



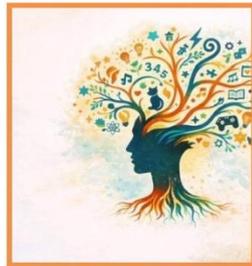
STRM – SEND the Right Message Registered Charity No. 1193572

Making Sense of Neurodivergence - Autism & ADHD Parent Support Course – 3-Hour Course

Impact Report | February 2026

Participants: 19 Parents & Carers

Making Sense of SEND: Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child After Diagnosis (Autism & ADHD)



1. Executive Summary

STRM delivered a co-produced, lived-experience-led Autism & ADHD Parent Support Course designed to reduce emotional overwhelm, increase confidence, and strengthen family stability.

The programme operates within STRM's wider early-intervention ecosystem, beginning with open-access guidance and continuing through structured peer support, practical assistance and financial navigation.

Outcomes demonstrate measurable short-term impact, particularly among parents entering with the highest levels of need.

Indicative modelling suggests a likely social return between **1.4:1** and **3.5:1**, depending on escalation assumptions. Even under conservative modelling, the programme offsets a significant proportion of its delivery cost through short-term system savings alone.

2. Context: Neurodivergence, Inequality & The Disability Price Tag

Families raising neurodivergent children frequently experience emotional distress compounded by financial strain.

Participants included:

- Families awaiting diagnosis
- Families post-diagnosis navigating uncertainty
- Parents managing school-based SEND processes
- Parents reporting high emotional overwhelm



Many families were also experiencing financial pressure linked to the “disability price tag”, including:

- Increased food and energy costs
- Transport to appointments
- Specialist resources
- Reduced parental income
- Employment instability linked to caring responsibilities

Emotional overwhelm and financial stress often interact, increasing the risk of escalation across health, education and safeguarding systems.

The programme helps reduce health inequalities by improving early access to knowledge, navigation, and community support for families who may otherwise struggle to access specialist services.



3. How Families Access Support

Families typically enter STRM’s pathway via the open access **Start Here** page. This enables:

- Immediate practical guidance
- Early sense-making
- Reduced confusion and self-blame
- Proportionate help-seeking
- Isolated & confused

This front-door clarity reduces panic-driven escalation and inappropriate service navigation.



4. The Parent Course Intervention

The Autism & ADHD Parent Course is parent-led and co-produced by diagnosed Autistic and ADHD facilitators with lived experience of raising children.

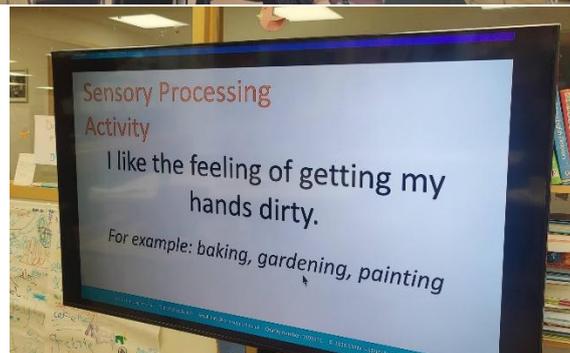


The course provides:

- Education on sensory processing and executive functioning
- Regulation and co-regulation strategies
- Reframing behaviour as communication
- Facilitated peer discussion
- Structured signposting

Delivery is underpinned by STRM's safeguarding framework, with trained staff and clear escalation protocols.

The aim is stabilisation before escalation.





5. Measured Outcomes (n = 19)

Parents completed short pre- and post-session evaluations.

Reduced Emotional Overwhelm

Before attending:

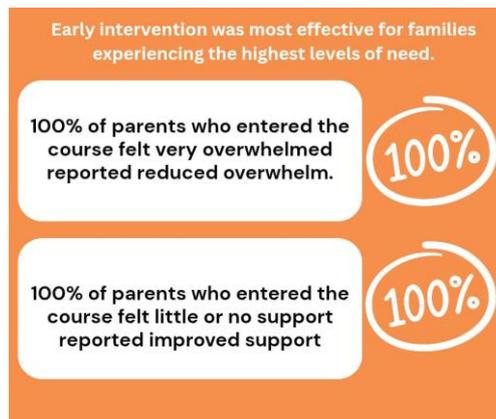
90% reported feeling quite or very overwhelmed.

After attendance:

- 74% moved to feeling manageable or calm.

Reduced Emotional Overwhelm

- 100% of those entering highly overwhelmed reported improvement.

