A.utism I.ntegration

Educational materials harnessing the potential of artificial intelligence to support the social inclusion of young people with cognitive disabilities.

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The publication has been prepared in three language versions - Polish, Spanish and English.

"A child with Asperger's syndrome may grow into an outstanding engineer or scientist. Some possess perfect pitch and otherworldly musical talents. Often their language skills are so exceptional that it's referred to as 'little professor syndrome.' But don't be fooled – most kids with Asperger's don't grow up to be professors. In general, growing up can be tough for them."

John Elder Robison

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About the project and publication

About the project

Project origins

The Enabler Foundation has long been committed to supporting young people at risk of social exclusion. In the course of its everyday work, the foundation has had the opportunity to collaborate both with autistic youth and with their neurotypical peers. From that fieldwork—through countless conversations and observations—a very specific problem emerged, which became the starting point for this project.

On one hand, autistic young people—often extremely sensitive, intelligent and passionate—expressed a strong need for social belonging. In numerous one-on-one and group consultations, they repeatedly said things like: "I'd like to have friends, but I don't know how to find them," "Everyone ignores me and I don't know why," or "I feel like I don't understand people, and they don't understand me." Their desire for connection was genuine and deep, tied to a profound sense of loneliness, alienation and lack of trust in themselves and others. This wasn't social indifference – quite the opposite: it was loneliness born of not knowing what to do, lacking the skills and fearing rejection.

On the other hand, the neurotypical youth with whom the Foundation ran workshops in schools and educational centres also reported difficulties. Many of them said they had nothing against classmates who were "different," "quiet" or "strange," but simply didn't know how to talk with them. Some were convinced that autism is an inherited disorder; others equated it with intellectual disability. Still others believed autistic people were geniuses

with extraordinary abilities but also emotionally inaccessible and "living in their own world." Such misconceptions – perpetuated online, in the media, films and games – greatly influenced the distance and reserve that neurotypical young people maintained toward their autistic peers.

These divergent–and often hurtful–beliefs about the autism spectrum deepened isolation. Data cited in the project proposal showed that by 2021 the National Health Fund in Poland had registered over 65,000 children and adolescents diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, and that number grows year by year. This upward trend is visible not only in Poland but across Europe. Experts stress that ensuring social support for this group of young people will be one of the key challenges of the twenty-first century. Recognizing this issue, we decided to focus on one of the most important–and simultaneously most neglected–areas of life for autistic individuals: peer integration. Providing psychological, educational or therapeutic support alone isn't enough if a young person has no friends, doesn't feel understood by those around them, isn't invited to class gatherings, doesn't join conversations during breaks or share interests with others.

The project was thus conceived to build a bridge between these two worlds – that of those on the spectrum and their neurotypical peers.

The key question became: how can we support social integration without imposing it? How can we teach empathy without pity? How can we facilitate communication without stigmatization?

Answering these questions wasn't easy. On the one hand, it was clear that school talks or educational leaflets weren't enough. Young people learn best through experience - through contact, relationships, trial... But on the other hand, that first encounter with someone on the spectrum can be stressful, unpredictable and emotionally challenging for both sides. Teachers and educators also admitted, "we don't know how to support these kinds of relationships" or "we're afraid we'll get it wrong."

From this need sprang the idea of an educational tool that would allow people to safely step into a situation of contact with someone on the autism spectrum before an actual meeting takes place. A tool that would function like a "dress rehearsal" - a conversation with someone who won't judge, mock or react angrily, while simulating the real communication challenges faced by many autistic teenagers.

The concept was simple in principle: let's create a chatbot that simulates a teenager on the autism spectrum - the kind you might meet in class, during activities or at the bus stop. This tool was intended for educators, teachers, trainers, peers and family members - anyone who wanted to better understand people on the spectrum but hadn't yet had the courage or opportunity for direct contact.

Most importantly, the project was created with the involvement of autistic youth, not "about them, without them." Their voice was crucial - they know better than anyone what their world looks like, what scares them, what they find challenging, which messages feel confusing and which ones hurt. The foundation carried out a series of diagnostic and consultation activities to create a realistic, authentic communication model - not based on simplistic stereotypes, but on genuine experiences.

Activities carried out as part of the project

As part of the project we carried out three key activities:

- A.utism I.ntegration – mobility for professionals working with young people with special educational needs;
- A.utism I.ntegration – development of a script, together with guidelines on using AI in the social-inclusion process of youth with cognitive disabilities;
- A.utism I.ntegration – workshops for neurotypical young people as part of the scaling-up process.

The first activity – the mobility of educators working with young people with special educational needs – took place in Spain (with Crea360 SL coordinating the efforts). The main goal of the six-day meeting between the Spanish and Polish teams was to enhance competencies in inclusive methodologies and to explore the use of artificial intelligence as a communication-support tool. Twelve trainers participating in the mobility also began collaborating on the project's intellectual output, planning the next steps toward creating the simulator (the chatbot) of a teenager on the spectrum.

The second activity involved developing a complete educational tool – the simulator – and a accompanying script that includes both the technical documentation of the tool (the conversation simulator with a teenager on the spectrum) and practical guidelines for its use in the social-inclusion process of young people with cognitive disabilities, presented as three workshop scenarios.

The final component of the project was the scaling-up of the developed offer, realised through workshops for young people from both Poland and Spain. During these sessions, the tool's functionality was tested, and a series of

educational, integrative and reflective activities were conducted.
All three activities were designed and implemented in close cooperation between two partner organisations: the Enabler Foundation in Poland and the Spanish educational company Crea360 SL. Both institutions contributed equally in terms of content expertise and organisational support, sharing their experience in working with youth and their competencies in designing digital educational tools. This collaboration not only ensured equal engagement from both partners but, above all, enabled the effective transfer of the solutions developed into two distinct cultural and educational contexts, while preserving their inclusive character.

A.utism I.ntegration – mobility for professionals working with young people with special educational needs.

One of the three main activities carried out as part of the project was the mobility of youth trainers, aimed at deepening their knowledge, skills and competences in working with young people with cognitive disabilities—particularly those on the autism spectrum—and their neurotypical peers. The programme ran from 23–28 November 2024 in Cocentaina and involved twelve representatives from the two partner organisations: the Enabler Foundation and Crea360 SL.

The mobility took the form of an intensive training combining workshop sessions, study visits, group work and direct contact with autistic young people, specialist-centre teaching staff and parents. Sessions focused on inclusive digital education and the potential of artificial intelligence to support the social-inclusion process for young people with cognitive disabilities.

Day 1 – Introduction to the project (23 November 2024)

The first day of the mobility was devoted to welcoming participants and introducing the project's objectives, structure and expected outcomes. The Spanish partner–Crea360–presented their experience working with socially excluded youth. Participants took part in a thematic session that outlined the needs from which the project arose and explored how AI could be used to foster peer integration between autistic young people and their neurotypical peers. The day concluded with an expert lecture on current trends in artificial intelligence and its role in inclusive education.

Day 2 – Overview of tools and school visit (24 November 2024)

The second day began with a review of available AI tools and an assessment of their potential applications in educational practice. During a working session, the trainers jointly defined the key criteria for selecting AI functionalities in the context of autistic youth. They then visited the specialist educational centre CPEE Santo Ángel de la Guarda, where they had the opportunity to observe work with young people with disabilities and to discuss teaching staff's expectations for the planned AI simulator. In the afternoon, they collaboratively drafted a

questionnaire to gather data from autistic young people– data essential for creating realistic communication profiles.

Day 3 – Legal and technical aspects (25 November 2024)

The third day of the mobility focused on legal, ethical and technical issues. With a lawyer in attendance, participants explored regulations on personal data protection, copyright and the handling of sensitive information in educational and digital projects. This was followed by hands-on workshops where they tested tools for interview transcription, data anonymization and converting audio content to text. Throughout, participants practised transforming audio material into data for further analysis, while discussing strategies to ensure the process remained both secure and ethically sound.

Day 4 – drafting the simulator outline and consultations with young people (26 November 2024)

On the fourth day, the second study visit was carried out– this time at the Centro de Educación Especial Alinur. There, trainers had the opportunity to speak with both the teaching staff and the young people themselves. Thanks to this exchange of experiences, work began on the first draft of the "scenario" of behaviours and communication styles to be replicated in the AI simulator. Participants focused on the realism of the dialogues and the consistency of the interlocutor's profile. The day concluded with a moderated focus-group discussion involving autistic youth, who provided feedback on communication style, tone of voice and accessibility features.

Day 5 – Consolidation of results and planning further steps (27 November 2024)

The fifth day was dedicated to organising and refining the content developed so far. Partners fine-tuned the survey structure and the specifications for the simulator's final system prompt. Each team presented its vision of the ai chatbot and proposed changes to the shared tool. These activities enabled intercultural learning and allowed everyone to define the next stages of work. The day concluded with agreeing on the testing schedule and allocating tasks among the partners.

Day 6 – Evaluation and conclusion (28 November 2024)

The final day began with a summary of the entire mobility– results were presented, the workshops and project activities were evaluated, and participants completed self-assessment forms. A debate on the future of the tool and its

potential development followed. Participants received certificates of participation in the mobility under the Erasmus+ programme and had the opportunity to share reflections on the overall experience.

The outcomes of the mobility included, among others:

- Deeper insight into the autism spectrum and the communication barriers faced by autistic youth;
- Experience in designing inclusive digital tools and working with AI;
- Development of competences in creating research instruments and educational content;
- Ability to work with young people to co-create educational solutions (a participatory approach);
- Strengthened interpersonal and intercultural competences through international collaboration.

Mobility laid the groundwork for subsequent project activities and helped cement a shared vision of a tool designed to foster the social inclusion of young people with cognitive disabilities.

Importantly, a range of additional dissemination actions was also undertaken – including a meeting with representatives of the Cocentaina authorities.

A.utism I.ntegration – Development of a script, along with guidelines for using AI in the social-inclusion process of young people with cognitive disabilities

After the transnational mobility concluded, the partner teams moved on to the next phase of the project – developing a ChatBot that simulates the communication style of a teenager on the autism spectrum. These activities ran in parallel in two countries – from December 2024 to March 2025 – with trainers collaborating via Zoom.
The goal was not merely to build an advanced digital application but, above all, to design a tool that fosters social change by raising awareness, nurturing empathy and deepening understanding of neurodivergent individuals.
The ChatBot offers a safe, realistic and immersive way to practise communication – particularly for teachers, peers,

trainers and family members – helping them grasp the everyday social experiences of autistic youth.

Stages of tool development:

1. Building the digital infrastructure

A dedicated online environment was created at autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl. The site serves as a workspace, a testing environment and a public platform–all enabling safe, controlled access to the ChatBot.

2. Development of the research tool

A team of psychologists and youth educators developed a thirty-item questionnaire designed to assess the communication, emotional and cognitive patterns of teenagers on the spectrum. Its aim was to capture the true complexity of these profiles – without simplifications or stereotypes.

3. Data collection – interviews with young people

Fifty-four autistic teenagers took part in the study – 37 in Poland and 17 in Spain – each interviewed individually with their own and their guardians' consent. The conversations yielded a wealth of insight into how they express emotions, build relationships, their areas of interest and the challenges they face in social communication. The diversity of participants' profiles made it possible to model a broad spectrum of behaviours in the simulator.

4. Transcription of recordings

Using OpenAI's Whisper speech-recognition system, the conversations were transcribed with precision, preserving the speakers' authentic voices and the subtle nuances of their language.

5. Anonymization and data refinement

Each transcript was anonymized and underwent qualitative analysis. Sensitive data and the interviewers' remarks were

removed, leaving only those excerpts essential for modelling the communication profiles.

6. Development of the ChatBot's "personality"

Based on the data gathered, the scientific literature and the professional experience of the trainers involved, we developed a so-called system prompt – an advanced script that defines how the AI operates. The simulator doesn't emulate a single personality – each session is an interaction with a different type of individual on the spectrum: someone more literal, less emotionally expressive, with narrow interests or difficulty maintaining eye contact.

7. Safeguards and moderation

In light of the subject's sensitivity, the model's built-in content filters were employed to block hate speech, violence, profanity, sexual content and self-harm material– ensuring the tool remains safe for all users.

8. Building the application

Leveraging the Next.js framework and open-source templates, we built a stable, fully functional technical infrastructure–allowing the team to focus on the substance and polish the content rather than coding everything from scratch.

9. Integration of the AI system

Although the OpenAI's GPT model was originally planned for use, we ultimately chose Anthropic's Claude – thanks to its greater coherence, empathetic tone and enhanced stability in generating realistic dialogues.

10. User interface design

Care was taken to ensure the interface is simple and intuitive–both on desktop and mobile devices. The layout was designed with users who have limited digital experience in mind.

11. Instructions for use and guidelines for educators

A user guide was developed, containing operating instructions, sample educational applications and recommendations for working with young people on the spectrum.

12. Terms of use and privacy policy

The team prepared comprehensive documents covering the application's terms of use, data-processing rules and procedures for addressing undesirable behaviour.

13. Technical specification

Comprehensive technical documentation for the tool was developed, enabling its further enhancement, adaptation to other languages and cultural contexts, and potential open-source release.

The tool wasn't designed to simulate a "disability" – but to build bridges between the worlds of neuroatypical and neurotypical youth. The user – whether teacher, peer or trainer – can enter a safe dialogue, experience differences in communication and learn patience and openness. Thanks to the authentic voices of teenagers on the spectrum, we've preserved respect and authenticity for the community the tool serves.

The ChatBot blends empathy, technology and education. Accompanying it is this script – available in Polish, English and Spanish – a set of materials for educators to support workshop facilitation using the tool. Even in the testing phase, both neurotypical and neuroatypical users confirmed its educational and communicative value. In the coming months, we plan to promote it at educational events, youth conferences and teacher-training sessions.

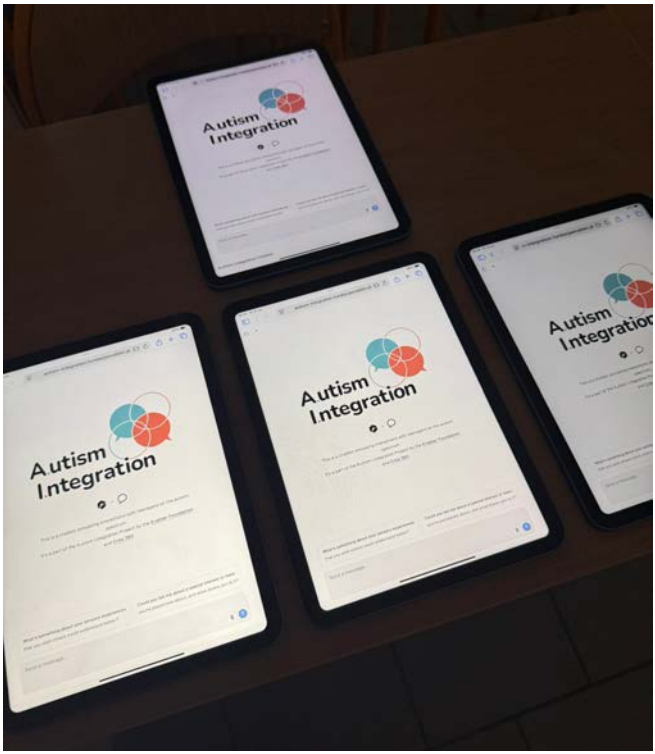
The simulator doesn't replace relationships – it makes them easier to understand.

A.utism I.ntegration – workshops for neurotypical young people as part of the scaling-up process

The final–and at the same time deeply significant–phase of the project was the organisation of a series of participatory workshops for neurotypical youth, encompassing 60 participants in total–30 teenagers from Poland (Gdynia) and 30 from Spain (Cocentaina and surrounding areas). This activity was crucial for scaling the project's outcomes, as it directly engaged the peers of those on the spectrum in reflecting on inclusion, testing the ChatBot and co-creating best practices for integrating neuroatypical individuals into school and community life.
The workshops unfolded in three stages, each centered on a different aspect of cognitive diversity, empathy, peer support and the potential of artificial intelligence in inclusive education.

Workshop 1 - "Understanding the autism spectrum and introduction to the simulator"

The first meeting began with an opening discussion: "What do you know about the autism spectrum?". Participants shared their beliefs, their knowledge and their questions, which allowed the trainers to pinpoint areas of misunderstanding and gauge the group's readiness to explore the topic further. Next, attendees were introduced to the project's aims and objectives, receiving an accessible



(yet accurate) definition of the autism spectrum. Special emphasis was placed on the diversity of functioning among autistic individuals and on dispelling the myth of a “single autism profile.”

In the next segment, participants took part in an interactive group game that playfully and engagingly debunked the most common myths about autism. They also reviewed global and national statistics on autism prevalence and learned about well-known public figures who identify as neurodivergent.

Knowledge was reinforced with a kahoot quiz testing participants’ familiarity with the topic in the realms of science, culture and pop culture. The group then moved on to building empathy – in small teams, participants compiled

lists of needs that peers on the spectrum might have and reflected on how to be a supportive friend or classmate. The day's highlight was the first encounter with the project's chatbot – a simulator for conversing with someone on the spectrum. Working on tablets in pairs or small groups of up to four, participants engaged with the simulator, observing its speech patterns, tone, emotional responses and communication dynamics. After the session, a moderated discussion addressed questions such as "What surprised you?", "What did you find difficult?" and "How can we be more inclusive as a group?". The day concluded with the collaborative creation of an action map titled "What can we do at our school?".

