

Recommendations



The Experiences of Social Exclusion and Inclusion Among People Aging with Neurodiversity and Their Families

From 2020 to 2025, a team of researchers wanted to learn more about neurodiverse older adults.

Neurodiverse older adults = NDOA

What is neurodiversity ? Neurodiversity is the idea that all human brains work in different ways. These differences are not problems to “fix,” but normal ways of being.

This word was created in the 1990s by autistic people and groups who wanted to explain their experiences in their own words, not only through doctors’ opinions. Today, the word neurodiversity recognizes that people think, learn, process information and feelings, and communicate in different ways.

The researchers spoke with 21 NDOA, 15 family caregivers, and 27 service providers (people who work with people with disabilities and their family caregivers). They live in Montreal or Quebec City.

Based on their ideas, we created this list of recommendations:

1. Put NDOA and their loved ones at the center of decision-making when developing public policies (that is, the plans and actions decided upon by a government to address the needs of the population).
2. Before making decisions on budgets and public policies in Quebec, consult with the people affected and evaluate the potential impact on their lives.

3. Act quickly to make sure everyone has access to quality services, housing for to their needs, and support to fully participate in social life while respecting their dignity and rights.
4. Take parallel aging into account in public policies and the services offered. For example: housing, home care, respite care, and mental health services.
5. Better train service providers on neurodiversity and aging.
6. Work more collaboratively across services by forming teams with professionals from different backgrounds. For example, a team might include a mental health professional, an aging expert, and someone who knows about neurodiversity. Each member of the team contributes their expertise and works with the others.
7. Create an independent organization that works with the government to address all issues related to disability, neurodiversity, and aging in Quebec.



Neurodiversity ! Age together, Act together

Photo credit : Geneviève Bilodeau

For more information, click here :
<https://creges.ca/vieillissement-neurodiversite>

To watch a performance about this project, click here:
https://youtu.be/Y_oibKbB8rM?si=lqNqOjvuqSEiStM8