



Mental Health Check-In with Dr. Matt Zakreski & Debbie Reber // Webinar Chat

Good evening from Austin, TX

Hello from near Seattle, WA!

Hi from Houston

Good evening from Windsor CO

Hello from Anchorage, AK

Good morning from Malaysia!! :)

Hi from New Zealand

Hello from NC

Hello!

Hello from Oakland CA. LOVE you Debbie!!

Hello from Moab, UT

Hello from Monterey, CA!

Hi from Ohio!

Hello from Mystic, CT!

Hi from Los Alamos, NM!

Hi from NY!

Hello from Wisconsin!

Hi from New Jersey!

Hello from Lima, Ohio!

Good evening just outside Seattle, WA

Hi from California

Hi from Vancouver BC

Greetings from Vermont

Hello from Massachusetts

Hi from NH

Hey from Bend, OR!

Greeting from Brooklyn, NY!

Hi, Everyone! I'm a parent coach in the DWC in Oak Park IL

Hi from NYC!

Southern Arizona

hi from New Jersey

Hi from Columbia SC

Hi, from Delco, PA


Hi from Texas, close to Houston.

Hello from Longmont, CO

Hi from Indiana

Hi from NJ

Hello from Tucson, AZ

Hi from British Columbia Canada 

Dr. Sharon SF from GA

Hi from Miami

Hello from Pennsylvania

Hi from Edmonton AB Canada!

Hi from Boston's north shore

Hello from Georgia!

Hello from Vermont!

Hello from NY!

Hello from Washington DC!

Hi from Chicago!

Hello from Maryland!

Hello from San Diego

hello from Kansas City

Hi there from Houston!


Hi! I'm in CO

Good morning from India, everyone!

Hello from Virginia!

Lindsay: Hi Everyone! Here to help if needed. :)

♥

Thank you for saying that 

Thank you for saying that it is hard to parent depressed kids. Thank you for acknowledging that.

Thank you for you.

WOW. The understanding already! Thank you!

Could people request recording after today if they did not already register?

Debbie Reber (she/her): The recording will be available for purchase afterwards, yes @Karen

honestly it's so nice to see an adult who grew up gifted and adhd and seems like they're doing okay.. that in itself is a huge relief

Thank you. I hope I'm muted. I can't figure out where it is. Also my video

yea I think we're muted by default

Lindsay: Yes everyone is muted and off camera by default for this webinar.

ok good. And our pictures are off too, right?

yes

I have a 13 yr old daughter in Rogers Behavioral Health in WI as we speak :(

my heart feels for you,

Thank you..... it's SO debilitating...

My heart goes out to you as well.

I am thinking of you and your family.

We really do need this support. She's in for high risk suicide and self harm.

I have 2 neurodivergent children- an 18 y/o senior and 10 y/o in 4th grader. While both have struggled with mental health, their youngest is struggling at a completely different level. :(

*the

I am in WI too. I have 2, one 12 and one 15 both boys. We had court for the 15yr old today.

So glad to hear this. There is no support in our area, community or family-wise.

13 year old and 11 year old step-daughters; I've noticed more crying outbursts and sudden moments of sadness; wondering if that is them feeling the emotion but unable to conceptualize why. I think confounders are use of social media and onset of puberty.

So happy to hear this being discussed. Such a high need for support in these areas.

How can you tell if your kids school even understands neuro diversity

Rural mental health care is a landscape of its own. With so much left to the parents.

Where in WI? I'm in Plymouth.

Yes I am rural as well. Upstate NY

I am also in Upstate NY, north of Syracuse.

I am divorced and my x says just step on him he's manipulating me

Just outside Madison. Even here I can't find good therapists, individual or family.

I live in the Catskills

Matt, that is exactly my 17 year old

My son refuses therapy

He just started a second medication and he's so mad at me.

me!