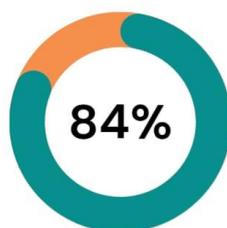


Increased Confidence

84% reported increased confidence in understanding Autism & ADHD

Parents described improved understanding of:

- Sensory needs
- Executive functioning
- Regulation
- Behaviour as communication



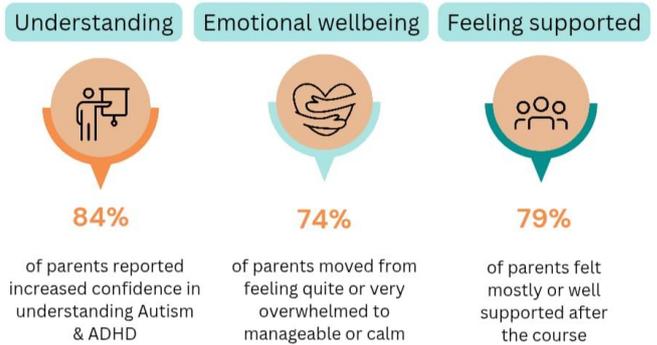
Increased confidence

in understanding Autism & ADHD
Parents reported clearer understanding of neurodivergent differences, regulation, and support needs.



Improved Perceived Support

79% reported feeling mostly or well supported. Peer normalisation and shared lived experience were frequently cited as transformative.



6. Parent Voice

Parents shared:

“I came feeling very overwhelmed and left feeling calm.”

“I don’t feel alone anymore.”

“It makes so much more sense now.”

“I wish teachers in schools knew this information.”

Parents frequently reported reduced isolation, greater clarity, and renewed confidence in navigating school and service systems.

7. Continued Support Pathway

Families are not discharged following the course.

They may continue accessing:

- Tea & Talk peer support sessions
- Themed workshops
- Benefits and household support guidance
- Ongoing advocacy signposting
- STRM’s Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child guide

Where financial strain is identified, families may be supported with:

- Benefits navigation
- Household support signposting
- Energy and food support referrals

By addressing both emotional well-being and structural stressors, STRM reduces the compounding risk factors associated with poverty and neurodivergence. STRM intends to monitor medium-term sustainability through follow-on engagement and future evaluation cycles.



Parent reported after attending the course, receiving the Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child resource and attending 1 Tea & Talk Session:

“Just knowing people have been through this and that we aren't going completely crazy really does help.”



8. Organisational Strategy Alignment

This programme aligns with STRM's strategic priorities:

- Early identification and intervention
- Strengthening family resilience
- Reducing health inequalities
- Preventing escalation into statutory services
- Building community capacity

The parent course operates within a coordinated portfolio that includes peer groups, inclusive activities, wellbeing initiatives, and practical advice services.

The low per-family cost and structured delivery model make the programme scalable across wider communities.



9. Theory of Change





10. Cost of Delivery

Total programme cost (including full cost recovery): £1,452

Cost per parent: £76

This includes facilitator time, staff support, venue, materials, compliance, governance and core cost allocation.

11. Wellbeing Valuation (HACT-Aligned)

Parent-reported improvements align with recognised wellbeing valuation methodologies, such as the HACT Social Value Bank.

Applying conservative assumptions for:

- Partial-year duration
- Attribution
- Deadweight

Indicative wellbeing value generated:

£12,000–£18,000

Equivalent to £800–£1,000 per parent.

Figures are proportionately adjusted and avoid double-counting.

12. Social Return on Investment (SROI)

Combining well-being valuation and avoided-cost modelling:

Indicative social return range: 1.4:1 to 3.5:1

This reflects risk-adjusted modelling and conservative attribution.

Even under lower-bound assumptions, the programme offsets a significant proportion of its cost through short-term system savings alone.

13. Limitations & Integrity Statement

- Outcomes are self-reported
- Data reflects immediate post-course change
- Social value modelling uses proxy-based assumptions
- Medium-term impact is not yet longitudinally measured

Despite these limitations, improvements were consistent and strongest among the highest-need families.

14. Conclusion

For approximately £76 per parent, STRM delivered measurable emotional stabilisation, increased confidence and strengthened peer

support among families navigating neurodivergence.



By combining open-access entry, structured psychoeducation, poverty-aware navigation and ongoing community connection, STRM operates an integrated early-intervention pathway. This model reduces escalation risk, strengthens radical resilience, and delivers credible preventative value across health, education and social care systems.

