Neurospicy

Let’s talk about it

You may have heard this word used as an informal, light-hearted way to say 'neurodivergent'. It's often used with good intentions, and some neurodivergent people use it about themselves. However, many people find the word problematic, and it can get in the way of clear and respectful conversation. For example:

- The word can make the very real, often difficult, challenges of being neurodivergent sound 'cute' or small
- It can sound childish. This is frustrating for adults who want to be taken seriously at work and in life
- It's informal slang, so using it when asking for support might cause confusion
- It's an 'in-group' word. This means many feel it's a word for neurodivergent people to use for themselves, but it can feel disrespectful when others use it about them

This is why being mindful of our words is essential for showing respect and building an inclusive team. Simple guidelines can make a huge difference, like these:

- Follow the person's lead. If someone describes themselves as 'neurospicy', that's their choice
- Don't label others. Avoid calling other people or the whole community 'neurospicy'
- Use clear terms, like 'neurodivergent' or 'a person with [insert neurodivergent condition here]'
- If you're not neurodivergent, it's generally best to avoid using this word

Useful links

- Is it OK to use the term ‘neurospicy’ when talking about autism and other neurodivergences?