I'm in Nyack! Hello from the Hudson nValley

I found that waiting for our son to agree to or request therapy made a big difference in his engagement. But the waiting is excruciating.

I agree ... good therapists are so hard to find.

Yes me too. We stopped therapy for awhile. His psychiatrist wants him to start again.

I hear you. My hubby is done with my oldest and I struggle to impress on him that he needs to breathe and let go, that our oldest is struggling.

thanks for verbalizing frequency, intensity and duration. That's so good to know. Also, looking for a family therapist in Boise, Idaho area. Good luck!

SO hard to find a therapist who understands neurodivergence. Been looking for years

I want him to have a voice

My son won't accept help, not that there is any help where we are

Please repeat: the big three: Frequency, X? And Y?

Frequency, Intensity, Duration

intensity and duration

My youngest fought it for a LONG time. He loves football though and I showed him the video of Harry Miller (former football player for Ohio State) and his keynote speech this past fall regarding his experiences with depression and suicidal ideation. That turned a lightbulb on for him... he saw someone he respects willing to share his struggles.

Can you talk about the different types of therapies like CBT, and DBT? or others

if your state has a gifted parent association or something similar, check to see if they have a list of providers that understand neurodivergent kids. they likely don't/can't vet the providers but may be a good place to start in finding a provider. And someone that can help with managing medications.

Is a a way to access good therapy for 2E kids at a reasonable cost

What about if the child just confabulates and the therapist believes them over a parent.

I searched Psychology Today to find a therapist for my daughter.

Any recommendations for therapist in Southern California for 2E kids

Too often therapists treat divergence and difference as pathologies. I appreciate Matt's reference to intensity and differential development across domains. Knowing that when my DS was younger would have made a big difference.

I've used that resource too. It was helpful.

@ S D. re. recos for providers in S CA... check out the Summit Center

Exactly. I fight that, too. Or they leave out the parts they are doing wrong and only berate me. I find doing it together with therapist so they have to say things in front of you.

Would love to know about therapists who specialize in neurodiverse kids anywhere in the country if they do virtual appointments. We are having a hard time finding someone locally.

Thanks

Berkley has an excellent parent board for psych resources.

Also, you'll likely never find the perfect provider (like educational setting). but find what works for now and go with it. then be ready to flex and adapt as needed down the road

OMG Matt that is so my experience as a kid

Summit Center did online appts during covid shut down. believe they did continue but unsure if they still do. worth a check.

Thanks. My son loves nothing except video games

Matt that's my son to a T

Me too

What about EMDR? That's good for trauma? Like adoption trauma.

Mine too

AACT?

He will NOT talk about feelings, he avoids it like the plague

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Mine too. No feelings talking

Does anyone have experience with the ucla peers program for adolescents?

Thank you

Thx

People are always like, oh, it's cuz he's too young and doesn't understand... I'm like, no... he understands so well that it scares him

Lindsay: Friendly Reminder - If you have a question for Debbie and Matt please post it in the Q&A section.

Emotional intensity is terrifying as a kid.

So true

My husband and I just started working with a therapist who offers Parent Coaching (and specializes in 2E kids) so our teen isn't involved in the sessions. That in itself has taken a lot of pressure off all of us to demand our (resistant) kid go back into therapy.

We're working on speaking up about feelings and as a parent I have been working on not redirecting his feelings when he does speak up. Realizing how much my own upbringing plays a part/unconsciously repeats itself in my parenting

What about a 16 year old boy who wants us out of his business?

Ellen, that's my son too

Same boat

Looking for a therapist who can help a an autistic and ADHD 12 year old

M son is 16 with ASD L1, ADHD, DMDD & Anxiety and adoption trauma. Trying to find someone but the equine therapy we started has been great

Looking for a therapist in Raleigh who can help an autistic and ADHD 12 year old

YES! It doesn't matter who the adult is, as long as there is a connection.