Workshop 2 – "Practising inclusive communication with the ChatBot"

The second workshop began with a brief recap of the key concepts and values from the previous session. Participants then worked with the ChatBot again – this time exploring different conversational paths and observing how the bot's responses varied according to the assigned personality profile, emotional state or social context.

The exercise was enriched with observation cards – the young people noted the bot's reactions, highlighted differences in its style of expression and reflected on how these would be perceived in real school interactions. On this basis, each group co-created a "decalogue of inclusive communication" – a set of principles to facilitate communication and collaboration with people who have cognitive challenges.

The next part of the workshop involved working with short situational scenarios: a misunderstanding during group

work, emotional overload in class and unclear rules in online communication. Participants role-played, used the ChatBot, analysed their own reactions and evaluated how to support a peer on the spectrum effectively.
To conclude, a moving debate was held around the statement “Do I have to understand in order to support?”. Participants physically positioned themselves at “agree” / “disagree”, argued their choices and listened to others’ opinions. This debate deepened their understanding of inclusion and revealed its multidimensional nature.
The workshop ended with a collaborative session creating posters and mind maps on which each class declared concrete actions to foster an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance in their peer community.

Workshop 3 – Mapping the needs and barriers of peers with cognitive diversity

The third workshop was the most analytical and reflective. It began with a “Fact or myth?” activity about young people with cognitive disabilities. Participants then returned to the ChatBot, this time treating it as a source for analysing social situations from a neurodivergent perspective.
Their task was to interpret not only the bot’s words but also the emotions that might accompany them. The young people annotated responses with emotional notes and compiled lists of needs and challenges that their peers might face.
Next came the barrier-mapping activity – participants examined school life (lessons, breaks, group tasks, trips) to identify situations that are difficult for people with cognitive diversity. In pairs, they worked through an exercise in which they identified a need, the corresponding

barrier and then brainstormed concrete, implementable solutions.
The most creative element was working on the “needs cloud” - a visual map in which, around the figure of a student on the spectrum, they placed needs, barriers, ideas, allies and institutions that could support their social inclusion. This exercise taught systemic and design thinking.
The workshop cycle concluded with a discussion: “How can AI support students with cognitive disabilities?” It was an opportunity to integrate the experiences gained with reflection on the role of technology in education.
Sixty teenagers took part in the workshops (30 in each country). They not only tested the AI simulator but also actively contributed to its development by sharing their observations and feedback.

The workshops promoted empathy, digital awareness, social engagement and shared responsibility for an inclusive school environment. Most importantly—the young people became not only recipients but also co-creators and ambassadors of change.

What's especially gratifying is the genuine engagement of the young workshop participants. They weren't merely recipients of the activities designed–they became active co-creators of the message the project sought to spread: empathy, openness and understanding toward people on the autism spectrum.

As part of their workshop work, the youth produced a set of three original brochures–available in Polish, Spanish and English–that blend educational content with the voice of their generation in support of social inclusion.

The first brochure – "Myths about the autism spectrum" – was dedicated to debunking the most common and damaging stereotypes, such as "people with autism don't have feelings" or "everyone on the spectrum behaves the same." In clear, youth-friendly language and through references to everyday situations, the material encourages readers to abandon oversimplifications and to view autism as a diverse, unique and deeply individual phenomenon.

The second brochure – "The needs of young people on the autism spectrum" – focuses on the everyday challenges that neurodivergent teenagers face in school settings, as well as in peer and family relationships. It highlights the importance of predictability, sensory adjustments, clear communication methods and the provision of emotional safety. The brochure serves as a resource for teachers, educators, school counsellors and anyone who wants to be a better ally to young people on the spectrum.

The third brochure – "How to be a supportive peer" – contains practical advice and example school scenarios in which neurotypical young people can act inclusively and mindfully. From initiating conversation, through responding to non-verbal cues, to understanding the need for quiet or personal space … the brochure translates workshop experiences into concrete, implementable actions.

All three brochures are included at the end of this script (in the "Additional materials developed by young people" section) and are available for free use. They can be integrated into school citizenship lessons, preventive workshops or public-awareness campaigns. They serve as an excellent resource for events such as World Autism Awareness Day (2 April) or European Autism Week. Their youth-oriented tone, visual appeal and accessible language ensure they resonate with peers – and it's precisely young people, educating one another, who have the power today to build a more tolerant society.

You can read more about the project at:

https://autismintegrationproject.fundacjaenabler.pl/

The ChatBot is available at:

https://autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl/

We encourage you to actively use the tools!

About the publication

This publication has been created in response to the growing need for educational spaces that foster understanding and inclusion of young people with cognitive disabilities—particularly those on the autism spectrum. It is not only a summary of the outcomes of an eight-month project carried out in partnership between Spanish and Polish organisations, but, above all, a practical tool for teachers, youth trainers, psychologists, educators and the adolescents themselves—both neurotypical and neurodivergent.

The structure of the publication is divided into two main parts. The first—"About the chatbot simulating a teenager on the autism spectrum"—is technical and analytical in nature, describing the development process of the AI-based educational tool. This section introduces readers to digital solutions that can genuinely support the social-inclusion process for young people with cognitive challenges. Its content aims not only to explain the technological aspects of the simulator but also to provide users with clear, safe guidelines for its use. Thus, alongside the description of the bot's creation, you'll find the terms of use and privacy policy drafted by legal experts.

The second part—"On the practical use of the simulator in youth work"—is application-oriented. It is designed for those who wish to integrate the chatbot into their teaching and mentoring practice. It comprises three ready-made workshop scenarios tested with neurotypical youth in Poland and Spain. Each scenario is based on informal-education methods and is structured to progressively deepen knowledge, build empathy, practise

communication and reflect on the role of artificial intelligence in inclusive processes. All scenarios include concrete objectives, activity proposals, reflection questions and space to adapt them to specific groups.
Finally, the publication features additional materials created by workshop participants from Gdynia and Cocentaina. Their work—educational leaflets and posters—reflects their engagement in the peer-inclusion process. These resources can be used during World Autism Awareness Day (2 April) or as part of educational activities in schools, community centres, libraries and youth organisations.

This publication is both an outcome and a tool – the conclusion of one phase of the project and a starting point for what comes next. It is meant to inspire, provide ready-made solutions and open up space for experimentation and adaptation. It was created for everyone who works with young people every day and who cares about building a community where diversity is not a barrier but a strength.

We want to emphasise that all the tools we've developed – the ChatBot, workshop scenarios and additional materials – are freely available on the project website: https://autismintegrationproject.fundacjaenabler.pl/. We encourage you to download, modify and implement them in your day-to-day work. We deeply hope this publication will help bridge the gap that often separates neurotypical and neurodivergent youth, and foster a more open, empathetic and understanding educational environment.

In the chapters that follow, you'll discover exactly how the simulator was created – step by step, from the first conversations with autistic young people, through data-structure design and the crafting of the system prompt, to the legal and technical considerations. The second part of the publication will take you into the practical realm – the workshop rooms where young people confronted their own assumptions, learned to understand difference and discovered that technology can be not only a communication tool but also a bridge between different social worlds.
We invite you to read on and take action. And if you need any assistance, we're here to help!

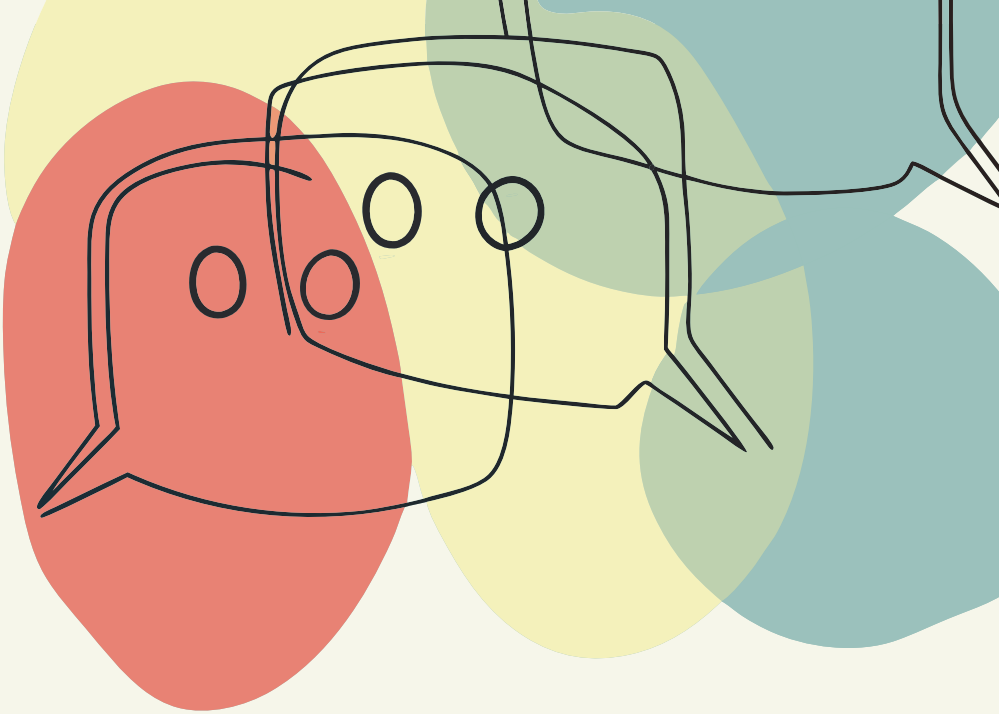
Authors

Chapter 1 – The process of developing the simulator

Artificial intelligence is already finding wide application in the field of neurodiversity – it supports the diagnosis of developmental disorders, analyses social behaviours and serves as an auxiliary tool in therapy and education for people on the autism spectrum. Specialist therapeutic apps are emerging, games that foster social-skills development, bots analysing speech, facial expressions or movement … all designed to help neurodivergent individuals function in society.

However, the partners behind this project had something entirely different in mind. Their ambition wasn't to build a therapeutic or diagnostic tool. The goal was to initiate peer integration between autistic young people and their neurotypical classmates – to "build a bridge" between these two worlds.

From the outset, they agreed that the starting point had to be understanding – an understanding of diverse experiences, modes of communication, emotional processing and social interaction. This understanding wouldn't come from textbooks, academic papers or diagnostic reports, but from genuine, authentic conversations with young people on the spectrum. Their voices were to become the heart of the tool: a digital conversation simulator—a ChatBot designed to replicate as realistically as possible the communication style, reactions and personalities of autistic teenagers. Not to "imitate autism," but to help peers, teachers, educators and families grasp what everyday communication feels like for those on



Part I

About the chatbot simulating
a teenager on the autism spectrum

the spectrum, recognise the challenges they face and learn how to offer support with greater mindfulness, empathy and without fear of "otherness."

It was this idea – integration grounded in experience, authenticity and digital support – that gave rise to the A.utism I.ntegration ChatBot. Its purpose isn't to replace human contact, but to allow young people and adults to practise conversations in a safe environment. Simulating such a dialogue serves not only as a source of knowledge, but also as a space for reflection: What do I feel when someone responds to me very literally? How do I react when a topic comes up unexpectedly because it's my conversation partner's passion? Can I accept silence as a form of communication? Am I able to notice the anxiety behind a brief "I don't know"? These experiences – even in digital form – have the potential to change how we think about and perceive autistic youth.

Creating this tool required not only technological expertise, but above all psychological insight and the lived experience of autistic young people. That's why the work on the simulator was carried out in stages, involving specialists from many fields – youth educators, psychologists, sociologists and software developers.

A key element of the process was the collection of data – conversations with young people on the spectrum who agreed to share their communication style and ways of relating.

Fifty-four individuals—mostly aged sixteen to nineteen—took part. For many, it was the first time their perspective was not only heard but treated as a core educational asset. All conversations—after transcription, anonymization and processing—became the foundation for a unique system prompt, the very heart of the ChatBot. It is this system prompt—based on authentic utterances, emotions, interests and challenges—that instructs the AI how to "behave," what responses to give and which personality traits to adopt. As a result, every ChatBot user can experience dialogue with different types of teenagers on the spectrum: from highly literal and reserved, through hyperactive and emotional, to those who speak with delays, sometimes mix up concepts, yet feel deeply and remain endlessly curious about the world.

In the next part of this chapter, we will walk you through the four-month process of developing the ChatBot in twelve stages: how we moved from the idea of integration to an AI-powered digital tool that teaches empathy and understanding; how we combined technology with education, lived experience with data, emotion with algorithms; and how, with respect for young people, we created something that can genuinely transform peer relationships and support the inclusion of neurodivergent individuals within the youth community.

- Stage 1 - Preparing the subdomain

The first step in creating the simulator was to establish the right digital infrastructure – a space that would support both development work and the eventual rollout to end users. To that end, the partners set up a dedicated

subdomain, autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl, integrated with the foundation's main website, which leads the project.
The subdomain served several key functions. First, it acted as a workspace – a secure testing environment in which successive technical components could be deployed: backend code, user interface, moderation system and integration with the external language model. This setup allowed the development team to monitor progress, test features and implement necessary adjustments in real time, without disrupting the foundation's other activities.
Second, the subdomain functioned as a communication channel with stakeholders – both those involved in the pilot tests and future users of the tool. It was through this site that the final version of the chatbot was made available, along with all required documentation: the terms of use and the privacy policy.

- Stage 2 - Preparing the questionnaire: a conversation scenario with people on the autism spectrum

At the second stage of developing the simulator, the partners focused on creating the research tool - a questionnaire-scenario for interviews with young people on the autism spectrum. Work on this began during the transnational mobility of the trainers. Initially, according to the project plan, an extensive questionnaire of around eighty questions was proposed. However, in the first consultations with specialists - especially oligophrenopedagogues working with young people with cognitive disabilities - it became clear that such a long list

could place too great a cognitive and emotional burden on the target group.

Experts unanimously pointed out that overly lengthy interviews could lead to fatigue, anxiety and, in extreme cases, cause participants to withdraw from further involvement in the project. They therefore recommended reducing the number of questions to thirty, while maintaining their quality, thematic variety and ability to elicit responses that reflected the genuine communicative, social and emotional experiences of autistic young people. The project team accepted this suggestion, recognising participant well-being as the highest priority. The final version of the interview scenario comprised thirty questions, organised to ensure a smooth interview flow – the questionnaire itself is presented on the following page.

I. ME AND MY WORLD

1. How would you describe yourself to someone who doesn't know you?
2. What do you most enjoy doing in your free time?
3. Do you have a favourite place where you feel good? If so, what is it and why?
4. Are there topics you could talk about for hours?
5. Are there things that really stress or tire you out on a day-to-day basis?

II. RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION

6. Do you have close friends? How do you get along with them?
7. What makes someone your friend?
8. How do you react when someone speaks to you unclearly or ambiguously?
9. Is it easy for you to start a conversation with someone new? Why or why not?

10. How do you feel when you have to talk to several people at once?

III. AT SCHOOL AND AMONG PEERS

11. What do you like and dislike about school?
12. How do you feel in your class or group? Do you feel part of it?
13. Does it ever happen that peers don't understand you? How do you react then?
14. How could teachers better support you in everyday situations?
15. Have you ever felt treated differently? What went through your mind at the time?

IV. EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOURS

16. Is it easy for you to tell others what you're feeling?
17. How do you feel when you're very nervous or excited?
18. Do you have personal strategies for coping with difficult emotions?
19. What does your day look like when everything is going well?
20. Are there situations that "overwhelm" you? What do you do then?

V. TECHNOLOGY AND ONLINE COMMUNICATION

21. Do you enjoy chatting via messaging apps? Why or why not?
22. Do you use any apps or games that help you relax or communicate?
23. What do you think about someone creating a bot that converses like someone such as you?
24. How would you like such a bot to behave? What would be important to you?
25. Do you think such a bot could help others understand people on the spectrum?

VI. YOUR OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCES

26. What do you think others should know about people on the spectrum?
27. What do you most dislike when someone talks to you?
28. And what makes you feel comfortable and safe during a conversation?
29. How would you like the relationships between people on the spectrum and their peers to look?
30. Is there anything else you'd like to add that you think is important?

With the help of specialists, a simplified version of the questions was also created—more accessible for young people with significant cognitive impairments.

- Stage 3 - Conducting interviews with teenagers on the autism spectrum

The third—and crucial—step in creating the simulator was conducting interviews with teenagers on the autism spectrum, which provided the essential data for building the realistic communication model used by the chatbot. At this stage, both project partners—the Enabler Foundation and the Spanish organisation Crea360—were equally involved, coordinating research in their respective countries and collaborating with institutions specialising in the education of young people with cognitive disabilities. The interviews took place in January 2025 as one-on-one conversations, recorded with participants' consent either as audio or in written form (depending on each young person's needs and barriers). Their aim was to collect

authentic linguistic data reflecting communication style, emotionality, interests, reactions and challenges encountered by neurodivergent individuals in everyday social interactions. Efforts were made to ensure the interviews occurred under comfortable conditions—conducted by familiar figures (for example, supporting teachers), in spaces known and friendly to participants (within special-needs schools or boarding facilities, in a separate room, on a schedule tailored to each respondent's needs).

