












# ADHD vs. Autism: What's the difference?

	Autism	ADHD	Similarities
<b>CONVERSATIONS</b> 	Conversations involve less back-and-forth than neurotypical peers. Often use direct and literal language.	Conversation may not flow due to lapses in attention and interruptions.	Conversations can appear one sided or focus on interests.
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> 	Differences in non-verbal communication including potential decreased direct eye-gaze.	Highly distractible may look around and not notice others non-verbal communication.	Variation in use and understanding of non-verbal communication.
<b>SOCIAL CUES AND BEHAVIOUR</b> 	Difficulty understanding social cues.	May miss social cues.	May not respond to social cues in the way a neurotypical person would.
<b>FRIENDSHIPS</b> 	Differences in understanding friendships and expectations.	Impulsivity, inattention and planning difficulties impact on ability to make and maintain friendships.	Difficulties forming and maintaining friendships. High potential for social fatigue and masking.
<b>INTERESTS</b> 	Strong interests that are consistent over time and when not physically present.	Hyper-fixations that may change frequently and are varied.	Strong focus on interests.
<b>MOVEMENTS</b> 	Repetitive body movements.	Strong need to move and fidget.	Engage in movements that may appear different to a neurotypical individual.
<b>PLAY</b> 	May struggle with the reciprocal nature of play and prefer to play on own.	Often may have difficulty with turn taking or take control of play.	Both may show play skills younger than their age.
<b>ROUTINE AND CHANGES</b> 	Strong preference for routine and predictability.	Can have difficulty with planning and organisation.	Benefit from and preference for routine.
<b>SENSORY</b> 	Sensory differences including seeking and avoidance behaviours.	Sensory differences including seeking and overwhelm in high sensory environments.	Different experience of the sensory world.
<b>SCHOOL</b> 	Difficulties in school, highly influenced by sensory and social environment.	Difficulties with many aspects of school including academics and maintaining friendships.	School may report need for additional support.
<b>EMOTION REGULATION</b> 	Reactive to sensory world and changes in plan.	Heightened feelings of emotions and quick to move between emotions.	Strong emotional reactions.

\* Please note not all the behaviours will relate to all people, nor is it an exhaustive list. Additionally, people can be both ADHD and Autistic (AuDHD). We encourage anyone seeking to learn more to speak with a qualified health professional.