I've heard about the SPACE program I think out of Yale which is for parents to be present to kids, a more general not necessarily Neurodivergent approach. Also, the practice of being present such as is learned in Non-Violent COmmunication/Compassionate communication practice can support the parents. Again not focused on ND but can be applied.

YES!! I am the external amygdala ALL day....

Connection over compliance.

What if your child won't accept another adult because they have been let down so often

Love that point about leaning on other adults to guide and mentor our kids.



Radical and unconditional love!

I agree I was brought up strict and that shows in my parenting and my kids are rebelling. I'm trying to be strict and protect and it's not working....

Yes!!

Kids do not want to participate because it's hard to find therapist who knows how to help. We've tried therapy from elem school including school counselor. Nobody even mentioned anything about "gifted child". Now I know and it all sign was there.

There is no fixing, only love....

Unfortunately, it keeps coming back to us, the parents, since support, resources are so bad where we live. I would love to have other resources, but bridges were burned and pp won't work with him. So that has ended many opps that we researched, spent so much time on, etc.

Talk about that more building own support team

Thank you so much. I have to leave now. I appreciate your time.

Yes, I agree about a support team because often family doesn't understand.

I'm in NZ - feels like the bottom of the world when trying to find adhd-specific help.

Beyond a therapist I would love a case manager and family advocate

I teach gifted students and I have my son in class. I am his teacher AND his parent and we are together all the time. His behavior for me is completely different than for his other teachers (in a negative way... he's bored to tears in his other classes but he's a "good" kid so he bottles it up all day then when he gets to me it all comes out) but it's because I'm his safe space... but it's exhausting. I feel like I'm failing him on every level.

Deb, I'm in NZ too. Little help for ASD too

Therapists in IL have to be licensed in the other state or they can not provide services.

This is so spot-on to everything my family is going through with my 12 yr old ASD,ADHD and ODD son. Been trying to find a therapist who is experienced with neurodivergent kids and does DBT or CBT in Colorado Springs for over a year. He's just entering puberty and it is SOOOOO critical to get him help NOW. He is even asking for it! He won't do Telehealth because if he gets mad he will shut it off or walk away.

Can we talk about advocacy resources like the Centres for Independent Living or legal advocacy.

What about kids who are glued to their personal screens - does it impact the quality of therapy?

I am setting up a virtual for my daughter on Saturday mornings.

I do Telehealth with my 11 yo ASD/ADHD son...because if I'm not following him around with the computer, he would check out. So tough as they get older.

School refusal is huge in our house and it's impacting our younger son's perspective on school as well...

I feel you. My son is the same. Teachers love him but he gets home from school and is a nightmare in his behavior toward us.

They can only hold it together so long.

Valerie you are so right!

Yes we have the problem with virtual sessions too - 15 yo doesn't have capacity to resist temptation of other browser windows and doesn't want parents in the room with him anymore (understandably)

What do you think of taking lavender (silexan) for anxiety?

Yes, and the lack of knowledge when kids are ready to go back...

Yup. Just becoming cognisant that my 9 yo son very probably has ASD too. Trying to figure out what to focus on first to help him.

School refusal/school can't is incredibly stressful on the whole family.

Same here. My 17 yr old is failing all but one class for years. He will go, 75% of time but do nothing 🙄. And it starts at 7:30. He won't get there til 9, 😞.

Thank you for this discussion on school refusal!

But at 16 I would think they need to start having less behaviors at home after holding it together. He wants to work and he wants to participate in after school groups.

One thing at a time. Can't do it all at once. I pick what's impacting the individual or household the most at that time and work on it. Then on to the next, when needed.

Self directed education and homeschooling has set my son free. Lifelong learning is key. There is no such thing as being behind. 😊

What if our kids are aching to go but can't...don't want to homeschool etc

We are so lucky to have found an alternative school - it's a career and technical school and he now wants to go to school.