The Enabler Foundation carried out its study in cooperation with Special School and Educational Centre No 2 in Gdynia, where young people with cognitive disabilities also study. Interviews were held with 37 students and 11 parents, which proved invaluable for a fuller understanding of the social and family contexts in which these young people live.

Most interviewees were young men aged sixteen to nineteen, attending upper-secondary and vocational schools. Their responses varied widely: from very laconic, simple sentences to repetitive language structures and strong focus on favourite topics (for instance, transport, computer games or sport), all the way to complex, reflective narratives revealing surprising self-awareness.

Thanks to parental involvement, it was also possible to enrich students' accounts with emotional and situational context—many caregivers shared their own experiences around their children's integration, daily communication challenges and observations about societal reactions.

Meanwhile, the Spanish partner Crea360 conducted a series of interviews in collaboration with CPEE Santo Ángel de la Guarda—a specialist educational centre for students

with disabilities in the Alicante region. Seventeen students and seventeen parents took part.
Unlike the Polish group, the Spanish youth tended to be slightly younger (fifteen to seventeen years old), and their conversations were often supported by the centre's special-needs educators (oligophrenopedagogues). As with the Polish participants, their emotional expression varied greatly: some spoke enthusiastically about their favourite activities, while others were very reserved, focusing on a single topic or avoiding eye contact. Many participants struggled with abstract and social concepts, underlining the importance of realistically modelling such reactions in the simulator.
Additional parental interviews helped identify common needs and barriers—such as difficulties forming friendships, sensory hypersensitivity, emotional overload, misunderstanding by teachers and social isolation. Altogether, the 54 individual conversations with young people and 28 with parents captured the full spectrum of experiences, emotions and communication styles of autistic teenagers. These data formed the foundation for the chatbot's subsequent development, ensuring that its utterances and reactions would be authentic, diverse and true to the real-life experiences of the individuals it represents.

- Stage 4 – Converting audio recordings into text

The fourth step in creating the simulator was converting the audio recordings into text using the Whisper speech-recognition model from OpenAI. This stage was crucial for subsequent project activities, as the text transcripts formed

the basis for developing the system prompt—the "personality" and speech style that the chatbot would adopt.

All interviews with young people and parents, in both Poland and Spain, were recorded with participants' and their legal guardians' consent. The raw recordings contained natural speech, pauses, corrections, occasional repetitions and sometimes hard-to-understand fragments. That's why Whisper proved ideal: its advanced machine-learning capabilities enabled precise transcription even with atypical syntax, distinct articulation or unusual speech tempo—features often present in conversations with autistic individuals.

Whisper also handled varying acoustic conditions—whether in classrooms or therapy rooms—by filtering out background noise and accurately recognising participants' speech, giving structure to their spontaneous utterances.

In line with project commitments and the assurances given to legal guardians, the original audio files were permanently deleted once transcription was complete. This measure ensured maximum privacy protection for the young participants and full compliance with data-protection regulations.

The result was eighty-two fully anonymised text transcripts, free of identifying details yet preserving the distinctive communication traits of each speaker. These transcripts formed the foundation for the next stage—data cleaning and preparation for designing the simulator's communicative core.

- Stage 5 – “Cleaning” the text and extracting only the necessary information

The fifth step in creating the simulator focused on editing the text obtained from the interview transcriptions – a stage that was as much ethical as it was technical, aimed at ensuring participants’ anonymity while preserving the material’s substantive coherence.

The project team began by meticulously reviewing each transcript generated by the Whisper model. The first task was to anonymise all personal and identifying information, in line with the assurances given to participants’ guardians and the applicable data-protection regulations (including GDPR). Names, surnames, school names, place names, nicknames and any other details that could indirectly reveal a speaker’s identity were removed.

Next, the team cleaned the material of any fragments irrelevant to the project’s purpose. This primarily involved excising digressions, evasive answers, humorous asides unrelated to the topic, unintelligible passages, repetitions and linguistic errors that might obscure clarity. Some content also included highly personal or emotional vignettes which, although meaningful to individual participants, lay outside the project’s thematic scope and were therefore omitted with respect for privacy.

A key element of this editing phase was stripping out the interviewers’ questions, leaving only the responses of the young people and their parents. The result was a uniform, uncluttered text corpus composed solely of authentic,

unscripted utterances by autistic individuals – the very foundation for developing the simulator's communication profile.

The outcome of this stage was a fully anonymised, well-structured database of conversations, ready for further processing in prompt-engineering and for shaping the distinctive linguistic traits of the simulated teenager. Though time-consuming and exacting, this step was fundamental to ensuring the quality and ethical integrity of the tool under development.

- Stage 6 – Using the collected information to fine-tune the ChatBot

In the sixth stage, which formed the core of the simulator's substantive fine-tuning, the project partners undertook a crucial task: crafting a detailed and realistic "system prompt," the behavioural instructions that would enable the ChatBot to mimic the communication style of a teenager on the autism spectrum. To this end, teams of special-needs educators, oligophrenopedagogues and youth workers analysed the cleaned transcripts of conversations with fifty-four autistic young people and interviews with their caregivers.
Work on this element proceeded in parallel in both partner countries, ensuring international representativeness and communicative diversity. The aim was not to create a single, generic "autistic person," but to simulate a wide spectrum of traits and communication styles—taking into account differences in gender, levels of sensory sensitivity,

individual interests, emotional reactions and ways of forming social bonds.

Key areas of analysis and construction of the system prompt included:

1. Building the personality
The first step was to create a set of detailed character profiles ("personas") that the simulator would emulate in various conversation sessions.
Each persona had a clearly defined set of traits:
- Gender and age (13 – 18 years old – maintaining grammatical consistency in inflected languages)
- Educational level (for example, high-school or technical-college student)
- Unique interests (for instance, robotics, terrarium-keeping, molecular gastronomy)
- Recent activities and projects related to those interests
- Communication style (direct, polite, ironic, laconic, emotional)
- Stress reactions (for example, withdrawal, irritation, use of intensified language)
- Sensory preferences (for instance, avoidance of noise, hypersensitivity to light)

Each conversation with the user began by randomly selecting one of these personas – making every interaction unique and authentic.

2. Naturalness and authenticity
The team placed great emphasis on ensuring the ChatBot didn't "explain" its communication style or identify itself as autistic. Instead, its character was to arise from natural speech patterns, emotional reactions and choice of topics.

The user should feel as if they're talking to a real person – not a "diagnosis simulation."

3. Ensuring diversity of communication styles
Experts emphasised that the simulator should showcase a range of – including less typical – communication styles of neurodivergent individuals, such as:

- Frankness and directness, sometimes even brusqueness ("That's a stupid question," "Leave me alone now")
- Frustration responses using mild swearing or impatience ("Seriously?", "What a load of rubbish")
- Mood swings
- Difficulty understanding ambiguity or irony
- Excessive focus on details
- Challenges interpreting social norms.

At the same time, the use of genuinely vulgar or violent language was prohibited–automatic filtering mechanisms were introduced.

4. Highlighting interests as the key to understanding
Each programmed persona was given two to three highly detailed interests that formed the foundation of their responses. For each interest, the team developed:

- Specific facts and figures they share
- Recent discoveries that have captivated them
- Projects or activities they're currently working on
- The personal context and significance of this interest for their emotions and identity.

The application of these techniques allowed simulator users to more deeply step into the lived experience of a neurodivergent young person.

5. Maintaining consistency
An extremely important principle was to maintain complete consistency–linguistic, stylistic, factual and emotional–throughout the conversation. The simulator could not change grammatical gender, tone of voice or interests during the interaction. All responses had to be grounded in the personality of the specific persona, which required careful mapping and prompt engineering by the creators.

6. Education by example, not by lecturing
The ChatBot wasn't meant to teach in the traditional way–through explanations or definitions–but by offering a simulated communicative experience. Users were to discover for themselves that certain responses arise, for instance, from a need for predictability, sensory fatigue or difficulties in processing emotions. In this way, the tool fulfils an educational role through engagement and reflection, rather than by dispensing ready-made formulas.

The outcome of the pedagogical team's work was a document of over five pages, which became the simulator's "heart" – the system prompt. From it, the AI could generate realistic, nuanced and deeply authentic responses.

- Stage 7: Implementation of safety mechanisms

The seventh stage of developing the simulator addressed the project's ethical responsibility. From the outset, it was assumed that the tool should foster empathy and understanding, not serve as a space for destructive or provocative behaviour. Both partners—the Enabler Foundation and Crea360—emphasised that it was unacceptable for users to deliberately provoke or subject the simulator (and, symbolically, autistic individuals) to symbolic or verbal violence.
The team chose not to build custom moderation systems but to leverage the built-in content-moderation features of the underlying language-model architecture, which provide a high level of automatic filtering.
In practice, this means the simulator relies on the model provider's internal safety mechanisms. As a result, the tool can detect and neutralise potentially harmful or inappropriate content in real time, without the need to design bespoke filters or blocks.

The model's built-in automatic moderation mechanisms include, among others:
- Blocking hate speech and discriminatory or offensive content
- Responding to attempts to provoke sexual discussions
- Neutralizing content related to violence, self-harm or suicidal ideation
- Rejecting any statements containing threats or calls for harmful behaviour

The project team, mindful of the topic's sensitivity and potential user reactions, thoroughly tested these safeguards in practice by conducting multiple conversation trials. As a result of these tests, it was confirmed that:

- The simulator can reliably detect abuse attempts and refuses to answer questions containing prohibited content.
- In borderline cases, it issues an "evasive" reply – for example, redirecting the conversation or informing the user that it cannot respond to the question.
- The model will not engage with topics that violate the terms of use or project guidelines, even under repeated provocation.

The decision to rely on existing moderation solutions was driven by the desire to ensure maximum stability, security and compliance with current ethical and technological standards. Developing bespoke filtering systems would have required constant updates and oversight (even after the project's conclusion).

For this reason, the project team consciously chose a tool with robust "factory-installed" safeguards, allowing the simulator to be used safely by both neurotypical young people and specialists working with those on the spectrum. As a result, the chatbot can operate in an open environment without continuous moderation, while still offering a high level of protection against unwanted content and misuse.

- Stage 8: Programming the ChatBot application

The decision to use a proven solution—a ready-made Next.js template—for the simulator's application wasn't accidental. Next.js is highly regarded in the developer community for its reliability, flexibility and seamless integration with modern web-app tooling.

Opting for an off-the-shelf scaffold was part of a deliberate tech strategy: to devote maximum effort to the project's most valuable educational and social component. The true innovation lay in crafting the ChatBot's "heart," the system prompt that defines its personality, speech patterns, emotional reactions and communicative consistency.

By leveraging a prebuilt technical framework, the team could focus on refining this crucial element—both linguistically and pedagogically—while ensuring the app itself remained robust, stable and easy to integrate with other project components (the user interface, the AI API and the content-management system).
Next.js enabled the rapid rollout of a test version of the simulator, straightforward updates and hassle-free hosting on the project's dedicated subdomain.

- Stage 9: Integration with the artificial intelligence system

Initially, we planned to use OpenAI's GPT system—but during testing we chose to switch to Anthropic's Claude. This decision was driven by Claude's superior performance in generating naturally sounding text, which was crucial for the realism of simulated conversations. Claude also demonstrated greater stability, faster response times and a

more accurate reflection of human communication patterns.

- Stage 10: Developing the user interface

One of the final stages in creating the simulator was crafting the graphical user interface, which enables intuitive interaction with the ChatBot. The underlying technology was the Next.js framework – this made it possible to build an environment that not only looks appealing but also runs smoothly and reliably on a range of devices, from desktop computers to smartphones and tablets.
In designing the interface, particular emphasis was placed on usability and accessibility. The team strove to make the application welcoming and easy to understand for both seasoned digital-tool users and those with limited tech experience. As a result, a simple, uncluttered layout, clear on-screen messages and a minimalist aesthetic were adopted so as not to distract the user.
Accessibility considerations were also addressed – appropriate contrast, large, highly legible text and intuitive navigation elements ensure the simulator is accessible even to people with cognitive challenges or reduced visual acuity.

- Stage 11: Drafting the terms of use and privacy policy

To ensure transparency of usage rules and full compliance with applicable law, two key documents were drafted: the terms of use and the privacy policy. Both have been made available to users at https://autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl/.

The terms of use define the basic rules for using the application. The ChatBot is an educational simulation tool created by the Enabler Foundation and the Spanish company Crea360 to promote a better understanding of neurodiversity.
It is emphasised that conversations do not constitute diagnosis, therapy or professional advice – the ChatBot is a fictional persona based on anonymised data, designed solely for educational purposes.
Users are required to observe the following prohibitions:
- attempting to use the tool for medical diagnosis;
- providing crisis-counselling advice;
- entering personal data (their own or others');
- generating illegal, offensive or discriminatory content.
Violation of these rules may result in suspension of the user's account or restriction of access.

The partners accept no liability for decisions made on the basis of ChatBot conversations and reserve the right to interrupt, suspend or modify the service without prior notice. The technology is based on Anthropic's Claude model, and hosting is provided by Vercel with a Neon database – both infrastructures comply with GDPR and offer options for data localisation within the EU.
The data controller – the Enabler Foundation – processes data securely, transparently and in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The categories of data processed include:
- chat content;
- email addresses (if provided);
- technical data (IP address, server logs, browser type).
Data are used solely for technical, analytical and evaluative purposes.

No special-category data are processed, and chat transcripts may be retained for up to two years from last use. Users enjoy the full range of GDPR rights, including the right to access, rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, objection, data portability and lodging a complaint with the President of the Data Protection Authority. For data-protection inquiries, contact kontakt@fundacjaenabler.pl.
The service may use cookies and local-storage mechanisms for technical and statistical purposes, without employing advertising or marketing tools.
Institutional disclaimer

Both the terms of use and the privacy policy emphasise that the project is co-financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme. The views expressed by the creators and the ChatBot do not reflect the official position of the EU or the Foundation for the Development of the Education System.

- Stage 12: Creating the specification and outlining ways to use the ChatBot

The final stage involved drafting an expanded technical specification for the ChatBot and developing sample workshop scenarios in which the tool could be used. From the very beginning, the partners were determined that the ChatBot should not remain merely a “demo app,” but become an actively used teaching resource, well worth integrating into youth-work practice. The project team understood that the true value of a technological solution lies not only in its innovativeness, but above all in its practical application—especially when the goal is to nurture

empathy, tolerance and a deeper understanding of neurodiversity.
Accordingly, in the project's closing phase they produced an extended pedagogical specification, comprising three detailed workshop scenarios for 13 - 19-year-olds. Each scenario places the autism-spectrum conversation simulator at its core as a didactic element. The workshops were designed so that the tool serves not only an informational role, but also a transformative one—shifting students' attitudes toward their neurodivergent peers.
The activities outlined in these scenarios include, among others:
- An introduction to the autism spectrum
- Reflection on interpersonal communication
- Identifying the needs of people on the spectrum
- Exercises that teach mindfulness and appropriate ways of responding in social situations

The ChatBot serves as a safe training space where young people can test different communication styles, observe reactions and draw conclusions without fear of hurting someone or committing a faux pas.

Each of the three scenarios also includes facilitator notes, suggested probing questions, engagement techniques and space for reflection.

The full workshop scenarios are available in Part II of the script and can be successfully used in schools, non-formal education centres, libraries, youth centres or NGOs.
The project team recommends implementing them not only as one-off workshops but also as part of broader anti-

discrimination initiatives or public-awareness campaigns – for example, during World Autism Awareness Day (2 April).

Chapter 2: „ Terms of use”

In connection with the launch of the educational-simulation tool available at autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl, the partners have drafted a terms-of-use agreement setting out the rules for using the ChatBot. The document was created to ensure transparency, user safety and compliance with applicable law, including the GDPR. The terms are accessible directly on the autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl website (both before account creation and after logging in) and apply to all users of the ChatBot.

Terms of use for the ChatBot at autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl

1. General information

1.1. These terms of use set out the rules for using the chatbot available at autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl, created by the Enabler Foundation and Crea360 S.L. as an educational simulation tool.

1.2. The purpose of the chatbot is to enable users to practise interacting with a teenager on the autism spectrum in simulation form.

1.3. The chatbot plays a fictional persona based on anonymised data and spectrum profiles; it is not a diagnosis nor a representation of any specific individual.

1.4. By using the chatbot, you accept these terms of use and the privacy policy.

2. Liability and limitations

2.1. The chatbot:

- does not constitute psychological, medical or pedagogical advice;

- makes no warranty as to the accuracy, completeness or reliability of the content generated;
- is not liable for any decisions made by the user based on the interaction;
- is a demonstration tool with no obligation to achieve any particular outcome.

2.2. The partners disclaim all liability for any damages, including financial, reputational, emotional or any indirect harm.

2.3. The partners reserve the right to suspend, modify or limit the chatbot's operation (including technical changes, maintenance downtime, outages, updates or user-account removal) without notice and without liability.

