

Neurodiversity affirming wellbeing resources

100 testimonials

Dr Stephanie Petty

Dr Stephanie Petty has created a series of resources to share affirming messages about being neurodivergent and give practical wellbeing actions. They were designed with autistic people.

The resources were made **freely available** to be used by anybody who might benefit. They were distributed through professional networks, which reached clinicians, educators, researchers, employers, professional services, and many individuals who found the resources useful for themselves, their friends and families.

Card pack

Neurodiversity
Wellbeing Cards

Copyrighted to Dr Stephanie Petty (spetty@yorks.ac.uk).
Illustrations are by Matt Cole (https://mattcoleillustration.co.uk).

This card extension pack is inspired by Dr Karen Treisman's Therapeutic Treasure Decks of Feeling and Regulating cards.

Please cite and share respectfully.
www.safehandsthinkinminds.co.uk



Daydream for a short while.

When you can, create a fictional world. It might feel like a tangle of things all at once. Some people notice their body telling them that they are too tense, their heart might be racing, or they notice that they are gripping their hands, or shutting their eyes, or feeling faint. The underlying emotions might be fear, or embarrassment, or anger, or many others. You might not have words to go with what you are feeling, which is OK. Knowing if you are feeling things too strongly is the most helpful first step. You can then choose to do something about it. It is OK not to feel the same emotions or experience emotions in the same way as other people, or use the same words to describe them.



Carry something comforting.

This might be something small.



Dim your sensory world.

Turn off overhead lights, take a break from looking at screens, close your eyes, or wear sunglasses.



Make a list.

You might list things to do in the day, or make a shopping list.



Use a comforting sequence.

Rituals can be personal and meaningful. They are often a repeated action, done in a certain order, that help you to feel comforted because things feel 'right'.

Download for free from
www.yorks.ac.uk/emotions

This project report presents a summary of the reach, uses, and impact of these resources as told by the first 100 spontaneous testimonials. This represents 1000 resource downloads. Testimonials were received via a web feedback form and direct email.

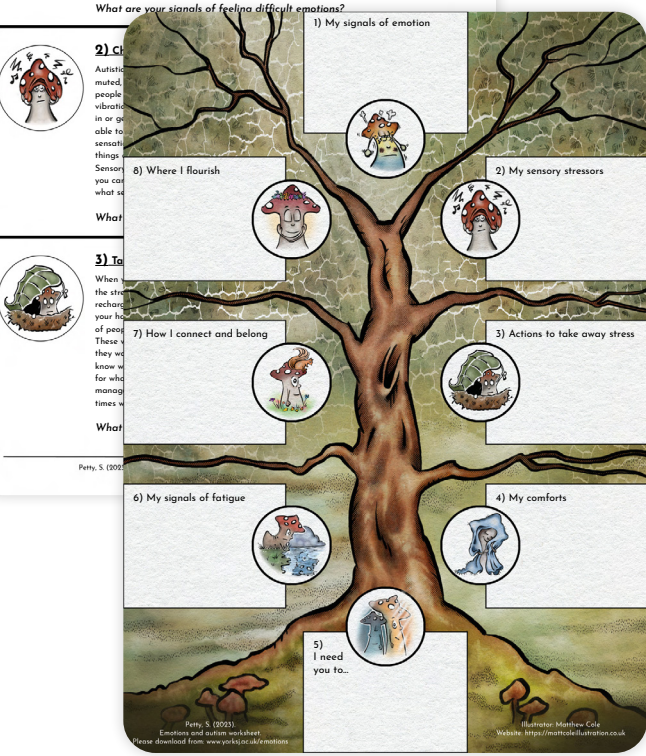
Illustrated worksheet

1) Notice your emotion signals

Are you feeling emotions? What signs tell you that you are feeling difficult emotions? You might call this overwhelm, or things feeling 'too much'. It might feel like a tangle of things all at once. Some people notice their body telling them that they are too tense, their heart might be racing, or they notice that they are gripping their hands, or shutting their eyes, or feeling faint. The underlying emotions might be fear, or embarrassment, or anger, or many others. You might not have words to go with what you are feeling, which is OK. Knowing if you are feeling things too strongly is the most helpful first step. You can then choose to do something about it. It is OK not to feel the same emotions or experience emotions in the same way as other people, or use the same words to describe them.