Yes, failing all classes- I asked how they can move her along to high school when she hasn't learned anything this year! She doesn't feel safe

Failing forward and it's so much better than all of those steps backwards and eventually it becomes a lived experience to grow from.

I'm a teacher of 2E kids plus a parent of 2E kids—just sending so much love and empathy to all of you. This feels impossible and our kids are so awesome that we want them to have successful experiences so they can see how awesome they are. Solidarity, caregivers.

They are on their own timelines.

I realized my son was totally overwhelmed sensory-wise at regular school. After lots of blood, sweat & tears, he is in a therapeutic very small school now. He can handle this, I don't think he will return to a regular school setting. I'm just happy he now wants to attend,..it took a while to get here.

Similar issue happened at age 8 and we were able to get a 1:1 and all work done in the resource room, which was very helpful. Now at 14, they offer nothing and say she can't come to school if she can't keep herself safe - no self-harming

I tell my son almost daily that he is the bravest person I know for that very reason. Going to a place everyday that is overwhelming and trying day after day is so hard. It's hard to know when enough is enough and to try something else.

Ed therapist here- love the piece on listening. I have been blown away by what kids have said to me about why they don't want to go to school and what they really want. I have seen leaving school and co-creating an education based on who they are be transformational and beyond what I could have imagined when we started. Their innate wisdom and creativity blow me away!

YES!! Adults who snore these kids get called out immediately.

We have an interventionist who works with my son on Fridays (he doesn't have to go to school if he's not behind) and she helps with his executive functioning skills of planning and executing his school work because he won't let his parents help

Persistence for autonomy PDA

Can you touch upon the complexities of navigating what feels like a predominantly neurotypical world as individuals, families(immediate and extended), comprised of neurodiverse individuals who differ greatly.

Does this apply to younger kids too? My 8.5 yo is ASD, has a very hard time at school, and if I let him, he'll make movies on the ipad all day... I let him do it quite a lot, but I do yank it out of his hands quite a lot

I wish you two were in NZ!!

Boundaries and autonomy is so tricky around screen time when we see behaviour deteriorating with excess time/more than 30 mins in one stretch spent on gaming.

What about kids who refuse to accept that they have any disabilities?

Another Resource: [Autistic Women and NonBinary Network](#)

Absolutely!!!

Yes what about denial of Neurodiversity

100% agree with you

ND kids are susceptible to unsafe contents/online group - need to be very careful..

There's empowerment in owning what we live with. If we are diabetic, we get treatment and own the needs it comes with. But our needs are not always acute.

Thanks. :-)

I agree --the needed "down time" for recharge is challenging to manage. If my child says he "needs" 6 hours of gaming time to "recharge" out of his struggles but then due to that isn't doing other needed things for health--exercise, food, hydrating, managing that with a teen is challenging. Hard to know what is needed and when to help jump start them out of the funk with hard but needed things.

Thanks. Haven't heard that one.

Model Aloud - find out later they've been internalizing

I have that problem too. Doesn't want to do things needed, but will hang with friends, do gaming and sleep in etc.

WOW your insight to changing thoughts - love it

I like that, validation of the thought itself

Empathy is difficult for my son.

My son does this often and I'll ask him what evidence he have to back up his thought/feeling. He'll pause and realize he doesn't have any evidence and then other potential options are discussed.

I feel that too. When I used to try to use natural consequences when he was a young child, I thought it would yield skills, but not at all.

I totally agree - do away with homework!!!

Burn the homework for sure. Ugh.

Woohoo!

I completely agree... we need to get rid of homework!

Burn the homework, yes! Everyone says so why won't they just do it...

100%

Schools don't accept that, tho!

This is where older educational standards become the benchmark instead of what actually works.

Our challenge with homework/school load for our PG 2e 12 y.o. is that she feels she's finally in the right level of challenge for math work for the first time ever. Yet, her exec functioning, perfectionism, and procrastination + her geometry teacher doing a flipped classroom = CHALLENGES. EVERY. NIGHT.