2.4. These terms may be amended unilaterally – changes take effect upon publication. In the event of material changes, the partners will notify registered users.

3. Technology and data processing

3.1. The chatbot operates on Anthropic's Claude model via the appropriate API interfaces.

3.2. The service is hosted on Vercel, with data (including logs) stored in a Neon (PostgreSQL serverless) database. Data-storage regions may include locations outside the EEA; users are informed of this in the privacy policy.

4. Privacy and personal-data protection

4.1. Chat transcripts are automatically saved for analysis, evaluation and further tool development.

4.2. Your email address is also recorded during registration.

4.3. It is prohibited to provide any personal, sensitive or confidential data–your own or that of third parties–in the chatbot conversation.

4.4. To report bugs, inappropriate content or responses, contact kontakt@fundacjaenabler.pl. Such reports will be used solely to improve the system.

4.5. Data processing complies with GDPR. Detailed information is available in the privacy policy on the website.

5. User rights

Users have the right to:

- access their data;
- rectify their data;
- erase their data;
- restrict processing;
- object to processing;
- data portability;
- withdraw consent, where given;
- lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority.

6. Prohibitions and abuse

6.1. It is forbidden to use the chatbot for:

- attempting to diagnose individuals on the autism spectrum;
- addressing crisis situations (e.g. depression, self-harm, suicidal thoughts);
- generating illegal, discriminatory, offensive, pornographic, false or hateful content.

6.2. In cases of abuse, the partners reserve the right to block access or delete the user's account.

7. Erasmus+ programme and institutional liability

7.1. The project is co-financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme, application no. 2024-1-PL01-KA210-YOU-000256352, action type KA210-YOU.

7.2. Co-financed by EU funds. The views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the Foundation for the Development of the Education System. Neither the EU nor the Foundation is liable for them.

8. Final provisions
8.1. These terms take effect on the date of publication.
8.2. Matters not regulated herein are governed by applicable Polish and EU law.
8.3. Language versions of the terms may be available. In case of discrepancy, the Polish version prevails.

Chapter 3: „Privacy policy”

In order to ensure transparency and protect the data of those using the educational-simulation tool at autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl, the partners also drafted a privacy policy. The document sets out the rules for collecting, processing and storing personal and technical data in connection with the use of the ChatBot simulating interactions with a teenager on the autism spectrum.
The policy is available directly on the autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl website (both before account creation and after logging in) and applies to all users of the ChatBot.

Privacy policy – autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl
1. Data Controller
The data controller is the Enabler Foundation, headquartered in Poland. The Foundation processes data in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). The Foundation has or will appoint a Data Protection Officer (EU Rep) as required under Article 27 of the GDPR.
For privacy and personal-data matters, contact kontakt@fundacjaenabler.pl.
2. Scope and Purpose of Processing
We process only the data necessary for:
- the proper functioning of the service (chatbot interactions),
- registration and user-account management (email address),
- ensuring system security and performance analysis,

- improving tool quality (evaluation, moderation, testing),
- fulfilling legal obligations.

These data include:

- email address,
- chat content,
- technical data (e.g. server logs, IP address, browser type, connection time).

We do not knowingly process special-category data (e.g. health, religious or ideological information).

Partner-organisation staff do not monitor chat content in real time and bear no responsibility for its substance.

3. Legal basis for processing

Data are processed on the basis of:

- Art. 6 (1)(b) GDPR – performance of a contract or provision of a service,
- Art. 6 (1)(c) GDPR – legal obligations (e.g. archiving, responding to official requests),
- Art. 6 (1)(f) GDPR – legitimate interest of the controller (e.g. tool improvement, error analysis).

4. Hosting and Data Transfer

Our service runs on Vercel, with data stored in a Neon (serverless PostgreSQL) database. Both providers offer EU-based data-storage options but may use global infrastructure.

Accordingly, data may be transferred outside the European Economic Area (EEA).

Providers are prohibited from using user data to train their own AI models.

5. Data retention period

Chat content and logs will be retained for three years from receipt of the closing letter from the National Agency. Thereafter, all data will be deleted.

6. User rights
Under the GDPR, you have the right to:
- access your data,
- rectify your data,
- erase your data (“right to be forgotten”),
- restrict processing,
- data portability,
- object to processing,
- withdraw consent (if given),
- lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority.
To exercise these rights, contact kontakt@fundacjaenabler.pl.
7. Security measures
We employ appropriate technical and organisational measures, including:
- encryption of data in transit (SSL/TLS),
- access control,
- regular system updates and security reviews.
8. Cookies and analytics
The site may use cookies and local-storage mechanisms solely for technical and analytical purposes, such as:
- storing session identifiers,
- remembering user settings,
- analyzing site performance.
We do not use external advertising tools (e.g. Google Ads, Facebook Pixel) nor share your activity with any advertising platforms.
9. Error reports and contact
To report errors, inappropriate responses or abuse, email kontakt@fundacjaenabler.pl. Reports are used only to improve the tool and for no other purpose.
10. EU Co-financing
The project is co-financed by the European Union under

Erasmus+ (KA210-YOU, application 2024-1-PL01-KA210-YOU-000256352).
The views expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the EU or the Foundation for the Development of the Education System. Neither the EU nor the Foundation bears responsibility for them.

11. Changes to the privacy policy

We reserve the right to amend this privacy policy. The updated version will be published online with the date indicated. In case of material changes, users will be notified.

In recent years, we have seen growing interest in neurodiversity within educational and youth settings. Yet people on the autism spectrum often remain misunderstood or labelled according to harmful stereotypes. One of the project's aims was to create a tool that would allow young people and their educators to approach the perspective of a teenager on the spectrum in a more empathetic, realistic and engaging way. This led to the development of the chatbot simulator described in detail in the previous section—its functionality based on real, anonymised data (collected during conversations with fifty-four autistic young people) and its goal not only educational but, above all, to effect practical change in peer attitudes.

In the second part of this script we'll focus on the simulator's practical use in day-to-day work with youth. The three workshop scenarios presented here are ready-to-use tools for schools and beyond—in youth clubs, NGO-led workshops or community and youth-led initiatives. They have been designed for educators, youth trainers, school counsellors, psychologists and anyone running sessions in the spirit of equal-rights, inclusive and participatory education.

Part II

On the practical use of the simulator in working with young people

The simulator was not conceived merely as a demonstration tool. Its dialogue-based design enables safe, realistic practice of conversations with someone on the spectrum, reflecting typical social behaviours and reactions. This creates a unique opportunity to learn through experience–crucial for young people, who most effectively learn when they can live through, test and discuss a situation rather than simply hear about it.

Interaction with the chatbot doesn't replace contact with a real person, but it can serve as an excellent starting point for conversations about communication, barriers and empathy.

The scenarios in this part of the publication were designed to encourage the use of the simulator in educational practice. They complement the technological tool with a pedagogical component–translating interaction with the bot into a framework for working with youth groups. We operate on the assumption that technology alone doesn't change attitudes–but can be a highly effective tool when embedded in a well-designed educational process. That's why we've developed ready-to-use outlines for three educational sessions, which can be conducted separately or as a coherent series.

Each of the three scenarios is designed to span two 45-minute sessions (90 minutes in total) and includes: lesson objectives, a list of necessary materials, a detailed lesson plan, suggested reflection questions and facilitator notes. These sessions can be run in upper-primary (final grades) and secondary schools, as well as in non-formal education settings.

The structure of each scenario is grounded in experiential learning principles, incorporating peer education, group work, reflection and hands-on activities. Each one also accounts for varying levels of group readiness to discuss neurodiversity – from a gentle introduction to the topic, through direct interaction with the tool, to more advanced reflection on the needs of autistic young people and their peers with other disabilities.

Although these scenarios were created for participants aged 15 to 19, with appropriate adaptation they can also be used with slightly younger groups (for example, grades VI–VIII in primary school). It's important that participants already possess basic social skills and can work effectively in a group. No prior knowledge of the autism spectrum is required – the first session is explicitly structured as an introduction.

Although the simulator's primary purpose is to cultivate understanding of neurodiversity, we mustn't overlook the added value it brings in developing a range of key social competencies in young people:

- Empathy and listening skills
- Interpersonal communication – especially in situations of misunderstanding or differing perspectives
- Critical thinking – for example, when analysing the ChatBot's responses and reflecting on one's own answers
- Openness to diversity – including neurological diversity
- Self-awareness – recognising one's own biases, communication challenges and beliefs.

Activities based on the simulator thus become not only a space for learning about autism but also a "test" of everyday communication – the quality of which directly influences peer dynamics and the creation of a more tolerant environment.

Scenario 1 - "Introduction to the autism spectrum, demonstration of the simulator"

The first session is introductory in nature. Its goal is to build foundational knowledge about the autism spectrum, dispel common myths and introduce participants to the concept and purpose of the simulator. The session is structured around interactive activities such as a fact-or-myth exercise, idea mapping, a Kahoot quiz, working with short texts, educational games and group work.

Scenario 2 – "Practical application of the simulator"

The second scenario focuses on hands-on work with the ChatBot. Young people interact with the tool, attempting to connect with a "teenager on the spectrum." The workshop segment revolves around analysing that conversation– comparing different strategies, sharing experiences and reflecting on the emotions that arose during the dialogue.

Scenario 3 – "Mapping the needs of peers with cognitive disabilities"

The final scenario focuses on translating the knowledge gained into practical action. Young people identify the needs and barriers their peers may face, then design proposals for solutions – for example, educational campaigns, support activities or micro-projects within the school or local community.

Each scenario is not only a set of exercises, but also an invitation to dialogue and collective reflection on creating a more open and understanding world.

Their aim is to support young people in creating an environment where neurological diversity is regarded with the same seriousness as any other form of diversity.

We hope these materials will support your work and inspire the creation of further educational spaces where every child and every teenager–regardless of how they perceive the world–can feel safe, understood and welcome. Please feel free to make full use of the content!

SCENARIO NO. 1: "INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTISM SPECTRUM, PRESENTATION OF THE SIMULATOR"

Recommended duration:
2 class periods - 90 minutes (2 × 45 min plus a 10-minute break)
Target group:
Youth aged 15–19.
The scenario can also be adapted for younger participants (13–14 years old) by simplifying the language and reducing the level of abstraction in the exercises.
General objectives:

- Raising young people's awareness of the autism spectrum Challenging stereotypes and myths about autism
- Introducing participants to the concept and functioning of the simulator autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl
- Initiating reflection on social attitudes toward neurodiversity

Specific objectives:
The participant:

- explains what the autism spectrum is and knows its basic characteristics
- identifies and challenges common myths about people on the spectrum
- understands the purpose and principles of using the chatbot simulator
- is able to collaborate in a group and express thoughts on equality in communication
- develops empathy and a willingness to take action in support of neurodivergent individuals

Methods:

- brainstorming
  educational game
- interactive quiz (e.g. Kahoot)
- text analysis
- guided discussion
- working with worksheets
- group reflection
- pair and team work

Tools and materials:

- whiteboard or flipchart
- projector and computer with Internet access
- myth vs. fact cards about autism
- source texts (short situation descriptions or quotes)
- Kahoot app
- A3 sheets and markers
- printed worksheets
- access to the simulator website: autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl

Workshop flow:
First class period:

1. Introduction – "If you were an alien..." (10 minutes)

Type of activity: thematic introduction with elements of reflection and projection
Objectives of the activity:

- Encouraging participants to think openly about differences in how people perceive the world
- Introducing the topic of neurodiversity through the metaphor of "otherness"
- Stimulating participants' curiosity and imagination

Activity description:
The facilitator asks the participants:
"Imagine you've just landed on an alien planet. You look human, but you have completely different habits, ways of thinking, a different sense of time, heightened sensitivity to sound and light. You're walking into a school on this planet. What surprises you? What do you struggle with? What feels easy, and what is completely incomprehensible?"
Participants first write down their answers individually (2 minutes), then share them in pairs (2 minutes), and finally, volunteers share with the whole group (3–5 responses).
The facilitator writes key phrases on the board: otherness, difficulty, different logic, misunderstanding, not being understood by others, sensitivity, communication, curiosity.
Then they say:
"We're now beginning a conversation about autism. But not as a disease or a diagnosis. Today we'll explore what it's like to function as someone who—just like you in this metaphor—has a different operating system. A different way of processing the

world. A different language of experience."

Learning outcomes:
- Participants understand that different ways of perceiving and functioning do not imply a "mistake"
- They develop an attitude of openness to other perspectives and a willingness to further explore the topic

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- Don't correct "strange" responses - every answer has value.
- If the group has a strong sense of humor, allow room for creativity, but then bring it back to reflection: "Now imagine that someone actually feels this way - every day."
- You can prepare a worksheet with an illustration of a planet and space to write down 3 surprising things.

2. Activity - "Facts or myths?" (15 minutes)

Type of activity: educational game in small groups + group presentation and debrief

Objectives of the activity:
- Identifying and challenging stereotypes and misconceptions about the autism spectrum
- Increasing participants' knowledge in an engaging, team-based format
- Strengthening skills in argumentation and collaboration

Activity description:
1. Participants split into 8 groups (3-5 people in each).
2. Each group receives a different set of 10 cards with statements (5 facts and 5 myths) about the autism spectrum.

3. The task is to sort each statement into the category of MYTH or FACT – they have 5 minutes to do this.
4. Afterward, each group presents their set in turn (reading each statement and sharing how they classified it).
5. The facilitator writes a collective list of myths and facts on the board or flipchart, correcting any misinterpretations as needed. At the end, they may highlight a few commonly mistaken statements and briefly discuss them.

Learning outcomes:

- Participants identify misconceptions and learn accurate information about autism
- They practice teamwork and group discussion
- They develop social awareness and critical thinking

Tools and materials:

- 8 sets of statements (10 cards per group)
- A3 sheets labeled “MYTH” / “FACT”
- Whiteboard / flipchart for creating a collective list

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- If you have more time, you can let groups hold a brief debate when they’re unsure how to classify a statement
- Encourage questions during the presentations – it’s a natural moment to clear up confusion
- Be sure to correct mistakes gently – the goal isn’t to test knowledge, but to learn together

Sets of statement cards:

Set 1

People on the autism spectrum don't have feelings. (MYTH)
Some people on the spectrum have difficulty processing sensory input. (FACT)
All autistic people are nonverbal. (MYTH)
Autism can be diagnosed in adults as well. (FACT)
Autistic people are rude and disobedient. (MYTH)
Autism is not a disease, but a neurological trait. (FACT)
All people on the spectrum are geniuses, like Einstein. (MYTH)
Some autistic individuals can focus intensely on a specific topic. (FACT)
Autism is caused by vaccines. (MYTH)
People with autism learn differently than neurotypical people. (FACT)

Set 2

Autism affects only boys. (MYTH)
Some people on the spectrum are very talkative and sociable. (FACT)
Autism is a mental disorder. (MYTH)
People with autism can work and have families. (FACT)
Autistic people lack empathy. (MYTH)
Empathy may be hard to express, but that doesn't mean it's absent. (FACT)
Children with autism can be "cured" if therapy starts early. (MYTH)
Autism can coexist with ADHD, anxiety, or depression. (FACT)
Autism is caused by poor parenting. (MYTH)

People on the spectrum can be deeply emotionally sensitive. (FACT)

Set 3

Autistic people prefer to be alone. (MYTH)
Autism is a spectrum, meaning a highly diverse range of traits and functioning. (FACT)
Autistic people always have learning difficulties. (MYTH)
An autism diagnosis can be helpful and supportive. (FACT)
People with autism can't work in groups. (MYTH)
With proper support, people on the spectrum can function well socially. (FACT)
Autism is a trendy disorder—this didn't exist before. (MYTH)
Girls on the spectrum are often underdiagnosed. (FACT)
Autism always involves severe disability. (MYTH)
People with autism have the right to educational support. (FACT)

Set 4

People with autism don't like others. (MYTH)
Some individuals on the spectrum have highly developed memory. (FACT)
Autism is caused by trauma or poor family relationships. (MYTH)
The spectrum can be diagnosed at any age. (FACT)
People on the spectrum shouldn't study with other students. (MYTH)
Inclusive education can benefit all students. (FACT)
You can recognize autism at first glance. (MYTH)
Not every autistic person shows visible difficulties. (FACT)
People with autism are unpredictable and dangerous. (MYTH)

Challenging behavior can stem from sensory overload. (FACT)

Set 5

Autism is the same as intellectual disability. (MYTH)
People with autism can be very logical and concrete. (FACT)
Autistic people always avoid eye contact. (MYTH)
Every person on the spectrum has different experiences and needs. (FACT)
Autism affects only children. (MYTH)
Adults on the spectrum are often invisible to the system. (FACT)
People with autism never smile. (MYTH)
Some individuals on the spectrum have a great sense of humor. (FACT)
Autistic people can't fall in love. (MYTH)
Relationships and emotions matter to people on the spectrum, too. (FACT)

Set 6

All people with autism share the same traits. (MYTH)
The spectrum means diversity – no two people on it are the same. (FACT)
You can "grow out of" autism. (MYTH)
With age, many individuals develop their own coping strategies. (FACT)
Autistic people shouldn't go on school trips. (MYTH)
Good preparation and support enable active participation in outings. (FACT)
People with autism are cold and unfeeling. (MYTH)
Difficulty expressing emotions doesn't mean they don't exist. (FACT)

Autism causes aggression. (MYTH)
Aggression can be a reaction to overload or lack of understanding. (FACT)

Set 7
Autism can be diagnosed with an IQ test. (MYTH)
Diagnosing autism is a multi-step process, not based solely on IQ. (FACT)
Autistic people never make eye contact. (MYTH)
Some people on the spectrum make eye contact, others don't - it's about comfort. (FACT)
Autism is very rare. (MYTH)
About 1 in 100 people are on the autism spectrum - it's not a marginal phenomenon. (FACT)
People with autism are selfish. (MYTH)
Autistic individuals can have deep empathy and a desire to help others. (FACT)
People on the spectrum can't be leaders. (MYTH)
The right environment can foster leadership skills. (FACT)

Set 8
Autism is caused by video games and the internet. (MYTH)
There is no evidence linking technology to the occurrence of autism. (FACT)
People on the spectrum don't understand jokes. (MYTH)
Their sense of humor may be different, but it's just as valuable. (FACT)
Children with autism can't be taught in regular classrooms. (MYTH)
Support and understanding can make a classroom more accessible. (FACT)
People on the spectrum don't have social needs. (MYTH)
The need for relationships may be present, just expressed

differently. (FACT)
Autism is a trendy diagnosis among parents. (MYTH)
Better diagnostics reflect greater awareness, not a trend. (FACT)

After finishing the “Facts or myths?” activity and reviewing the results together, this is an ideal moment to present participants with a clear and accessible definition of the autism spectrum—rooted in reliable knowledge but phrased appropriately for a youth audience aged 15-19.
Youth-friendly definition - what is the autism spectrum?
The autism spectrum is a so-called cognitive difference—meaning the brain works in a way that processes information, emotions, and sensory input differently from most people.