Can you notice the earliest signs of emotions? What would 5/10 intensity feel like? Or have you found yourself feeling 10/10 without warning, as if being caught out of nowhere? This can be common for autistic people. If you feel too much right now, know this will pass. Some people rate their emotions without using numbers, by thinking of a scale or a metre. Whatever the early signs, can you look out for them?

What are your signals of feeling difficult emotions?



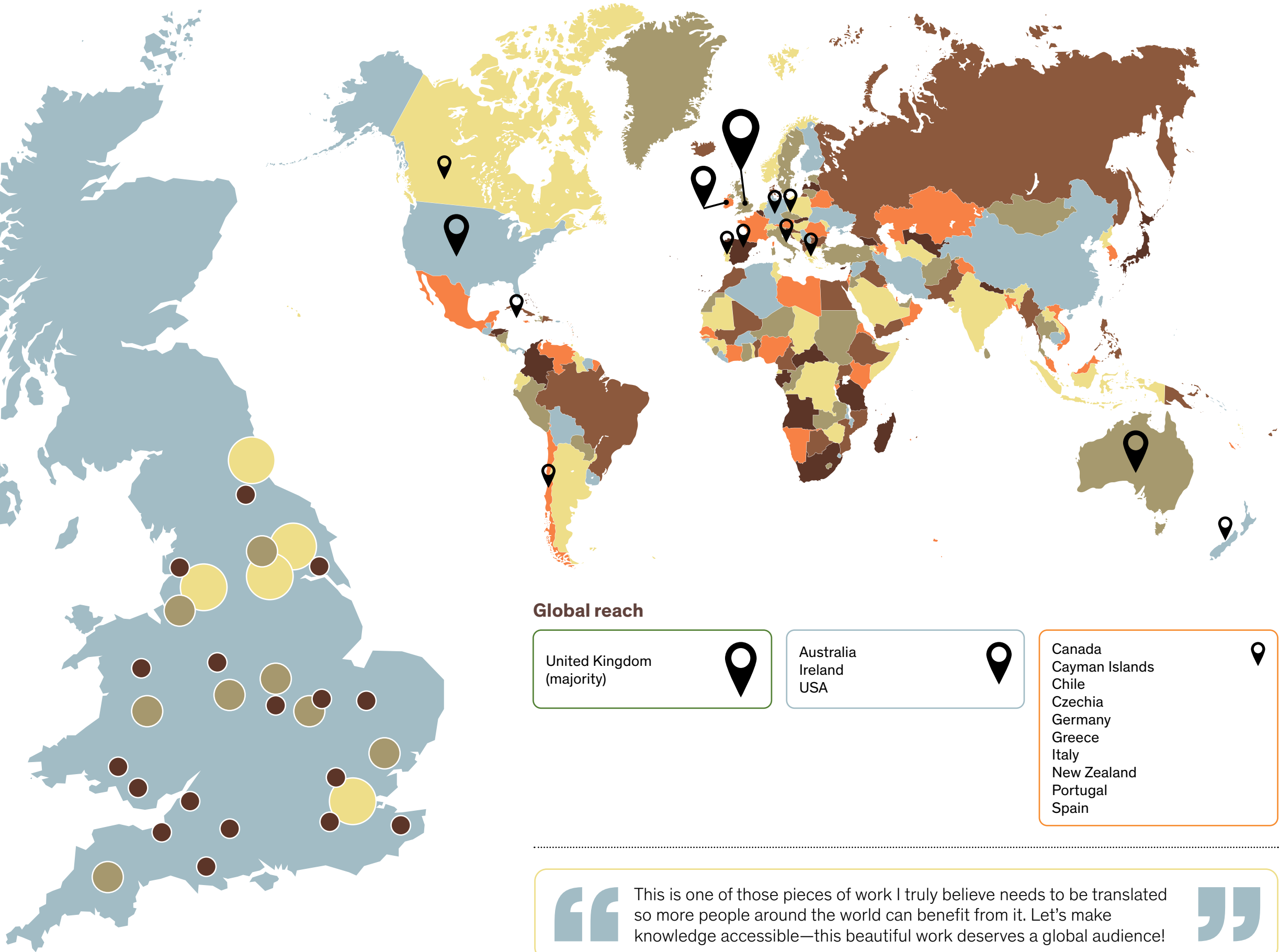
Use across the UK