Meet them where they are and build from there. With HW and many other things, too. So tough to remember in the moment.

My son gets modified homework due to his Anxiety. I am lucky to have a great special ed teacher on his team that helps look out for his well being.

Great wonderful guidance. looking forward to listening to rest later

Totally us!! My son craves all the challenges, so is doing a couple advanced classes, but really struggles with the executive function/procrastination/anxiety. He is much happier in the challenging classes (engaged), but stressed and sometimes overwhelmed.

What grade level? I work with students, and would love to consider doing accommodations for anxiety on homework/assignments!

Yep. A healthy dose of anxiety (plus anxiety for my husband and I) + big differences in our own experiences and expectations from our own schooling adds to it all.

Before having kids I would've never dreamed of putting my 5 year old on SSRIs but damn, that stuff saved our family's life. So grateful

We have some accommodations but this convo reminds me we can do more - esp with the homework load specifically.

How do you help a child to understand they should be open to trying medication?

At this time for the advanced math we have more time for testing, alternate location for testing, homework turned in any time before the end of the semester, rework on homework if she wants, headphones can be worn (without music) to help focus in class, can use a keyboard/computer instead of pencil/paper

She doesn't always use all those things. but she has them if/when she needs it

My son did great on Risperidone but we had to quickly stop due to weight gain and boobs. I think he's having a side effect to Wellbutrin. I hate meds

Question: does modeling work with kids with adhd/asd? I don't feel like my kiddo is aware of when I'm modeling (generosity of spirit for example). He soaks it up, but it doesn't seem to translate into doing it himself. (Really badly worded!)

<https://genomind.com/solutions/pharmacogenetic-testing/> This can give you a sense of what likely WONT work before starting an antidepressant which takes 6 weeks to work

The validation here tonight is appreciated.

My problem is my daughter wants to take medication. Whatever she can. It's an attention thing. Hey look at me.

Same to my daughter - she wants to do medication. The dose becomes larger and larger but I am not sure if it is helping..

It's so hard to see what works then.

Is this chat going to be available with the replay? I would like to go back and read through this wisdom too. But can't seem to copy and paste.

So I don't want to start 😊. She likes to self diagnose herself too, giving more issues she thinks she needs meds for. I feel she's faking some of it, so I don't want to medicate.

I don't know of a neurodivergent affirming program of any of the five programs we visited in the wealthy area we live in. Educationally or emotionally - there is just not this understanding in the PHP etc programs. So that expectation except for being with you Dr. Matt has not been possible with other clinicians. They resist it in fact.

I have been told that the social skills programs in my area can only be accessed with Medicaid and we don't qualify. The programs won't accept private pay or insurance.

Is this recording going to be shared with participants? I'm trying to write useful things down but SO MUCH lol

Heidi Molbak is an educational consultant who helps people find programs for neurodivergent kids... she's wonderful.

Dr Matt can you do assessments from afar?? (US)

Erika, yes the replay will be available apparently.

Thank you for that question right now. My daughter is that right now!


An adult friend survivor of suicide wrote a letter to my son at that time and it was so powerful!

She wants to go to the other side because she doesn't have to follow my rules then and have a phone!

Thank you so much for saying all of this

Thanks for the recommendation Debbie, my son is likely neurodivergent but refuses evaluation to be diagnosed *(which he can in our state) however he is significantly behind in school and refusing now. So does Heidi work with students other than gifted/2E

Name how to take care of yourself

Thank you. I wish someone could do that for her 

Great reminder Debbie thx

One never knows where these people are in their lives until there is such a crisis and then these angels appear. So thankful for that!!!

I have to work full time as the breadwinner for the family, 2nd shift, I struggle to find time to do self care? I breath all the time

Whatever kind of self-care you can get. Sometimes, for me, it is listening to funny (dark) comedians on you tube for a few mins. It is so hard! To make time for self-care, I know!