A cognitive difference doesn’t mean something is broken or worse—it just means a different way of thinking and functioning.
People on the spectrum may respond differently to light, sound, human contact, or social rules.
They may sometimes struggle to understand others’ emotions or to express their own.
They may need repetition, clear instructions, and a calm sensory environment.
At the same time, they may be highly observant, honest, loyal, and focused on what truly interests them.

Autism is not:

- a mental illness – it's not schizophrenia or depression, though people on the spectrum can experience those as well (just like anyone else)
- an intellectual disability – many people on the spectrum have average or above-average intelligence, though they may struggle with school-based learning (just like anyone!)
- a hereditary disorder in the sense of "you inherit it = you have it" – while genes may play a role, it doesn't work like eye color inheritance
- FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome) – which results from damage caused by alcohol during pregnancy and has different causes and symptoms

In Europe, the prevalence of autism spectrum conditions is estimated at around 1 in 100 children. Diagnoses have become increasingly common in recent years. Experts say this is due to greater awareness of autism and the broadening of diagnostic criteria.

It's important to remember that the word "spectrum" means diversity—no two people on the spectrum are the same. That's why people often say, "If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism" —not everyone.

Activity 3 – "What if..." (10 minutes)

Type of activity: mini-drama + analysis of social situations
Objectives of the activity:

- Increasing empathy toward individuals on the autism spectrum
- Understanding common challenges faced by neurodivergent youth
- Developing the ability to interpret behaviors from different perspectives

Activity description:
The facilitator introduces the activity:
"Now we're going to act out a few short situations from everyday life—things that could happen to anyone. I'll ask for volunteers to play out these scenes, and after each one, we'll analyze it together."
Volunteers from the group (or selected participants) perform 3 short scenes. Each lasts no more than 1-2 minutes. The rest of the group observes.
After each scene, the facilitator asks prepared questions and leads a brief discussion (2-3 minutes per scene and reflection).

Scene 1 – "The party"
Description:
A group of friends organizes a get-together (a party, birthday, bonfire). One person—who is on the autism spectrum—doesn't want to join, or shows up but stays very quiet, stands off to the side, doesn't speak, and leaves after a while. The others comment on it as "weird" or "unsociable."

Reflection questions:

- What might have been difficult for this person in that situation?
- Why might they have responded in that particular way?
- What needs might have been behind their behavior?
- What could their friends have done to show understanding and support?
- Have you ever witnessed a situation where someone was labeled as "weird," but maybe they just felt differently?

Scene 2 – "Noise in the classroom"

Description:

There's a lot of noise in the classroom—group work, laughter, conversations. One student stands up, covers their ears, says *"Be quieter, I can't work like this!"* and asks the teacher to leave the room. The rest of the group is surprised and sees the reaction as exaggerated, funny, or annoying.

Reflection questions:

- Why might noise be difficult for some people?
- How would you feel if you had to be in that kind of environment every day?
- What could have been done differently—from a student's perspective?
- How could the class or the teacher respond to help that person feel safe?
- Should reactions like this be judged—or understood?

Scene 3 – "Group conversation"

Description:

A group of students is talking during a group project. One person barely speaks, avoids eye contact, and when they

do talk, they speak very briefly and to the point. Someone in the group comments: *"You're being rude–you could at least try a little harder if we're working together."*

Reflection questions:

- Does someone's way of speaking always reflect their attitude toward others?
- Why might it be difficult for some people to maintain eye contact or speak at length?
- How do you feel when someone speaks like that–and how do you feel once you understand it's not disrespect, just a different communication style?
- How can you support someone like this in team work?
- What different ways of communicating are acceptable within a group?

Learning outcomes:

- Participants begin to understand that certain behaviors may stem from a different cognitive style–not from "rudeness" or "laziness"
- They become more willing to support peers in challenging situations
- They learn the importance of not judging someone based on surface-level reactions

Tools and materials:

- Printed scene descriptions (for the facilitator or to hand out)
- Whiteboard or flipchart - for noting key takeaways after each scene

Suggestions for the facilitator:

If the group is shy, you can read the scenes aloud instead of acting them out.

Make sure the discussion is safe and empathetic - remind participants that no one is to be laughed at.

You can wrap up the activity with a question like:

"After these scenes, do you feel it's easier to understand what someone on the spectrum might be experiencing?"

Activity 4 – "The ten commandments of empathetic behavior" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: summary + creative group work + discussion
Objectives of the activity:

- Consolidating knowledge and reflections from the first part of the workshop
- Collaboratively developing values and principles that support inclusion of people on the autism spectrum
- Empowering participants by engaging them in creating "rules of empathy"
- Fostering a positive group atmosphere around neurodiversity

Activity description
Facilitator's introduction (1 minute):
"Today we've talked about what the autism spectrum is, the kinds of challenges that can come up in relationships, and which stereotypes are worth breaking. To wrap up, I'd like to invite you to create a shared 'ten commandments'–10 simple principles for how to support someone on the autism spectrum, whether as a peer, classmate, friend, or simply as another person."

Group division (2 minutes):
Participants split into 3-4 small teams. Each group receives an A3 sheet, a marker, and the following instruction:
"Write down 3-4 rules you believe are truly important. Think about the situations we discussed today, and what you would

want to hear or experience if you were the one on the spectrum.”

Group work (4 minutes):
Groups write their rules, and can illustrate them with slogans, drawings, or associations.
Presentation and compiling the commandments (3 minutes):
The facilitator asks one person from each group to read their proposed rules. Based on their input, the facilitator writes a collective version of the “Ten commandments of empathetic behavior” on the board, selecting or combining the most repeated or clearly expressed points.
Example phrases that may come up:

- “Don’t judge based on appearance or behavior.”
- “Everyone has the right to feel safe in a group.”
  “If you don’t understand–ask, don’t laugh.”
- “Give people time and space–not everyone moves at the same pace.”
- “Don’t force interaction–but don’t exclude.”
- “See the person, not the label.”
- “Offer support instead of advice.”
- “Learn about diversity the same way you learn math.”
- “Don’t say, ‘he/she is weird,’ say, ‘he/she is different–and that’s OK.’”
- “Listen carefully, speak clearly, act respectfully.”

<u>Learning outcomes:</u>

- Youth reinforce their knowledge through collaboratively developed principles
- Participants build a sense of social responsibility and a readiness to support neurodivergent peers

- The group creates a tangible reference for the future–the rules can be posted, written down, or photographed as a memento of the session

Tools and materials:

- A3 sheets and markers (one per group)
- Whiteboard or flipchart (for creating the shared commandments)

Suggestions for the facilitator:

If the group is energetic–you can hold a "vote" on the 10 most important rules (using stickers, dots, or raised hands)
If time is limited–narrow the number of rules down to 5
You can end the activity with a symbolic gesture:
"This is our empathy code. Things won't always go perfectly–but if we try to stick to these 10 ideas, we'll be that much closer to real understanding."

Workshop flow:
Second class period:

Activity 5 – "Autism: FACT or MYTH?" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: online educational quiz (Kahoot)
Objectives of the activity:

- Reinforce knowledge from the first part of the workshop about the autism spectrum
- Review and summarize key facts and myths in an engaging format
- Boost participants' motivation to continue through fun and friendly competition

Introduction:

After the break, the facilitator refers back to the myths and facts activity from earlier:
"Before we dive into the simulator, let's see how much you

remember from our earlier talk about autism myths and facts. We'll do a quiz–it'll be fast, focused, and fun. Let's find out who's got the sharpest eye and ear!"

Activity description:

- Participants join the quiz at kahoot.it (or use the app).
- The facilitator launches a 20-question quiz where participants choose true or false.
- After each question, the facilitator briefly discusses the correct answer and reminds the group of the context–for example, *"That was one of the myths from set 3!"*
- At the end of the quiz, a symbolic prize can be awarded or the facilitator can simply thank everyone for participating.

Quiz questions - 20 statements (TRUE / FALSE):

- People with autism can't fall in love. (False)
- Autism is a mental illness. (False)
- People on the spectrum can experience strong emotions. (True)
- A spectrum means every case is different. (True)
- All people on the spectrum are math geniuses. (False)
- Autism can only be diagnosed in children. (False)
- Autism is caused by poor parenting. (False)
- Some people on the spectrum are very talkative. (True)
- Autism can be "cured" with therapy. (False)
- Communication difficulties can result from sensory overload. (True)
- Autism and intellectual disability are the same. (False)
- Girls on the spectrum are often diagnosed later than boys. (True)
- People with autism lack empathy. (False)
- Some individuals on the spectrum have excellent memory. (True)

- You can tell someone has autism just by looking at them. (False)
- People with autism can work, study, and have families. (True)
- Autistic people prefer being alone. (False)
- People on the spectrum have different sensory needs than most. (True)
- Everyone can help create a neurodiversity-friendly environment. (True)
- The earlier autism is recognized, the easier it is to provide the right support. (True)

Note: The quiz is prepared and available for free use (in Polish):

1. Go to: https://kahoot.com/
2. From the top menu, select the last tab “Discover”
3. In the search field “Search public content,” enter the Kahoot title: “A.utism I.ntegration: FAKT czy MIT?”

Learning outcomes:

- Young people check and reinforce knowledge in an accessible way
- The group compares personal assumptions with facts
- Participants better remember key information through play

Tools and materials:

- Phones/tablets with Internet access
- Projector or screen connected to kahoot.it
- Ready-to-use quiz—can be pre-made or found as a public set

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- If the tech fails, the quiz can be done on paper or with YES/NO signs
- You can wrap up the quiz with a short discussion question: "Which question was the hardest–and why?"
- If working with a younger group, consider preparing a certificate for the winner

Activity 6 – "Chatting with the chatbot" (20 minutes)

Type of activity: team-based work with a simulation tool + reflective worksheet

Objectives of the activity:

- Practicing a conversation with a person on the autism spectrum (in a simulated environment)
- Developing communication and empathy skills
- Reflecting on different communication strategies and their effectiveness
- Deepening understanding of the emotions that may arise for both sides of a conversation

Activity description:

Introduction (2 minutes):

"Now we're going to take a closer look at what communication with someone on the spectrum can look like–not in theory, but in practice. You'll work in small groups using a simulator that plays the role of a teenager on the autism spectrum. Your task is to engage in a conversation and observe what helps the dialogue and what makes it more difficult."

Forming teams (2-3 people):

Each group receives one device (phone/tablet/computer) with access to autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl and a worksheet to fill in during the conversation.

Chatbot interaction (10 minutes):
Participants chat with the bot, choosing a topic (e.g. school, relationships, interests).
On their worksheet, they note:

- what they wrote to the chatbot
- how the chatbot responded
- what surprised or moved them
- what was difficult and what went well

Group reflection and completing the rest of the worksheet (8 minutes):
Groups finish the conversation and discuss:

- what helped the interaction
- what emotions the simulation evoked
- how they might adjust their behavior in future situations

Learning outcomes:

- Youth experience the challenges of communicating with a neurodivergent person
- They develop self-awareness and empathy in interpersonal interactions
- They learn to apply simple principles of supportive communication

Tools and materials:

- Internet-enabled devices (1 per group)
- Website: autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl
- "Chat with the chatbot" worksheets - one per group

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Make sure each group has Internet access and knows how to use the simulator
- If working with a larger group and limited devices–run conversations in turns (one group chats, the other observes, then switch)

- Encourage participants to note down exact quotes from the chatbot–they can be useful for later analysis

Worksheet - "Chat with the chatbot"
(printable or digital version)

PART I - DURING THE CONVERSATION

1. What topic did you choose to start the conversation with?
   .....
2. Example of a message you sent to the chatbot:
   .....
3. Chatbot's response (quote):
   .....
4. How did you respond next?
   .....
5. Did anything surprising, difficult, or confusing come up?
   □ Yes □ No
   If yes - briefly describe:
   .....

PART II - AFTER THE CONVERSATION (REFLECTION)

6. What helped make the conversation easier?
   .....
7. What made it harder or interrupted the flow?
   .....
8. What moved you or made you reflect?
   .....
9. What emotions came up in your group?
   □ Surprise □ Impatience □ Curiosity
   □ Compassion □ Anxiety □ Other: .....
10. What could you change in your communication style to make connecting with someone on the spectrum easier?
    .....

Activity 7 – "What do you mean?" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: team-based language analysis + communication skills exercise
Objectives of the activity:

- Help participants realize that everyday language can be confusing for people on the autism spectrum
- Develop the ability to communicate clearly and unambiguously
- Identify common language traps: irony, idioms, metaphors, vague suggestions
- Practice rephrasing messages into more accessible and neutral language

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"People on the spectrum often think in a very literal way. Jokes, sarcasm, proverbs, or phrases like 'figure it out' can be hard for them to decode. So today we'll take a look at how we speak—and see how we can simplify our language to make it clearer and more supportive."
Team division (3–4 people):
Each group receives a set of 6 sentences on cards. Their task is to:

- identify what might be unclear or confusing in each sentence
- rewrite the sentence in a simple, direct, and clear way
- write down both versions on a worksheet or chart

Group work (5 minutes):
Each group analyzes their sentences and writes both the original and the "accessible" version.
They can also create their own real-life examples and simplify those as well.

Presentation and mini-discussion (5 minutes):
Each group reads out 1–2 sentence pairs.
The facilitator comments and asks questions—e.g., *"Which phrase was the hardest to 'decode'?"*

Example sentences for rephrasing (1 set = 6 sentences):
"Well, that was just great..." (spoken with irony)
➜ "You didn't do it correctly. You need to fix the task."
"You're supposed to figure it out!"
➜ "I want you to clear the table."
"Don't just sit there like a lump."
➜ "I'd like you to join us and take part in the conversation."
"Take a chill pill."
➜ "Please wait a moment and don't make any quick decisions."
"It's not all about you."
➜ "Remember, other people have needs too."
"That was world-class..." (sarcastic)
➜ "Your behavior was inappropriate and not well thought out."

<u>Learning outcomes:</u>
- Participants notice how much ambiguity everyday language contains.
- They learn how to speak more simply and clearly in interactions with people on the spectrum.
- They develop communication sensitivity and the ability to reflect on their own language.

Tools and materials:

- Sentence cards (6 sentences per group)
- Worksheets or activity sheets - with space for:
  - original sentence
  - what might be unclear
  - simplified version

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Encourage participants to add examples from everyday life—such as from school, social media, or messaging apps.
- You can mention that even neurotypical people sometimes struggle with irony—but for someone on the spectrum, the lack of literal meaning can be a real barrier.
- If the group has a good sense of humor, let them come up with the most absurd "figurative" sentences and try to translate them into "clear" language.

Workshop summary - "One sentence, one thought" (5 minutes)

Type of activity: individual reflection + optional group sharing

Objectives of the activity:

- Allow participants to summarize their own takeaways and emotions after the workshop
- Collect individual reflections in a concise, safe format
- Strengthen engagement and sense of purpose - everyone can take something "to go"

Activity description:

Facilitator's introduction (1 minute):

"To close today's session, I'd like to invite you to a brief reflection. I'd like each of you to write one sentence—just one—

that has stayed with you from today's workshop. It could be a thought, a feeling, something from your conversation with the chatbot, something that surprised you, or something you'd want to hear if you were on the spectrum."

