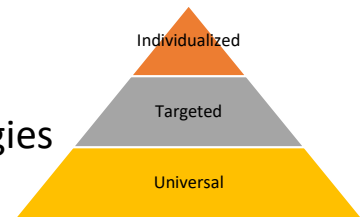


# Towards Neuroinclusive Schools: an introduction

## What is *Towards Neuroinclusive Schools* all about?

- A new approach to **occupational therapy** in schools, developed as part of a research project.
- Based on **tiered approaches to intervention**.
- First, we try to do **something for everyone**.
- Then, we think about targeted adaptations or strategies for students for whom generalized actions are not sufficient.
- And only then, we intervene more intensively with one student only if necessary.



## What are our goals? Who is targeted?

- **Strengthen the skills of people working in schools** (e.g., regular or specialist teachers, daycare educators, special education technicians).
- **Create neuroinclusive environments and activities**, i.e., those conducive to the well-being and meaningful participation of neurodivergent students.
- These students have neurological profiles that differ from what is often expected in today's society. Some are people with autism; others have been diagnosed or labeled with attention deficit, language, or learning disorders.
- Their strengths and needs to function and thrive in a school are sometimes different from what is offered.
- **In all school contexts**  
Examples: guided educational activities in class; playtime at recess or daycare; transitions.



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# How does the occupational therapist intervene in *Towards Neuroinclusive Schools*?

01

## Starting with the school's priority needs

- Where are the greatest challenges for neurodivergent students?
- In directed educational activities, in transitions, during free time and play activities, or during meals and snacks?

02

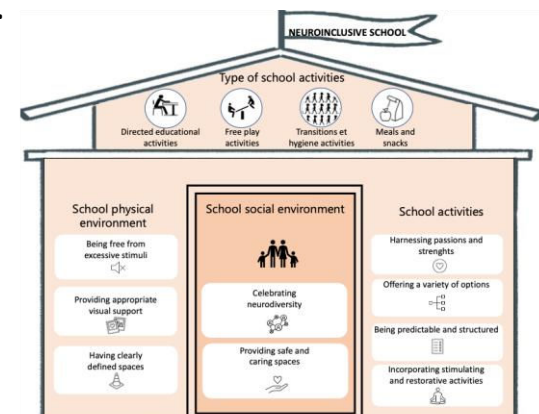
## Working in collaboration with the key people involved in the students' daily lives

- Including teachers, specialists, daycare and special educators, administrators, professionals, families, and students.
- Using a coaching approach to find solutions together.
- Sometimes working with several people in a team, but also on an individual basis.
- Through discussion meetings, observations, jointly planned and led activities, modelling, and training.

03

## Focusing on the creation of neuroinclusive activities and environments...

To identify what can be improved in activities or environments to promote well-being and meaningful participation for all students, including those identified as neurodivergent.



(Rajotte, Grandisson, et al. 2025, p.7)

## You would like to learn more about our project?

See answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the next page and visit the project web page.

<https://communautesinclusives.com/projets/pour-des-ecoles-neuroinclusives/>

Feel free to contact us.

**Marie Grandisson**, researcher in charge of the project:

[marie.grandisson@fmed.ulaval.ca](mailto:marie.grandisson@fmed.ulaval.ca)

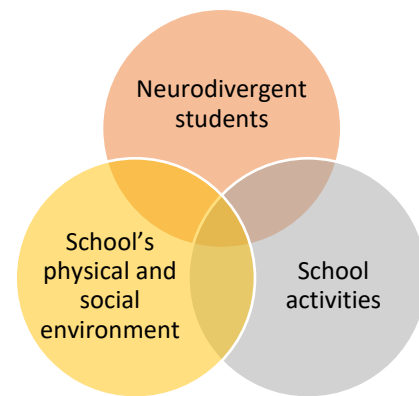
# FAQs

## Why focus on creating neuroinclusive activities and environments?

- The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (2017, 2020) recommends aiming for inclusive education, **upstream-thinking education** that is supportive of a wide diversity of learners rather than providing accommodations on a case-by-case basis.
- Yet the challenges of actualizing this vision in the field are numerous and varied.
- It's not surprising, then, that the school experience of many students with autism and other types of neurodivergence is often described as difficult and demanding, and the caregivers who assist and support them are at greater risk of burnout and demonstrating a low sense of self-efficacy.

## Why occupational therapists?

- Occupational therapists are well placed to support school staff in their **analysis of the factors that prevent a good match** between the characteristics of students, school environments, and activities.



## Can other professionals get involved?

- **Of course!** Teamwork is encouraged so that we can leverage the strengths of each profession to create a neuroinclusive school!
- Although the project began in occupational therapy, the research team is keen to document how other professions see their role in creating neuroinclusive schools.

## What does *Towards Neuroinclusive Schools* require?

- **A sustained presence in the school** over an extended period, e.g. one or two days a week throughout the school year.
- **A committed management team and school staff who are motivated** to work together, with the occupational therapist, to adapt their school to the needs of a wider range of students!
- **A clear mandate** given to the occupational therapist to support the school team in **creating neuroinclusive activities and environments**.