Breathing is really so good! We tend to shallow breathe when stressed.

Recovery sounds odd to me. Maybe how do we recognize when the lagging of Matt's 5 persons catch up with the others.

Yes, better phrasing!

Mindful Self Compassion is an effective and really helpful practice for self care.

How do you deal with grandparents or others. Like when my child refuses to go to school and having panic attacks and my parents are saying, "Just put your foot down. School is not a choice." Basically what is wrong with you as a parent

OMG, yes, the grandparents, or every other parent

I struggle to see the small milestones.... Focusing on the bigger wins. It's a challenge for me....

Tammy....do you have your own therapist?

Ignore the F out of the relatives!

No but I need one....

Dr. Matt is the BEST!

Brene Brown "twinkle lights" = little wins

We might need to look for the bright spots in ourselves too!

Saw a great resource on

This is huge for us!!

Thank you so much. Just today I had a student with Oppositional Defiance and lots of past trauma who can not focus on any academics. Your suggestions were extremely helpful.

Wonderful insights! "Progress is not linear, consistent or forever!" & "Sometimes doing nothing is doing something and is the right thing to do!" Loved those! THANK YOU!

Just had a huge situation with an uncle losing his sh*t at my 2e 5yo for not being able to stop asking questions while uncle was talking.... I spent an hour trying to explain to him that my kid was NOT being deliberately disrespectful... he could not see my point.

Sorry, saw a great resource on 'Calm the chaos' parenting about dealing with unhelpful comments. 1. Remind yourself of your parenting philosophy. 2. Focus on your child in the moment. 3. Then: I recognise you have thoughts about this, let's have a conversation about it now/later.

Thanks Deb!

Lotsa gold nuggets!!

Definitely - thank you so much for this valuable and timely discussion and information

Or other parent doesn't consistently follow through

Thank you Dr Matt and Debbie, this has been helpful and timely!

Omg, such amazing advice to give 24 hrs to cool down,

Great Webinar, Thank you!

Would love a session on how to help siblings deal with the chaos

Such great advice!

Thank you!

Yes, sibling support would be great.

Ditto on the impact on sibs!

This has been so great! thank you!!

Thank you this has been so helpful and valuable.

Yes please to a part 2! :-)

Great idea! a part 2

You are both blessings in our lives. Thank you

Thank you - so many aha moments in this presentation

"The Myth of Normal" by Gabor Maté has gotten me really questioning (in a healthy way!) how much I'm willing to work to get my 2e kids to "fit" into (what he so clearly lays out is) a toxic culture. For me it has been very freeing to have the research-backed case for

sometimes "opting out" of all the expectations that mainstream culture lays on us....so appreciate all your thoughts and advice here!

Thank you!

Thank you!!

We will be here if u are

Thank you so much

Thank you so much Debbie and Dr. Matt!!!

Thank you both so VERY, VERY much!!

Thank you for all of your advice. It is great to hear that we are not alone.

Amazing! What was the link to financially contribute to this zoom?

Thanks this was very informative and interesting

YESSSSSS

Thank you have started talking with family on how we can navigate our issues within the family circle and how that might look.

Yes to a Part 2, yay!! Maybe it can be more of the questions brought up.

Thank you so much Debbie and Matt and all parents. Just knowing I'm not alone in this is a gift. So grateful.

Thank you! It's just helpful to hear all the things and know that we are not alone! Much appreciated!

Need more just community engagement options for kids to feel a part of something and accepted by folk

Love part 2!!! thank you BOTH!! amazing info and tools. much appreciated

Thank you for validating us!!! So important and necessary!!

Matt and Debbie = YES!!! Thank you both so much

YES!!

Yes!!!

Hoot Hoot!!

YES!!!!!!! And thanks again!

Came in late but YES! Look forward to the recording and part 2!

Thank you so much!



Same!

Thanks so much for this webinar!!