# Creating Accessible Content for Our Neurodiverse World

**Where:** Literacy Texas Conference
**When:** August 1, 2022
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[**Session Slides**](#)

**Background Information**

The **medical model of medicine** has often reacted to differences and disabilities as problems to be fixed or deficits; the **social model of medicine** acknowledges that systems are often not designed to meet the needs of many people and aims to fix the environment, not the people.

Origin of term ND:
- **Coined by an autistic person, Judy Singer,** in the 1990s as a political statement to address the needs of self-advocates
- **Came from the idea of importance and necessity of biodiversity** in nature
- **Effort to expand idea of intersectionality** and find language around advancing civil rights in the Autistic Self-Advocacy Movement

Usage of the term ND in different contexts:
- Used to refer to the wide diversity of all human brains
- Often used to refer specifically autistic people or people with ADHD, sensory processing disorders, Tourette's, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and others that interact with the world differently than what has long been considered the norm (or **neurotypical**) and is not a medical term

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| **Big Takeaways** | <ul><li>Conditions often considered under the ND umbrella are common and often under-recognized/diagnosed</li><li>Barriers often keep people from accessing a formal diagnosis (systemic racism and genderism in the medical field, access to health care in general, stigma)</li><li>No group is monolith and people experience the world differently</li><li>Taking a Universal Design approach, using plain language, and being trauma-informed can be important tools to ensure information is clear, direct, and manageable for people</li></ul> |
| **Resources** | <ul><li>ADDitude Magazine</li><li>Centre for Excellence in Universal Design</li><li>Divergent Mind – By Jenara Nerenberg</li><li>Reflections on Neurodiversity – Judy Singer</li><li>UK Gov – Dos and Don'ts on Designing for Accessibility</li><li>Understood.org</li></ul> |

## Questions?

Contact Melanie Sampson, Clear Language Lab Program Director at melanie@litworks.org.