

## *Pivot Point Newsletter*



March

### **Nourishing Diverse Minds: A New Perspective on Brain Health**

As we welcome March, we recognize two important observances: Brain Health Awareness Month and Neurodiversity Celebration Week. Last month, we explored the critical importance of protecting the brain, specifically looking at how severe sensory overwhelm can lead to self-injurious behaviours and [long-term trauma like CTE](#). Building on that foundation of protection, this month we are shifting our focus toward nourishing neurodivergent minds.

When society talks about "brain health," the conversation usually revolves around memory games or physical exercise. But what does brain health look like through the lens of Autism and Neurodiversity?

For neurodivergent individuals, brain health is deeply intertwined with nervous system regulation and sensory safety. A healthy neurodivergent brain isn't one that is forced to mimic a neurotypical one; rather, it is a brain that is supported in its natural state. This means actively preventing "autistic burnout" by reducing the exhausting pressure to mask or hide authentic traits. It involves prioritizing sensory rest and emotional well-being just as highly as physical safety.

At Pivot Point, our [support services](#) for children, youth, and adults with diverse abilities are designed with this holistic view of brain health in mind. For a child, promoting brain health means providing proactive sensory accommodations to help them self-regulate long before they reach the point of distress. For youth and adults, it means fostering self-advocacy, honouring unique communication styles, and encouraging deep engagement in special interests, which act as powerful sources of joy and cognitive enrichment.

As we celebrate Neurodiversity Week once again, let's expand our definition of brain health. Together, we can move beyond simply keeping brains safe, and continue building accommodating, empowering environments where every diverse mind has the opportunity to truly thrive.

For more than 22 years, Pivot Point's team of dedicated professionals and staff have shared their extensive experience in supporting individuals with Autism and Diverse Abilities. [Our services](#) are client-centred, family-oriented, and evidence-based, drawing from Applied Behavior Analysis, Mental Health, Education, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychiatry, Neurofeedback, and other interventions as needed. All creating Positive Change!

#### **Newsletter Content Submissions**

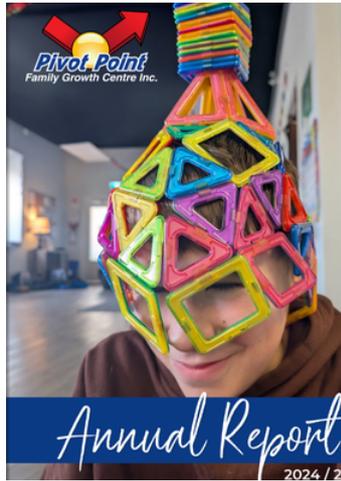
If you would like to participate in writing content, sending in photographs and/or sharing ideas for the staff newsletter, please contact Rochelle at: [marketing@pivotpoint.ca](mailto:marketing@pivotpoint.ca)

#### **Newsletter Feedback**

Rochelle would like to hear from you! Please provide her with your feedback or let her know of specific topics that you would like to see in upcoming newsletters by completing our [Feedback & Suggestion Form](#). Thank you for your input!

# Our 2024–2025 Annual Report is Here!

At Pivot Point, transparency and measurable human outcomes are at the heart of what we do. As a top-tier, CARF-accredited support services agency, we are thrilled to officially share our latest Annual Report with you.



Discover the incredible milestones, expanded community reach, and personalized success stories of the children, youth, and adults we support across British Columbia.

Thank you to our staff, families, and partners for making this year of growth possible!

Explore our shared impact and [read the full report here](#).

## Winter Wins & Community Connections!

This season, Autistic and neurodiverse youth across our [Learning Centres](#) have been experiencing amazing growth and connection. Recent highlights include youth braving the rink to go ice skating for the very first time, and mastering new independent cooking and life skills. Including Runner-Up award for Performance & Costumes at the Vernon carnival.



# Rethinking Nutrition Month for Neurodivergent Eaters

March is Nutrition Month, a time when we often hear the advice to "eat a rainbow." But for many families supporting Autistic children and youth, mealtime can feel more stressful than colourful.

It is incredibly common for neurodivergent individuals to eat a limited variety of foods. While society often labels this as "picky eating," clinically, it is rarely about stubbornness. Instead, it is deeply rooted in sensory processing and a need for predictability.

For an Autistic youth, the complex smells, mixed textures, and unpredictable flavours of a standard meal can be entirely overwhelming to their nervous system. A blueberry might be sweet and firm one day, but mushy and tart the next. In contrast, a preferred "safe food", like a specific brand of cracker or chicken nugget, is exactly the same every single time. It provides a reliable, safe sensory experience in an unpredictable world.

So, how can we support nutritional health without causing mealtime anxiety?

- ✓ Remove the Pressure: High-stress environments suppress appetite. Remove the demand to "take just one bite" and focus on making the table a relaxed, positive space.
- ✓ Try [Food Chaining](#): Build gently on what already works. If they love a specific French fry, try offering a different brand, then perhaps a tater tot, and eventually a roasted potato.
- ✓ Deconstruct Meals: Keep foods separated on the plate. Mixed textures, like casseroles, are frequent sensory triggers.
- ✓ Fortify Where You Can: Smoothies, daily vitamins, or fortified safe foods can bridge nutritional gaps.

At Pivot Point, our approach reminds families of one vital truth: a fed child is best, and reducing mealtime anxiety is the foundation of long-term nutritional wellness.

Navigating support for a loved one? You don't have to navigate this journey alone. Book your [complimentary consultation](#) with our team today.