- London
- Manchester
- North Yorkshire
- South Yorkshire
- Tyne & Wear

- Bedfordshire
- Devon
- Essex
- Leicestershire
- Merseyside
- Wales
- West Midlands
- West Yorkshire

- Bristol
- Cambridgeshire
- Carmarthenshire
- County Borough of Bridgend
- Dorset
- Durham
- Hertfordshire
- Hull
- Kent
- Lancashire
- Northamptonshire
- Peterborough
- Shropshire
- Somerset
- Staffordshire
- Surrey
- Wiltshire

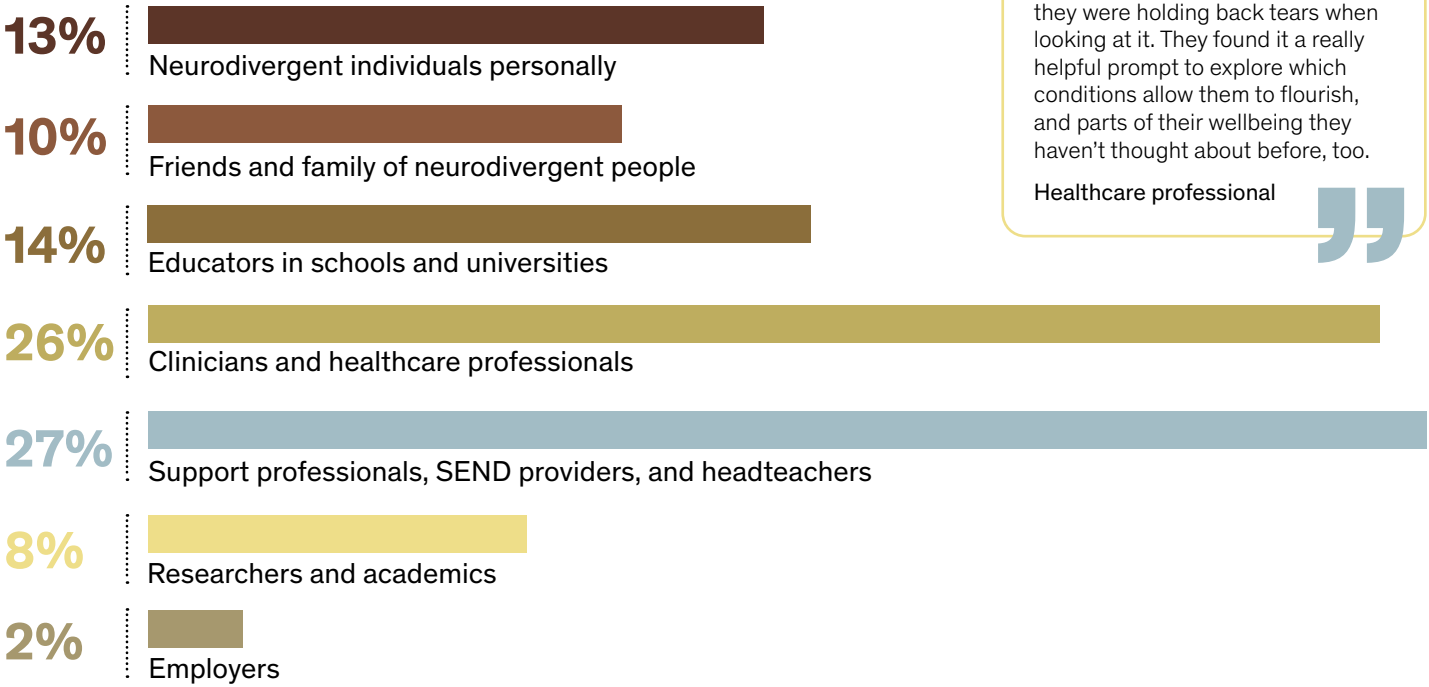
“ I will be printing some off for my own wellbeing box ”
Individual