Writing (2 minutes):

Participants anonymously write their sentences on small slips of paper. They can use block letters, symbols, or even draw—any format is allowed, as long as it feels personal.

Optional sharing (2 minutes):

A few people (3–4 volunteers) may read their sentences aloud. The facilitator can also read a few randomly selected ones (if collected earlier in a "reflection box").

Learning outcomes:

- Participants pause and reflect on what felt meaningful to them
- The group hears different perspectives, which deepens understanding and openness
- The activity provides a sense of closure, while leaving a thought that may stay with them

Tools and materials:

- Sticky notes, paper strips, pens/markers
- (Optional) "Reflection box" for collecting anonymous sentences
- Flipchart or whiteboard to display the notes as a visual ending to the session

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- If the group doesn't feel like sharing out loud—don't push. The moment of personal insight is what matters
  End with a thank you for their engagement in the workshop.

SCENARIO NO. 2:

"PRACTICAL USE OF THE SIMULATOR"

Recommended duration:
2 class periods - 90 minutes (2 × 45 min plus a 10-minute break)
Target group:
Youth aged 15-19
The scenario can also be adapted for younger participants (13-14 years old) by simplifying the language and reducing the level of abstraction in the exercises.
General objectives:

- Deepening the understanding of real-life communication challenges experienced by people on the autism spectrum
- Fostering an empathetic and mindful approach to differences in communication styles
- Practicing concrete skills for engaging in conversation with neurodivergent individuals

Specific objectives:
The participant:

- conducts a conversation using the autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl simulator
- analyzes the chatbot's responses and the flow of interaction
- identifies factors that support or hinder communication is able to describe their own feelings and reflections related to the simulation experience
- develops soft skills such as active listening, patience, self-reflection, and empathy

Methods:

- working with the simulator
- case analysis
- brainstorming
- reflective discussion
- drama techniques (simulation)
- emotion mapping
- guided worksheet activities

Tools and materials:

- Internet-enabled devices (1 per group)
- access to the simulator: autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl
- “Chatbot conversation analysis” worksheets (new version, different from Scenario 1)
- printed cases/situations to be recreated in the simulator
  whiteboard / flipchart, markers
  colored sticky notes / stickers for reflective activities

Workshop flow:
First class period

Introduction - "What do we already know, what can we do after the first workshop?" (5 minutes)

Type of activity: activating introduction with review elements and a focus on action
Objectives of the activity:

- recalling and reinforcing key concepts from the previous session (autism spectrum, myth vs fact, communication difficulties)
- engaging participants and reintroducing the topic
- creating a safe, open space for further work with the simulator

Activity description:
Facilitator's opening:
"Today we're going to get practical–you'll get a chance to engage with a simulated teenager on the autism spectrum and reflect on what makes communication easier or more difficult. But before we start, let's review what we remember from our last session."
Activity (5 minutes):
The facilitator displays or writes 4 questions on the board or screen (they can also be printed or presented on a flipchart).
Participants respond either aloud in a circle or on sticky notes–depending on the group's mood. They may share voluntarily or in pairs.
Questions for participants:

- What traits or behaviors can be seen in people on the autism spectrum?

- What can make a conversation with someone on the spectrum challenging?
- What autism myths did we debunk last time?
- What can we—as peers—learn from neurodivergent individuals?

The facilitator writes down selected answers (keywords) on the board to create a visual starting map.

Learning outcomes:
- Participants recall essential information
- A sense of continuity and purpose is built (Scenario 2 is a follow-up to Scenario 1)
- The group is activated and ready for the hands-on part

Tools and materials:
- whiteboard / flipchart or screen with presentation
- markers or optionally sticky notes
- printed or projected discussion questions (optional)

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- If the group is less active, allow written responses to be posted on the board
- Avoid judging answers—every association matters, even if imprecise, because it reveals participants' thought processes
- You can wrap up with:
  "Ready for the conversation? Let's see what it looks like in practice."

Activity 1 – "Communication strategies: what works, what doesn't?" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: case analysis, group discussion, communication sorting exercise

Objectives of the activity:

- preparing participants for a conscious and thoughtful conversation with the chatbot
- identifying types of messages that may support or hinder communication with someone on the spectrum
- practicing empathetic thinking and understanding the speaker's perspective
- strengthening teamwork skills

Activity description:

Facilitator's introduction:

"Before we launch the simulator, I'd like to invite you to an exercise that will help you reflect on how we phrase our questions and responses. Some messages help bring us closer to the other person—others may discourage them or even cause harm. Your task will be to sort these messages based on their impact on the conversation."

Group work (5 minutes):

Participants form small groups (3–4 people each).

Each group receives a set of 6 sample statements (printed or projected) that might occur in a conversation with someone on the autism spectrum.

Groups assign each statement to one of three categories:

🟢 Supportive

🟡 Neutral / needs improvement

🔴 Hindering / hurtful

Groups write down their decisions, with optional short explanations.

Group debrief (3 minutes):
Each group shares one example and their decision.
The facilitator doesn't judge responses but offers clarification—especially around how certain phrases might be received differently than intended.

Sample statements for analysis:
(each group may receive the same or different sets—up to the facilitator)
- *"It's not a big deal, don't overreact."*
- *"Would you like some quiet time, or would you prefer me to stay nearby?"*
- *"You're weird, seriously. But whatever."*
- *"I don't know how you feel, but I'd like to understand."*
- *"You really need to learn how to act normal."*
- *"This is new to me. Want to tell me how you see it?"*

Learning outcomes:
- Participants learn to recognize subtle differences in language use
- They build awareness of how words can affect the emotional state of the listener
- They are better prepared to engage with the chatbot and real neurodivergent individuals

Tools and materials:
- printed message sets (1 per group)
- optional sorting sheet (with three labeled columns)
- markers or pens

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- You can add blank spaces in the message set so participants can write their own examples
- If time allows, ask if anyone has heard similar messages in daily life—e.g. at home, school, or online

- Encourage reasoning and discussion–some statements may fall "on the borderline," which makes for a great conversation starter.

Activity 2 – "Chatting with the chatbot – part I" (15 minutes)

Type of activity: interaction with a digital tool, teamwork, simulation, experiential learning
Objectives of the activity:
- practicing initial contact with a teenager on the autism spectrum (simulated by the chatbot)
- observing the flow of conversation and real-time responses
- recognizing personal feelings and communication patterns
- gathering material for further analysis

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"In a moment, each group will begin their first conversation with the chatbot, which simulates interacting with a teenager on the autism spectrum. Your task is to try to make contact. This isn't a test–it's an opportunity to see how the chatbot responds to different approaches."
"Remember: this isn't a game you need to win–it's an exercise in attentiveness, empathy, and trying to understand. You can write however you like–but try to be natural and genuine."

Group work (10 minutes):
Groups of 2–4 people work together on one device (phone/tablet).
They visit autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl and launch the chatbot (registration required—participants need to enter an email address; registration is free).
Each group receives a predefined starting scenario from the facilitator, such as:

- "A new student joins the class"
- "Someone is sitting alone in the cafeteria"
- "Group homework project"

Participants engage in a conversation with the chatbot for about 5–7 minutes.

Collecting outcomes (5 minutes):
Groups write down or take screenshots of 2–3 excerpts from the conversation that they found most difficult / interesting / surprising.
The facilitator asks them to save these excerpts for the next activity.
Sample conversation starters (1 assigned to each group):

1. "A new student shows up in your class. They sit off to the side and say nothing. How do you start a conversation?"
2. "A classmate refuses to work in a group and says you'll end up doing everything anyway."
3. "You're talking to someone who says they don't like changes. You just suggested changing the meeting time."
4. "In the hallway, someone is sitting with headphones on, seeming distant. What do you do?"

5. “During class, someone in your group tells you they don’t understand the instructions but don’t want you to explain.”
6. “You’re working on a group project. One person communicates very sparingly.”

Learning outcomes:
- Participants experience “live” what it’s like to have a conversation with someone on the spectrum
- They develop the ability to respond in real time
- They gather material for self-reflection and further analysis (exercises 3 and 4)

Tools and materials:
- Internet-enabled devices (1 per group)
- Prepared conversation scenarios (printed or shown on slides)
- Option to save the conversation (screenshots, notes)

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- If possible, walk between groups and check that the chatbot is functioning properly
- Emphasize that participants may not receive “perfect” answers—and that’s OK
- Ask them not to comment on other groups’ conversations —what matters is their own experience

Activity 3 - “Quick reflection: how did it go?” (5 minutes)

Type of activity: individual reflection + visual/group integration element

Objectives of the activity:
- allowing participants to express emotions related to the chatbot conversation experience

- recognizing emotions and impressions (their own and those of the group)
- collecting insights that will serve as a starting point for further communication analysis

Activity description:

Facilitator's introduction:

"Before we move on, let's take a moment to capture our first impressions. How did you feel during that conversation? What surprised you, what felt easy, and what was difficult?"

Individual reflection (3 minutes):

Each participant receives a sticky note or A6 sheet of paper. They are asked to write one word or short sentence that best captures their feeling after the chatbot conversation (e.g. "unexpected," "difficult," "oddly pleasant," "uncertainty," "fascination," "I wanted to back out," "I was frustrated," etc.).

There are no "right" or "wrong" emotions–everything is accepted.

Creating a shared visual (2 minutes):

Participants stick their notes on a board / flipchart in the shape of a cloud, circle, or tree.

The facilitator may read a few of them aloud (anonymously) and comment:

"See how each of us experienced it differently? And that's important. Every conversation with someone on the spectrum can also feel different–and not always immediately understandable."

Learning outcomes:

- Developing self-reflection and emotional expression
- Group integration around a shared experience

- Laying the groundwork for deeper analysis (upcoming activities)

Tools and materials:

- sticky notes or A6 paper
- markers or fine-tip pens
- whiteboard, flipchart, or large sheet of paper for the visual display

Suggestions for the facilitator:

It's a good idea to praise the group's engagement:

- "You did a great job. It's not easy to talk about how we feel–but you did it."
- If the group is very reserved, you can skip posting the notes and instead collect them anonymously (e.g. in a box) and read a few at random.

Activity 4 – "Mini-debate: What would my conversation partner say?" (15 minutes)

Type of activity: analysis of conversation excerpts, perspective-shifting, group discussion

Objectives of the activity:

- developing cognitive empathy by trying to "step into the shoes" of someone on the autism spectrum
- analyzing messages from the receiver's point of view
- understanding how the same words can be interpreted in different ways
- improving teamwork and argumentation skills

Activity description:

Facilitator's introduction:

"Now let's take another look at your chatbot conversations–from the other side. Let's try to answer the question: What might your conversation partner have thought or felt in that moment?"

Group work (10 minutes):
Each group selects one excerpt from their chatbot conversation that:

- triggered a strong emotional response
- was hard to interpret
- ended with a surprising reply
- felt confusing to the participants

Participants reflect using the following guiding questions:

- What might the teenager on the spectrum have thought when reading that?
- What emotions might they have experienced?
- What would they tell us if they could describe the situation in their own words?

Groups write their conclusions on paper or a flipchart as a first-person statement, e.g.:

- "I felt lost because the question was too vague and I didn't know what it meant."
- "I thought it was sarcasm–I wasn't sure if they were laughing at me."

Presentation (5 minutes):
Each group reads their short "perspective statement" aloud.
The facilitator can conclude with:
"See how many meanings a single sentence can carry? In conversation–even with a chatbot–it's not just about what we say, but how we say it and whether we're being understood."

<u>Learning outcomes:</u>

- development of empathetic communication and listening skills

- increased awareness of the other side of the conversation
- better preparation for the next chatbot interaction (activity 5)

Tools and materials:
- notes or screenshots from chatbot conversations (from activity 2)
- A4 paper, fine-tip pens, optionally flipcharts for presentations
- guiding questions displayed for everyone (slide/board)

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- If participants struggle to imagine the "other side," support them with examples, e.g.:
  - "Think about how you'd feel if someone asked: Why are you so weird?"
  - Ideally, groups should write their statements in 2-3 sentences–shorter is often more accurate.

Workshop flow:
Second class period:

Activity 5 - "Second attempt: chatting with the chatbot" (15 minutes)

Type of activity: interaction with the tool, group work, reflective communication practice
Objectives of the activity:
- applying knowledge and insights from earlier exercises in practice
- comparing communication strategies "before" and "after"

- developing attentive dialogue and language adaptation skills
- reinforcing a sense of effectiveness in relationships with people on the spectrum

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction (1 minute):
"We're beginning the second part of the workshop. Now you'll have another opportunity to talk to the chatbot. Try to use all the observations and ideas from the earlier exercises. See what changes—can you establish a deeper connection? Will the conversation flow differently this time?"

Group work (10 minutes):
Participants return to their groups.
This time, they may choose their own communication scenario to try with the chatbot, or reuse one of the previous ones.
Before the conversation, each group receives a reflection card to help them analyze how the interaction unfolds.

Reflection card - to be filled in by the group during or after the conversation:
1. What was the goal of the conversation?
2. How did we start the dialogue?
3. What worked well?
4. Did any difficulties arise? What kind?
5. Was the conversation smoother than the previous one? Why?
6. How did we feel after this conversation?

(Participants may write down their answers or discuss them aloud—depending on the group's working style.)

Mini-summary in groups (5 minutes):

- Groups compare this conversation with the first one (Activity 2).
- They reflect on what changed and what they learned.
- The facilitator may invite willing groups to share the most interesting excerpts or reflections from their reflection cards.

Learning outcomes

- ability to critically self-evaluate and learn from one's own actions
- increased confidence in conversations with neurodivergent individuals
- translating theory into practice in communication

Tools and materials:

- internet-enabled devices - tablet or smartphone (1 per group)
- reflection card - printed or displayed (you may receive an editable version from me)
- previous notes / conversation excerpts for comparison

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Emphasize that this exercise is not a "test." It's not about performance—it's a process
- Encourage spontaneous attempts and unconventional questions, as long as they're respectful
- Remind participants that even a "worse" conversation can be a valuable lesson

Activity 6 – "Identify the obstacle – improve the message" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: group work, communication analysis, text editing, cognitive empathy
Objectives of the activity:

- developing the ability to express thoughts clearly and understandably
- identifying elements that may hinder comprehension for individuals on the spectrum (e.g. irony, metaphors, vagueness)
- improving the skill of tailoring language to the listener
- practicing teamwork and justifying communication choices

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"People on the spectrum often think literally and interpret statements very directly. Now we're going to see whether you can recognize which phrases might be difficult—and how to simplify or clarify them."

Group work (7 minutes):
Each group receives a set of 6 sentences—either printed or shown on a slide.
Their task is to:

- identify what might be unclear (e.g. sarcasm, ambiguity, colloquialisms)
- rewrite the sentence in a way that is more direct and clear
- add a brief explanation of why the original version needed improvement

Example group entry:
Original: *"Yeah, sure I'll talk to you–when I feel like it."*
New version: *"I don't want to talk right now. I need some time."*
Justification: *"The original sounds sarcastic. The new version is direct."*

Mini-presentation or joint discussion (3 minutes):

- Each group shares 1 selected example–the original and their revised version
- The facilitator comments or adds insight

Example sentence set (each group gets the same or a different set):

- *"You've got to be dreaming if you think I'll agree."*
- *"Great idea... seriously."*
- *"Come on, any normal person would get this."*
- *"Don't be so weird, it's just a joke."*
- *"Go ahead and wait–see how long that takes."*
- *"You don't get it? Is it really that hard to figure out?"*

Learning outcomes:

- increased awareness of linguistic and social cues
- understanding the importance of clear and supportive communication
- practical skill in formulating accessible statements

Tools and materials:

- sentence cards (printed or projected)
- A4 sheets or flipcharts for revised versions
- markers, pens

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Emphasize that everyone uses unclear language at times– this is not about judging, but learning
- Show how even a small wording change can improve clarity
- If time allows, compare how different groups rewrote the same sentence

Activity 7 – "What do I see, what remains unseen?" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: reflective discussion game, working with metaphor cards, empathy, awareness of cognitive differences

Objectives of the activity:

- developing sensitivity to the idea that what we see and understand can vary from person to person
- highlighting the importance of invisible challenges that people on the spectrum may face
- practicing attentiveness and interpretation from multiple perspectives
- inviting discussion on hidden barriers in communication

Activity description:

Facilitator's introduction:

"To end today's workshop, I have a task for you that shows how what seems obvious to one person can look completely different to someone else. And how many things that affect our behavior are... invisible."

Working with cards (8 minutes):

The facilitator distributes metaphorical illustration cards

(or displays them on a screen).

Examples may include:
- a person in the rain holding an umbrella that's snowing underneath
- an iceberg with a small tip and a massive base underwater
- a maze inside a human head
- a crowd with one person facing the other way
- someone wearing a theatrical mask with a second mask hidden behind their back

Participants work in pairs and draw one card each. Their task is to:
- interpret the card in the context of communication with a person on the spectrum
- come up with one sentence that could serve as the "message" of the image, e.g.:
  - "You don't see that I'm trying–because it doesn't show on my face."
  - "Sometimes the answer isn't what I say–it's what I can't find the words for."

Each pair writes their sentence on a sticky note or A6 card.