“ This is one of those pieces of work I truly believe needs to be translated so more people around the world can benefit from it. Let’s make knowledge accessible—this beautiful work deserves a global audience! ”

Who is using the resources?

The resources are being used by:



“I shared it with a client recently, whose immediate response was that they were holding back tears when looking at it. They found it a really helpful prompt to explore which conditions allow them to flourish, and parts of their wellbeing they haven't thought about before, too.
Healthcare professional”

Which settings are the resources supporting?

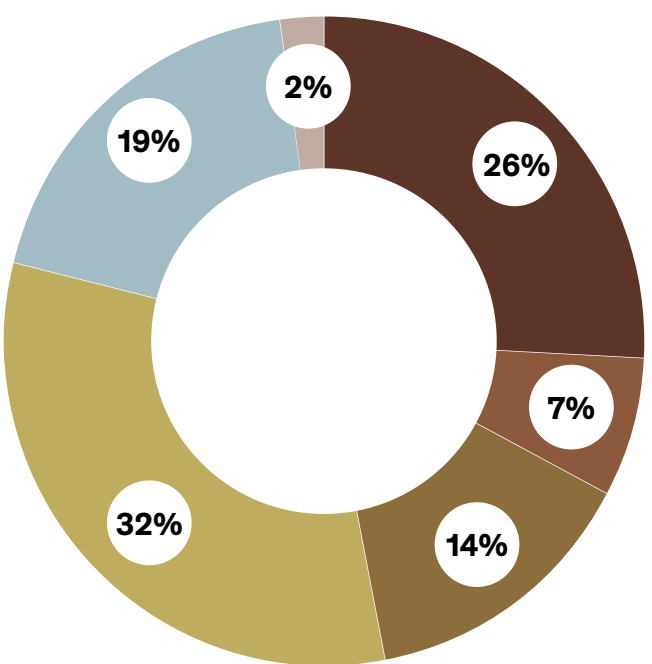
The contexts represented in the testimonials included: the NHS; charities; psychotherapy services (with family, art, trauma, cognitive-behavioural, addiction and substance use therapy specialisms) and inpatient clinical settings; primary, secondary, and university educational settings including in-school wellbeing support provision; social care services including care homes and financial support agencies.

“We are a charity. These effective resources made available to us support and enhance outcomes for the children in our care.”

The resources are being used across the age range, for children, young people, and adults.

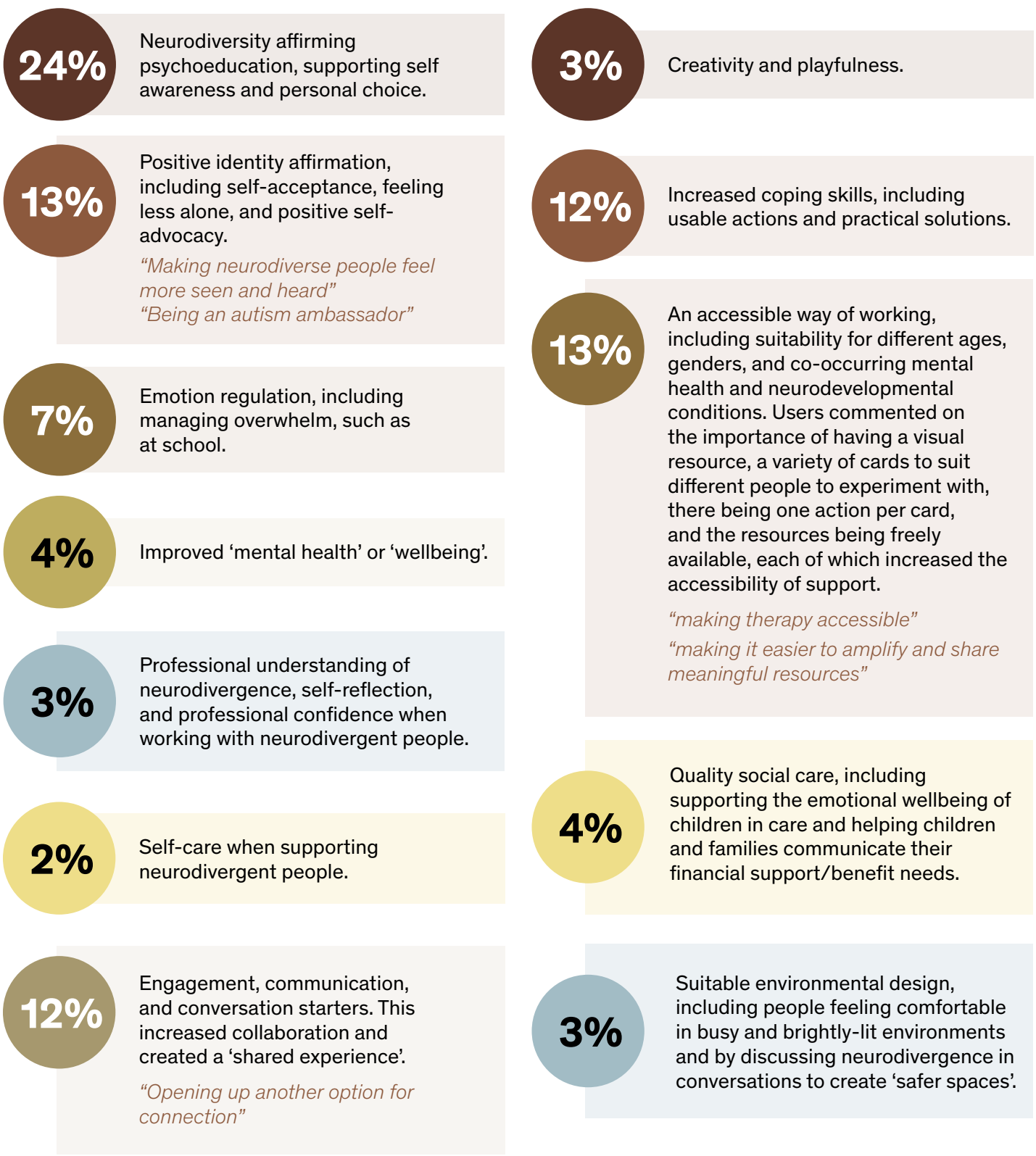
The resources are being used:

- Personally.
- To support families, including within parent-child communication.
- To support students across education settings.
- To help patients and clients in healthcare contexts.
- To upskill healthcare professionals such as occupational therapists, social workers, and psychotherapists. Examples included upskilling newly qualified professionals.
- To support employees. Examples of employee support included induction and employee wellbeing provision.



What positive impact is being achieved?

The resources are creating visible change and making a positive difference via:



“I feel quite emotional looking at them, I haven't fully processed why yet- but it is positive!
Individual”

“

The resources are helping neurodivergent young people to normalise their feelings and feel less alone or different.

Healthcare professional

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“

One thing I really like is the simple explanations as to why the action might help; I think it is very healing. I think it provides a pathway for people who might not understand the reasons behind divergent behaviours, to having a positive framework to understanding. I think it will have a huge impact on self-empowerment, self-esteem, and unmasking through this.

Individual

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“

I feel encouraged as a neurodivergent person.

Individual

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I feel inspired as a researcher.

Researcher

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“

I appreciate the variety of cards to suit different people and to experiment with.

Individual

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They'd make a great thoughtful gift for many people.

Healthcare professional

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