<u>Mini-gallery (2 minutes):</u>
Participants post their messages on the wall near the corresponding illustrations or read them aloud.
The facilitator sums up:
"Communicating with someone on the spectrum is sometimes about looking for what isn't immediately visible–but is definitely there."

Learning outcomes:
- greater awareness of diverse communication barriers
- reflection on what's hidden or non-obvious in relationships
- deeper understanding of people on the spectrum as both recipients and senders of messages

Tools and materials:
- metaphor illustration cards (can be self-made or requested from me as a PDF)
- sticky notes / A6 cards and markers
- tape to attach cards to the wall or board

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- Don't evaluate the interpretations—each one is valuable and personal
- You might ask: "Could this card speak to someone who feels misunderstood?"
- For larger groups, distribute one card per 3-4 participants to keep things moving efficiently

Summary - "The drawing of communication" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: creative and reflective work in pairs or small groups (3-4 people)
Objectives of the activity:
- summarizing key takeaways from the workshop in a visual format
- visualizing communication as a process of building a "bridge" between people with different ways of perceiving

- encouraging collaborative problem-solving in communication
- developing imagination, cooperation, and self-reflection

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"To close the workshop, try imagining communication as a bridge–one we build between ourselves and another person. What makes that bridge strong and stable, and what might weaken it? In a moment, you'll draw your own Bridge of understanding."

Creative work (8 minutes):
Participants work in pairs or groups of three/four.
On a large sheet, they draw a communication bridge–from one person (e.g. 'me') to another (e.g. 'a person on the spectrum').
The drawing may include:
- pillars (e.g. trust, simple language, patience)
- obstacles below the bridge (e.g. sarcasm, rushing, misunderstanding)
- a name for the bridge
- symbols of support (e.g. words like "I ask," "I listen," "I explain")

Groups sign their work and create a short motto or message, e.g.:
"Understanding doesn't require speed–only attentiveness."

Gallery and closing (2 minutes):
The facilitator invites everyone to hang their drawings on a wall or board.

Participants can walk around and view the other works. Volunteers may share a one-sentence comment.

Learning outcomes:

- visual summary of acquired knowledge and insights
- strengthened awareness of diverse communication styles
- group integration through creative action

Tools and materials:

- A3 sheets, markers, crayons, colored pens
- tape or magnets for hanging the drawings
- optional: player with soft background music (e.g. instrumental)

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Encourage fun and creativity—this isn't about artistic skill, it's about the message
- Consider turning it into a small exhibit—e.g. "The Understanding Bridge Gallery"
- Take photos of the artwork (with participants' permission) to use in project summaries or on your website

SCENARIO NO. 3: "MAPPING THE NEEDS OF PEERS WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES"

Recommended duration:
2 class periods - 90 minutes (2 × 45 min plus a 10-minute break)
Target group:
Youth aged 15-19
The scenario can also be adapted for younger participants (13-14 years old) by simplifying the language and reducing the level of abstraction in the exercises.
General objectives:

- Developing social empathy and civic competence among young people by analyzing the real needs of peers on the autism spectrum and those with other cognitive difficulties
- Fostering a sense of engagement in building a school environment that is inclusive and accessible for all students, regardless of ability
- Stimulating creativity and agency in designing educational and social solutions
- Applying knowledge gained in previous scenarios (on the autism spectrum, communication, neurodiversity) in a practical way

Specific objectives:
After the workshop, the participant:

- can list challenges students on the autism spectrum may face in school
- identifies barriers in physical, organizational, and social spaces

- can propose concrete solutions and accommodations (e.g. no-bell days, inclusive school policies)
- co-creates leaflets, posters, slogans, or other forms of awareness campaigns in support of students with disabilities (using digital tools like Canva)
- helps create a map of needs and expectations of neurodivergent peers
- actively participates in formulating recommendations for the Student Council and the school
- is able to express their ideas both visually and in writing
- gains a stronger sense that their voice and actions matter

Methods:
- needs and problem mapping
- group project work
- brainstorming
- graphic presentation (leaflets, posters, manifestos)
- student debate and developing shared recommendations

Tools and materials:
- A3 sheets, flipcharts
- colored paper, markers, felt-tip pens, scissors, glue
- templates: needs map, inclusive school policy, project planning sheet
- optionally: computer/projector to present ideas
- printed examples of initiatives (e.g. Autism Awareness Week, no-bell days, quiet zones)

Workshop flow:
First class period:

Introduction – "Why does it matter?" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: discussion, visual mind map, activating questions
Objectives of the activity:

- recalling the purpose of the session and topics from previous workshops
- introducing the theme of the needs of people with cognitive disabilities (including those on the autism spectrum)
- fostering social engagement
- initiating thinking in terms of "how can I help?" within one's environment

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"Today we'll try to step into the shoes of people who can actually make a difference—in the classroom, in school, in the city. Together, we'll reflect: what do our peers on the autism spectrum or with other cognitive challenges need in order to feel good in the same space as we do?"

Opening questions (displayed or written on the board):

- When was the last time someone at school acted unfairly toward a person who was ‚different'?
- Are there people at our school who feel excluded?
- How do I feel when I don't understand what's happening? When I'm overwhelmed by noise? When I'm afraid of a task?

- Is there anything that could be changed to make things easier for everyone?

Mind map / brainstorming:
On the board or flipchart, create a shared map around the phrase:
"A school that's friendly for everyone"
Students contribute ideas such as:
- what helps them feel good at school
- what makes it harder
- what could be changed

Use colored sticky notes (e.g. green = good practices, red = barriers, blue = ideas for change)
Learning outcomes:
- participants begin to understand that the needs of neurodivergent students aren't "special"—they're simply human
- initial themes emerge for future exercises: noise, lack of understanding, exclusion, lack of time to respond

Tools and materials:
- board / flipchart
- markers and/or multicolored sticky notes
- questions to display or write down

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- ensure that student comments are not judgmental (e.g. don't criticize someone who admits they once overlooked someone's needs)
- leave the map visible in the room for the rest of the workshop—it will serve as inspiration for future tasks

Activity 1 – "Understanding daily life" (15 minutes)

Type of activity: working with scenario cards, empathic analysis, group discussion
Objectives of the activity:

- understanding the challenges faced by people with cognitive disabilities (including those on the autism spectrum) in everyday school life
- developing empathy and attentiveness to diverse needs
- realizing that not every need is "visible" at first glance
- moving beyond one's own perspective toward understanding "the other"

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"You're about to step into the shoes of students who go to the same school as you—but whose day may look very different. Maybe because of sound sensitivity, difficulty reading emotions, or trouble focusing in a stimulating environment. Everyone has their own daily reality—and today we'll try to understand it."

Group work (10 minutes):
Participants are divided into small groups (3-4 people).
Each group receives or draws a situation card (a school scenario from the perspective of a student on the spectrum or with other cognitive difficulties).
Groups are asked to read the situation and answer:

- What might have been difficult here?
- What emotions could this person have felt?
- What could help in this situation?

Then they write down 2-3 takeaways on a worksheet.

Group sharing (5 minutes):
Each group shares one takeaway–e.g. a recognized need or a specific support idea.

Sample scenario cards for analysis:
Scenario 1: Loud hallway during break
I leave the classroom after math. The hallway is packed, everyone's talking at once, laughing, some shouting. My whole body tenses up. I feel like I'll explode or faint. I want to go back to the classroom, but it's already locked. I know I can't just "stand and wait." I hide in the restroom and lock the stall–it's the only quiet place.

Scenario 2: Question in class
I'm sitting in the third row. The teacher looks my way and says, "Maybe you can answer–what do you think?" I'm not sure if she's talking to me or someone behind me. I have an idea for an answer, but I don't know if now is the time. If I mess up, everyone will laugh. I start sweating and stay silent. After a moment the teacher moves on and says, "As usual, no reaction." I feel ashamed.

Scenario 3: Comment during a test
I'm taking a biology test. I'm trying to focus, but there are many open-ended questions and I'm not sure what to write. Others are already turning in their papers. One of them says, "Look, he's still not done. Always the slowest." I pretend I didn't hear, but it hurts. Maybe I am too slow. Maybe I don't belong here.

Scenario 4: PE class
We're in the gym. The teacher explains the exercise quickly and only shows it once. Everyone starts running–I don't know

where or why. I'm left standing. I try to ask, but no one hears me. I think about pretending my leg hurts just to sit out. I'd rather do that than feel stupid.

Scenario 5: Group work
In English, we're told to work in groups. The teacher doesn't say who goes with whom—everyone starts pairing off. I stand and wait. No one calls me over. When nearly everyone's grouped up, the teacher puts me with a trio who aren't happy. I hear: "Great, now it's gonna be weird." I feel like I need to stay silent and not get in the way.

Scenario 6: Schedule change
I arrive at school. The homeroom teacher says there won't be history class—we're going to the library instead. That wasn't in the schedule. I had everything planned—what I'd do in each class, when I'd eat, when I'd get a break. Now everything's changing. I get stressed and feel sick. I don't know if I can stay in class.

Learning outcomes:
- participants identify the varied needs of their peers
- they learn to notice hidden (emotional, sensory, social) barriers
- they begin formulating initial support ideas—preparing for the next activities

Tools and materials:
- scenario cards (printed or projected)
- A4 sheets or notebooks for notes
- pens / markers

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- match the scenarios to the group's age—simplify or expand as needed
- allow groups to draw the scenario instead of reading it, if preferred
- consider closing with a question:
  "Do you know anyone who might feel this way? What could we do to make things easier for them?"

Activity 2 – "Student needs map" (15 minutes)

Type of activity: group work, situation analysis, empathic thinking, needs visualization

Objectives of the activity:

- developing the ability to identify individual needs of students with cognitive disabilities (e.g. on the autism spectrum, with Asperger's, ADHD, intellectual disability)
- translating insights from Activity 1 into specific educational, communicative, and social needs
- practicing teamwork and attentiveness to others' perspectives

Activity description:

Facilitator's introduction:

"You've just analyzed scenes showing the daily challenges some of your peers might face. Now your task is to step into the shoes of the person from your scene and ask: what do they need? What would help them? What could make their school experience better?"

Group work (10 minutes):

Each group works with the same scenario they discussed in Activity 1.

On a large A3 sheet, they draw a symbolic “needs map” of the student—it could be a figure, a tree, a cloud, a castle, or another metaphor.
The map must include at least three types of needs:

- Educational needs - e.g. more time for tasks, individual work options, clear instructions
- Social needs - e.g. a friendly atmosphere, peer acceptance, freedom from group pressure
- Communicative and emotional needs - e.g. ability to withdraw, simple language, calm, space to rest

Groups can use colorful sticky notes or markers and add visual elements—symbols, emoticons, simple drawings.

Mini-presentations (5 minutes):
Each group briefly shares the key needs of their “character” —not reading the full map, but highlighting 2-3 essential points.
The facilitator records recurring needs on the board (e.g. in the form of a “shared needs cloud”).

<u>Learning outcomes:</u>

- development of cognitive and emotional empathy
- better understanding of invisible barriers
- practicing cooperation and active listening
- initiating reflection on how to support such individuals in school and the wider community

<u>Tools and materials:</u>

- large A3 sheets or flipchart paper (1 per group)
- colored markers, crayons, sticky notes

- optional: outline template of a character or "Student needs map" worksheet (available in PDF format upon request)

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- You can propose a metaphor (e.g. needs as a student's "backpack"–which may be heavy or well-packed)
- Don't evaluate the maps–each interpretation has value
- If the group struggles to name needs, offer guiding questions:
  - *"What would help them?"*
  - *"What would they need from other students?"*
  - *"What should the teacher know?"*

Activity 3 - "How to support? Mapping ideas" (5 minutes)

Type of activity: open group discussion, brainstorming, visual mapping of ideas
Objectives of the activity:
- collecting initial ideas for real actions to support peers with cognitive disabilities
- actively involving all participants in the planning process
- summarizing knowledge and reflections from the first part of the workshop
- preparing the foundation for project-based work in the second hour

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"Over the past hour, you've worked on identifying situations where people with cognitive disabilities may feel excluded, misunderstood, or overwhelmed. Now let's think together–

what can we, as a class, school, or group, do to change that? How can we support our peers?"

Group discussion - idea mapping (5 minutes):
The facilitator writes the central question on the board or flipchart:
"How can we support peers with cognitive disabilities at school?"
Students spontaneously suggest ideas—single words, phrases, associations, or specific actions. The facilitator writes them around the question, creating a mind map / action map.

Sample ideas that may arise:
- organizing an Awareness Week
- no-bell day
- simple illustrated instructions
- classroom empathy monitors
- integration activities
- educational videos for younger grades
- accessibility coordinator role in the Student Council

Facilitator's conclusion:
"Look how many things we can do—even small actions can make a big difference. In the second part of today's session, you'll choose some of these ideas to develop into posters, campaigns, or school projects."

Learning outcomes:
- strengthening the sense of agency and social responsibility
- group integration around a shared goal

- mental and organizational preparation for the second part of the workshop

Tools and materials:
- whiteboard / flipchart for mapping ideas
- markers
- optionally: colored stickers or a marker to highlight ideas chosen for further work

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- Keep up the pace–note even brief keywords to maintain momentum
- Don't judge the ideas–write everything down, even if it sounds "wild" or difficult
- You may end by asking: "Which of these actions could we start implementing as early as tomorrow?"

Workshop flow:
Second class period:

Activity 4 - "Supportive classroom charter" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: group work, collaborative rule-setting, presentation and consultation
Objectives of the activity:
- turning general ideas into specific rules that support peers with cognitive disabilities
- developing a sense of shared responsibility for the social climate in the classroom
- improving cooperation, expression, and the ability to create inclusive guidelines

- preparing material that can be used as the basis for a class or school project

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"Our map is full of great ideas. Let's now try to create something concrete, useful, and implementable in your class or school—a supportive classroom charter. This isn't a list of do's and don'ts, but a set of principles that help everyone feel safe, understood, and welcome—no matter how they communicate, what they need, or how they perceive the world."

Group work (7 minutes):
Students form teams of 3–4. Each group creates their own list of 10 rules, answering the question:
"What can we do as a class to support peers with cognitive disabilities?"

The rules should be:
- specific (e.g. "We always ask if someone needs help understanding the instructions")
- positively worded (avoid prohibitions like "Don't..." statements)
- community-oriented (use phrases like "In our class..." or "We make sure to...")

Groups write their suggestions on large paper sheets or on a template provided by the facilitator (you may pre-design a heading: "Supportive Classroom Charter").

Mini-presentations and idea sharing (3 minutes):
Each group reads aloud 1–2 of their rules.
The facilitator writes them on the board, forming a

collective draft of the charter, which can later be expanded or turned into a poster.

Learning outcomes:
- students learn how to translate ideas into actionable rules
- they create a document that can serve as a reference point for the class or school
- values of empathy, inclusion, and shared responsibility are reinforced

Tools and materials:
- large A3 sheets or flipcharts (1 per group)
- markers, colored pens
- optional: ready-made template with the heading "Supportive Classroom Charter"

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- Encourage the use of simple, accessible language–so that the charter can be understood by everyone
- If the group struggles to begin, offer starter phrases, such as:
  "In our class, we pay attention to..."
  "If someone doesn't understand, then..."
  "We help when we see that..."

Activity 5 - "Design your message: posters and leaflets supporting peers" (20 minutes)

Type of activity: creative group work, graphic design, social action
Objectives of the activity:
- developing the ability to design educational and social materials

- turning the idea of inclusion into a visually engaging message for peers
- strengthening digital and teamwork skills
- producing real, usable outcomes for school or campaign purposes

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"In the previous activity, you created a set of rules that could guide a class supporting neurodiversity. Now it's time to show others why being open and mindful toward peers with cognitive disabilities matters. Your task is to design a poster or leaflet that could be displayed in your school hallway, shared in class, or shown during Autism Awareness Day. You have full freedom—you can go for an educational, motivational, or reflective approach."

Group work (15 minutes):
Students work in teams of 3–4.
They use the Canva app on tablets or laptops (browser version is fine—free accounts are enough).
Each group selects one format: poster or leaflet.
Additionally, they create a sample social media post—an online campaign item for school accounts.

Content inspirations:
- rules from the supportive classroom charter
- quotes from earlier discussions / reflection cards
- chatbot dialogue or metaphor cards
- sample needs of peers: "I need more time," "I don't always make eye contact, but I'm listening," "Noise overwhelms me."

Criteria:

- simple, understandable language
- visually clear and coherent
- message: supportive, non-judgmental, non-patronizing

Instruction for groups:
Your task is to create one of four educational/social materials that could be used in school or for a campaign. Work in teams of 3–4. Choose one of the following topics and design a leaflet or poster in Canva (tablet or laptop). The material should be clear, visually appealing, and supportive.

Topics to choose from:
"Myths about the autism spectrum"
- Present 3–5 common myths (e.g. "People on the spectrum don't feel emotions") and debunk them with short, simple facts.
➜ Format: folded leaflet or poster with a strong visual hook
"Needs of youth on the autism spectrum"
- Show what students with ASD need at school, in class, in relationships (e.g. quiet, understanding, predictability)
➜ Format: educational leaflet with 3 sections: "What?", "Why?", "How can you help?"
"How to be a supportive peer?"
- Suggest specific behaviors, reactions, and ideas for inclusive peer relationships
➜ Format: leaflet with practical tips and short scenario examples
Educational poster
- Choose 3 slogans/messages that challenge stereotypes, and design a poster for display at school
➜ Format: one A3 page, minimal text, maximum impact

Time: 15 minutes
Let's get started!

Group presentations (5 minutes):
Groups present their work on screen (if possible) or send it to the facilitator.
You may create a class gallery of posters/leaflets online or announce an upcoming school campaign.

Learning outcomes:
- students learn how to formulate positive social messages
- they strengthen their sense of agency–their work may be used in real settings
- they develop digital and design skills
- they practice teamwork and task-sharing

Tools and materials:
- tablets/laptops with Internet access
- Canva app (or alternative)
- previous notes and materials (e.g. "Supportive Classroom Charter")
- option to upload files to a shared drive or send to the facilitator

Suggestions for the facilitator:
- Help students set up Canva accounts if needed
- Ensure each team has a clear concept and task roles (e.g. one person for visuals, one for text)
- Encourage authenticity–don't let them copy posters from the Internet, but instead develop their own messages creatively

Activity 6 – "Propose an action: what can change the school?" (10 minutes)

Type of activity: designing solutions, teamwork, planning micro-actions in the school environment
Objectives of the activity:

- developing civic competencies and a sense of shared responsibility for the school environment
- applying knowledge about the autism spectrum to social practice
- practicing action planning, communication, and project-based thinking
- strengthening participants' sense of agency and belief in the possibility of change

Activity description:
Facilitator's introduction:
"Let's think about what could realistically change in our school to help students with cognitive disabilities–including those on the autism spectrum–feel safer, better understood, and more included. Think like advocates for change: what could you propose to the Student Council, teachers, or classmates?"

Group work (7 minutes):
Each group selects one idea for a microproject or school initiative, e.g.:

- introducing a "Day (or Week) of Quiet" - no bells or loud announcements
- creating a supportive communication code - as a classroom agreement
- organizing a poster campaign with quotes from autistic students or your own materials

- setting up a “Needs Box” at school - for students who prefer not to speak out loud
- inviting a neurodivergent person (or expert) to speak with students
- creating a podcast or educational video featuring students

Groups are asked to plan:
- goal of the action (what issue it addresses)
- basic plan - what, where, when, with whom (3-4 points)
- required resources (e.g. teacher approval, posters, space, microphone)
- a short project title or slogan

They can write the idea on A3 paper, a slide, or in Canva.

Presentations (3 minutes):
Each group presents their idea to the class (briefly– maximum 1 minute).
The facilitator writes key titles or slogans on the board and concludes:
“Look at how many different ideas came up. Each one is a real step toward a more supportive school.”

<u>Learning outcomes:</u>
- students learn how to initiate and plan social actions
- they gain experience in setting realistic, achievable goals
- their belief in their ability to impact their environment is reinforced

<u>Tools and materials:</u>
- A3 sheets, markers, tablets (optional: Canva)

- project planning worksheet (available from me upon request)
- tape/magnets to display ideas on the wall/board

Suggestions for the facilitator:

- Encourage bold but realistic ideas
- Emphasize that it's not about big campaigns–small, doable changes matter too (e.g. a poster, a quiet corner in the library, or a class empathy day)
- Help groups stay focused with guiding questions:
  "What is your action trying to achieve?" (goal)
  "Who do you need to make it happen?" (allies)
  "What can you do as soon as next week?" (minimum plan)
  "How will you know it worked?" (evaluation)
- Offer examples if students are stuck:
  - "One school created a podcast series explaining neurodiversity."
  - "Another hung signs reading: 'You can be yourself here'–in multiple languages and pictograms."
  - "A class introduced a monthly 'Day of Empathy'–no grading, and students could write letters to teachers."
- Support creativity and collaboration:
  Watch group dynamics–if someone is quiet, ask them directly: *"What would you change if you could?"*
  Assign roles if needed: note-taker, presenter, moderator, visual designer
- Encourage strong, enthusiastic presentations:
  Reinforce the importance of sharing ideas with pride–this builds engagement
  End the session with a motivating summary, e.g.:
  "Today, you designed the future of a school where empathy and understanding are part of everyday life. Remember: it starts with you."

Summary – Workshop wrap-up and Youthpass certificate presentation

Thank you for taking part in all three workshops.
This has been an extraordinary time in which you've done tremendous work: you learned, shared, designed, and co-created. You've shown that young people are capable of thinking critically, acting with empathy, and designing meaningful change.
You've gained a deeper understanding of what the autism spectrum really is–not as a label or a problem, but as a way of experiencing the world that deserves understanding.
Instead of prejudice, you chose knowledge.
Instead of indifference–you chose involvement.
Instead of silence–you chose to speak up for inclusion.

Additional materials

Leaflets and posters designed by young people

A word of introduction

As part of the project, young people aged 15–19 with no special educational needs were invited to participate in a series of workshops aimed not only at broadening their knowledge about the autism spectrum, but above all at developing attitudes of empathy, understanding and active support for their neurodiverse peers.

A key stage in the process was inviting participants to create their own educational materials, including posters and a set of leaflets, aimed at their peers and the school and local community.

The resulting materials are the fruit of joint discovery, discussions, group work and genuine engagement of young people in a topic that many of them previously knew only superficially or through stereotypes.

It was the young people themselves, after working with the simulator, participating in role-play exercises, analysing needs and reflecting on diversity, who decided what they wanted to pass on.

All materials – both leaflets and posters – are designed to serve as educational tools, but also as vehicles for values. They not only teach what the autism spectrum is, but also encourage an attitude of active care for others. Importantly, the materials are visually appealing and tailored to a young audience. They were created using digital tools such as Canva, which allowed participants not only to express themselves, but also to develop digital skills and teamwork.

The set of materials includes:

1. Poster: ‘Myths about the autism spectrum’

Designed as a tool for display in school spaces, the poster presents the most common myths about people on the autism spectrum. It includes beliefs such as ‘People with autism do not feel emotions’ and ‘All people on the spectrum are the same’. Each myth is juxtaposed with reality, expressed in simple, true words. The whole is rounded off with the slogan ‘Look deeper. See the person,’ which sums up the idea behind the entire project.

2. Leaflet: ‘Myths about the autism spectrum’

An expansion of the poster's content, presenting myths and counterarguments in the form of a brochure that can be handed out during educational campaigns, workshops, Autism Awareness Day or as part of school initiatives organised by the Student Council. Its strength lies in its simple language, bluntness and directness - qualities that young people considered most important in communicating with their peers.

3. Leaflet: ‘The needs of young people on the autism spectrum’

The material was developed as a result of work with needs cards and reflections after the ‘Map of barriers and support’ exercise. Participants identified specific needs of their neurodiverse peers, such as stability and predictability, avoiding sensory overload, the need for clear and direct communication, and the need for time to process information. The leaflet also includes practical examples of adjustments and forms of support at school and in peer relationships.

4. Leaflet: ‘How to be a supportive peer’
The third material is a bridge between knowledge and action. The young people have prepared a set of practical tips for everyday situations: how to talk, how to react, what to avoid, what to suggest. The material also includes quotes from the participants themselves, showing the authenticity of their cognitive and emotional transformation after participating in the project.

‘Small gestures of kindness can make someone's whole day better,’ wrote one of the students. This sentence ended up on the last page of the leaflet as the punchline of the entire educational process.

All of the above materials have been prepared in three languages: Polish, Spanish and English. Their presence in this script is not accidental. It proves that young people, given the right tools, space and trust, are capable of discussing difficult topics with great maturity and sensitivity.
We encourage you to use these materials both in further workshops and in independent educational activities – in schools, community centres, libraries, non-governmental organisations or in public spaces. The young people who created this content are sharing it with the belief that it can make a difference – in awareness, in relationships, in attitudes towards difference. May it inspire the creation of further educational tools that put people at the centre, regardless of how they feel, speak or think.

MYTHS ABOUT AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS, BUILDING UNDERSTANDING

MYTH: People with autism don't feel emotions.
REALITY: We experience emotions deeply—sometimes more intensely than others. We might just express them differently.

MYTH: All autistic people are the same.
REALITY: Autism is a spectrum. Each person has unique strengths, challenges, and ways of experiencing the world.

MYTH: Autism needs to be 'fixed'.
REALITY: Autism is a neurological difference, not a disease. Support and understanding make the real difference.

MYTH: Autistic people can't form relationships.
REALITY: We value friendships and connections. We might need different approaches to communication and social interaction.

REMEMBER: LOOK BEYOND THE LABEL. SEE THE PERSON.

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Autism Integration

HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE PEER

FRIENDSHIP HAS MANY FORMS

Starting Conversations:

- Be direct and friendly: "Hi, I'm Kate. What are you interested in?".
- Ask about their hobbies or passions.
- Don't worry if the conversation feels different—different can be wonderful.

Understanding communication:

- Some of us make less eye contact—we're still listening.
- We might take longer to respond—give us time.
- Our body language might be different, but our feelings are real.

Being Inclusive:

- Invite us to activities, even if we sometimes say no.
- Respect when we need breaks or quiet time.
- Celebrate our strengths and interests, even if they're different from yours.

What workshop participants say:

"I learned that friendship isn't about being the same—it's about understanding each other."
"Now I know that if someone doesn't look at me when talking, it doesn't mean they don't care."
"Small acts of kindness make someone's whole day better."

EVERYONE DESERVES TO BELONG

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NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

CREATING INCLUSIVE SPACES TOGETHER

What we need:

Predictable routines - Knowing what to expect helps us feel secure and confident.
Sensory awareness - Some sounds, lights, or textures can be overwhelming. A quiet space can make all the difference.
Clear communication - Direct, honest conversation works better than hints or sarcasm.
Time to process - We might need extra moments to understand or respond to information.
Emotional safety - Acceptance without judgment helps us be our authentic selves.

In school:

- Advance notice of schedule changes
- Breaks when feeling overwhelmed
- Understanding of different learning styles

With friends:

- Patience with social cues
- Respect for our interests and passions
- Inclusion in group activities

SMALL CHANGES CREATE BIG IMPACTS

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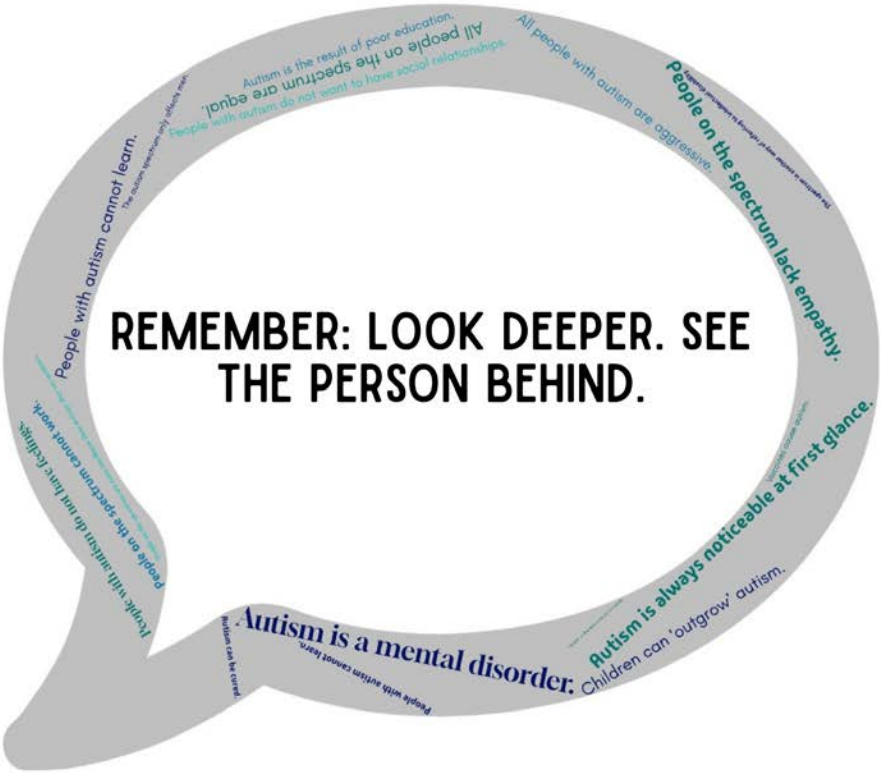

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Summary

We have provided you with a script that was created not only out of a need for education about neurodiversity, but above all out of a belief that young people are ready to talk about difference, empathy and genuine relationships. The ChatBot simulator, around which all activities are structured, is a unique tool – not because it is technologically advanced, but because it provokes reflection, builds curiosity and, most importantly, allows you to glimpse into the world of a person functioning on the autism spectrum.

The project was experimental from the outset. We assumed that if we gave young people the right tools and space to act, they would create something important – and we were not mistaken. During the workshops, we observed moments of surprise, laughter and difficult questions. Young people not only actively participated in simulations and exercises, but often confronted for the first time how much harm can be caused by a lack of knowledge, exclusionary patterns and disregard for differences.

We are not experts on 'correct answers,' but we firmly believe that education about autism should not begin with definitions, but with encounters – with emotions, with other people, with questions that have no ready answers. ChatBot does not pretend to be a person on the spectrum. It is merely a tool to imagine a certain experience. Many workshop participants said that talking to it was 'strange' and 'surprising at times' – and that was exactly the point. We do not offer clinical realism, but a simulation that moves and provokes reflection.
Our observations and evaluations show that ChatBot works not only as a communication exercise, but above all as a

mirror in which young people see themselves – their reactions, emotions and prejudices. Some people were impatient, others curious, and still others tried to adapt to the communication style of the interlocutor. Each of these reactions became a starting point for a conversation about how different we can be – and how much we need to understand each other.

The workshops with young people provided us with many valuable observations. Firstly, young people are able to talk about neurodiversity with great commitment and empathy, as long as they are given the space to do so. Secondly, they need specific tools that will allow them to translate knowledge into action. That is why each part of the script leads from reflection to action: from deconstructing myths, through simulation, to designing social campaigns, leaflets, posters and even proposals for student councils.
What struck us most were the participants' voices: ‘Now I know that it's not that they are different, it's just that I can approach their needs differently,’ ‘I understood that some behaviours are not a lack of upbringing, but a reaction to the world,’ ‘I would like it to be quieter in the cloakroom at our school, not just for people on the spectrum.’ These statements show that the project not only broadened knowledge but also opened hearts.
We encourage you to use this script flexibly – not everything has to be implemented in one form or at one time. It is worth responding to the needs of the group, adding your own elements and sharing the results.

The project team remains open to suggestions, comments and cooperation. The script was created with a view to further development and testing - by formal and informal educators, youth workers, teachers, psychologists and young people themselves.
We realise that every person on the autism spectrum is different - and it is this diversity that inspired us to create a tool that does not provide simple answers but asks questions. How to conduct a conversation? How should you react when someone does not respond? What is the meaning of gestures, tone of voice, silence? The simulator - although digital - can become a very human experience if we treat it as a bridge, not a filter.
Therefore, we strongly encourage you to test, ask questions and transform. And if something is missing, please write to us.

The pilot workshops showed us one thing very clearly: young people want to talk. They want to know more, understand, try and support - but they need space, tools and a language that does not judge. A chatbot cannot replace live contact with a person on the spectrum, but it can help prepare for such a conversation - without fear, tension or uncertainty.
The conclusions from working with young people are clear: we need more education about neurodiversity, but also more courage to talk about what is difficult. Young people pointed out that after the workshops, they began to see completely new perspectives in their classrooms, groups and relationships. Many of them admitted that for the first time they consciously thought about how their own behaviour might be perceived by people on the spectrum. This is a huge change - and a huge hope.

We will conclude with the words of one of the workshop participants, which best reflect our intention:

'This chatbot doesn't say everything – but thanks to it, for the first time, I felt that I could really try to understand another person. And that I am the one who has to learn a new language.'

Let this script be the beginning of such learning – at school, in class, in everyday life. For empathy. For dialogue. For change.

If you have any suggestions regarding our work, please feel free to contact us at:

kontakt@fundacjaenabler.pl

crea360@crea360.es

CHATBOT FOR SIMULATING CONVERSATIONS WITH TEENAGERS IN THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

https://autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl

What is this chatbot?
This is a training tool that mimics the way teenagers on the autism spectrum communicate. It allows you to safely practise conversation and learn about the specifics of this type of communication.

Who is it intended for?
For teachers, school colleagues, youth coaches, family members, and anyone who wants to better understand communication with people on the autism spectrum..

Why should you try it?
It will help you avoid harmful stereotypes, learn appropriate responses, and understand what behaviours may unnecessarily upset the person you are talking to.

Where can I try it out?
After registering for free, you can chat with the chatbot on our platform. Just scan the QR code below.

What do I need to know before I start?
You can chat in any language. The chatbot is available 24/7 and provides a safe environment for learning.

Does this replace real conversation?
No, it's a preparatory tool. It helps build confidence before real interactions.

DIRECT ACCESS TO THE CHATBOT

https://autism-integration.fundacjaenabler.pl

PROJECT WEBSITE WITH ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

https://autismintegrationproject.fundacjaenabler.pl

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